

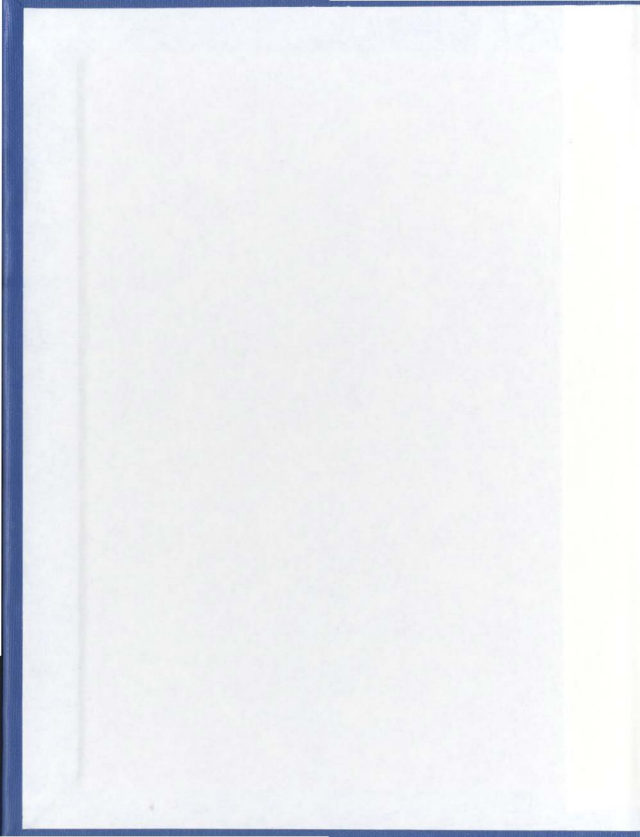
"THERE'S NOTHING OFFERED HERE":  
THE RHETORIC AND REALITY OF A REHABILITATIVE  
APPROACH AT THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND  
LABRADOR CORRECTIONAL CENTER FOR WOMEN

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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MIRANDA MONSTER







**“THERE’S NOTHING OFFERED HERE”: THE RHETORIC AND REALITY OF A  
REHABILITATIVE APPROACH AT THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
CORRECTIONAL CENTER FOR WOMEN**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis begins by reviewing the mandate of Newfoundland and Labrador Adult Correctional Services with specific emphases on the service's position regarding rehabilitation, and some of the assumptions underlying its mission statement. The degree to which false assumptions and under-explored external and internal factors have combined to hinder the quality and quantity of rehabilitative programs at the Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Center for Women (NLCCW), form the main crux of the thesis. Internal factors considered include offender demographics and correctional officer work orientations. External forces consist of the location and structural design of the institution, as well as social, political, and economic considerations. Data, largely in the form of semi-structured interviews, were collected between April and June, 1999. Key informants included female prisoners, correctional officers, prison administrators, and treatment personnel. These data are augmented by selective observations and secondary sources. Findings are informed by concepts and ideas derived from feminist, sociological, and criminological theories of crime, as well as the theory of human motivation. The thesis concludes by providing a summary of the main findings, avenues of future research, and some policy alternatives for interested parties.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The sociology of corrections notes that correctional institutions strive to carry out two conflicting goals: rehabilitating offenders while simultaneously punishing them and asserting control over their lives. Incarceration is just one of the forms of criminal punishment that represents formal social control. When social control is referred to as formal, we know it relies on established rules that are adopted by a decision making body for a social group (Duffee, 1989: 6). Imprisonment is one punishment that is a result of breaking the rules that this decision making body, as one sector of society, has labeled as criminal.

The goal of rehabilitation, on the other hand, is to prevent or reduce further incidence of crime by changing or modifying the attitudes and behaviours of an offender (Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1994: 189; Samaha, 1997: 445). Rehabilitation involves treatment of the individual through vocational training, education, counseling, teaching, casework, religious activities, and clinical activity (Allen and Simonsen, 1998). By exposing the offender to a number of rehabilitative programs, there is hope that the individual will be re-socialized to become a conforming member of society, adhering to social norms and laws.

These two conflicting goals – punishment/control on the one hand, and offender

rehabilitation on the other, are undeniably present in the following mission statement adopted by the Adult Correctional Division of the Department of Justice in Newfoundland and Labrador (1995):

*(1) As a partner in the Criminal Justice System, we will strive for a safer society by encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens.*

*(2) We will exercise fair, just and humane measures of custody, supervision and control.*

*(3) We will strive to provide access to programs and services necessary for the offender's reintegration into the community.*

*(4) We will strive to ensure that victims are able to participate meaningfully in the criminal justice process.*

*(5) We will facilitate access to programs and services which target the destructive impacts of victimization while promoting healing and recovery.*

It is clear that while the emphasis in the second statement is on control, custody, and supervision, the first and third statements stress offender rehabilitation, and reintegration into the community.

In addition to attempting to carry out a mandate that contains contradictory goals, the mission statement is soured with assumptions regarding offender rehabilitation. For example, there is a built in assumption that the "necessary programs and services" are present, either in prison or in the community, and can be "accessed" by those who require them. It is also assumed that those people in daily contact and thus directly influencing inmates - correctional officers (COs) - will have an orientation toward "encouragement" and "fair" and "humane" treatment. If these and other necessary social structures are not

in place to facilitate the presumed efforts outlined in the mission statement, this statement becomes but a moot guideline.

This thesis addresses the aforementioned issues by examining how a number of external and internal social factors have combined to 1) hinder the policy development and delivery of rehabilitative programming and services at the NLCCW, and to 2) emphasize the goal of control and punishment. The internal factors referred to consist of personal attributes and relationships that exist within the institution, which in turn, influence the daily social organization and operation of the NLCCW. They include offender demographics and criminal profiles, as well as the contradictory role of the CO and the officers' relationships with offenders. External factors, on the other hand, refer to structural constraints over which the offender has very little, or no, control. These include the location and structural design of the institution, as well as social, economic, and political considerations.

Although I have separated these components, it should be noted that they are, in no way, mutually exclusive. In fact, they are so intricately connected, it becomes impossible to isolate at any time those that are the most influential on the daily lives of the women incarcerated at the NLCCW. Each of the factors is actually exacerbated by the others and to discuss one without factoring in the rest greatly minimizes its importance.

### **1.2 The Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Center for Women**

The NLCCW was moved from Stephenville to Clarenville in April 1996 (see Figure 1-1). The prison in Clarenville was originally built to house minimum security, male

offenders. Prior to the building of the Stephenville prison for women in 1982, female offenders were housed at Her Majesty's Penitentiary (HMP)— a medium and maximum security facility also designed for male prisoners.

The former minimum security male institution currently accommodates 22 minimum/medium female offenders, and services the entire province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Despite being a provincial institution, the NLCCW also houses low risk federal prisoners who are permitted by the courts to serve their sentences in provincial, as opposed to federal, institutions. Federal prisoners are differentiated from provincial prisoners in terms of sentence length, with the former consisting of women with prison sentences of two or more years. Prisoners awaiting transfer to a federal prison, those remanded in custody by the court, and women detained under the Immigration Act may also be confined to the NLCCW.

### **1.3 Rationale for the Study**

#### **1.3.1 Female Prisoners**

According to statistics, most female provincial prisoners currently serve comparatively short terms (Approximately 44 days), meaning that they will soon be returning to the community (Reed and Roberts, 1999: 44). A study which sheds light on the type of treatment services needed and acquired by female prisoners would represent a necessary first step in the direction of ensuring that they ultimately lead law-abiding lives, and do not return to prison in the future. The findings of the study may be useful in building stakes in conformity by determining those issues deemed important to inmates

and by building on them. For example, studies have shown that women constantly express concern over their children's well-being (Clark, 1995; Grey, Mays, and Stohr, 1995; Moyer, 1993; van Nijnatten, 1997), and that many incarcerated mothers take advantage of available self-help and parenting programs in order to strengthen their relationships with their children (Clark, 1995: 306). Delivering parenting classes to women prisoners may give them the tools needed, upon release, to become effective socializing agents for their children.

Up until recently, female prisoners in Newfoundland and Labrador have been without a group lobbying on their behalf. This fact suggests female prisoners in this province, unlike some other Canadian female prisoners, may have fallen behind in their bid to acquire both basic and improved treatment services. Furthermore, when an Elizabeth Fry Society recently organized in this province and delivered a report (Woodrow, n.d.) on the state of the NLCCW, it produced some rather controversial and negative reaction from female prisoners. The 30 page report, released in April 1998, concluded that women incarcerated in this province were being neglected and that the programming and living space at the NLCCW were inadequate. In addition, there was a call for sensitivity training among COs. Immediately following the release of the report, a local CBC News crew went directly to the prison to get reactions from prisoners. The inmates condemned the report and claimed that they were being treated fairly at the prison. One of these inmates, for example, stated:

I'm not treated like a bad criminal because I'm in jail. Like some places they treat

you like you're nothing, but people here, all the guards, they treat me like I'm somebody. And that's an important thing that I feel is important to me because all my life I have been put down.

This study aims to make an important contribution by attempting to correct any current public misconceptions about female prisoners and about their efforts to acquire various types of rehabilitative services.

### 1.3.2 Correctional Officers

Correctional personnel are thought to experience role conflict in their work. Such conflict stems from their need to carry out two contradictory tasks. On the one hand, COs must carry out enforcement and policing functions aimed at protecting the security of female prisoners, fellow COs, and the general public. On the other hand, they are expected to provide support services to help facilitate offender rehabilitation. Information unearthed in this study may produce useful insights concerning how COs may perform their support functions more effectively. This information could, in turn, help to reduce or eliminate any potential negative consequences associated with role conflict (e.g., burnout, stress, fatigue). Moreover, individual role conflict would indeed be a concern for correctional administrators. It may very well produce high employee turnover and, as a result, mean that administrators need to invest considerable funds toward the recruitment and training of new personnel.

### 1.3.3 Government Policy

One must take into consideration the political/economic context of corrections in

order to understand prison policy development and practice. Despite its traditionally low crime rate, Newfoundland's rate of incarceration in recent years has been rather startling. Figures for 1996-97 indicate that the number of offenders in prison (daily) was 349 per 10,000 adults charged— third highest in the country. By comparison, the provincial/territorial average numbered 268 (Reed and Roberts, 1998).

Adult Corrections in Canada is an expensive business, costing \$2.08 billion in 1997-1998 (Reed and Roberts, 1999). It presently costs roughly \$44,000 annually, or \$120 a day, to house a provincial offender (Griffiths and Cunningham, 2000: 77). Such costs were much higher for female prisoners at the NLCCW (\$178.21). This prison has a total operating cost of \$845,600 annually (Newfoundland Department of Justice, 1998). Newfoundland has the third highest per capita cost among all provinces in terms of the maintenance of provincial correctional institutions. Each Newfoundland resident must now pay \$35.38 annually for institutional correctional services in this province.

Given these high correctional costs, it would be in the government's best interest to find out what types of prison programs are the most cost effective. Very little is known about the character and effectiveness of programming and services received by female prisoners in this province. The very scattered data available (Newfoundland Department of Justice, 1998) appear to indicate the existence of only seven types of offender programs: 1) Upgrading/Literacy; 2) Anger Management; 3) Substance Abuse; 4) Life Skills; 5) Volunteer Work Release; 6) Spiritual Development; and 7) Physical Fitness. It is unclear from such government policy documents whether all or most of these programs are



actually delivered to the comparatively small group of female prisoners in this province. Shrinking budgets in the public sector mean that governments now have much less money than before to spend on the correctional sector. With its relatively small population, Newfoundland has a much smaller tax base compared to other provinces. Thus, it has somewhat scant funds to spend on the design and implementation of prison programs.

#### **1.4 Interpretive Frameworks**

Theories are “ways of seeing that provide understanding and modes of interpretation which focus on specific phenomenon, linkages, or the social systems as a whole” (Kellner, 1995: 24). This thesis integrates theories from an array of disciplines. There is an incorporation of feminist theories, as well as theories from the areas of sociology, criminology, and psychology. The following introduction to a number of these theories helps set the context for subsequent data analysis chapters in which ideas and concepts from the theories will be utilized in a discussion of the findings.

Although theories explain why, or how, specific phenomena are related to criminal behaviour and/or forms of rehabilitative treatment and delivery, it must be noted that theories do not have perfect predictive power. Pollock (1999) informs us that “natural sciences” have come to terms with probabilities and that we should not assume that the social sciences can be any more accurate in their ability to predict. Drawing on the medical science model, for example, she reminds us that everyone who smokes tobacco does not get cancer. No one, however, doubts the link between smoking tobacco and cancer despite the fact that some people can smoke tobacco for 50 years and not get cancer as a

result. Returning to the social sciences, we see strong links between female poverty, sexual and physical abuse, and criminal behaviour. This is not to say, however, that *every* woman who is poor and has been sexually and physically abused will commit criminal offences.

#### 1.4.1 Feminist Theories

Some feminists feel that in order to understand the nature of female crime and subsequently rehabilitative programming and services, there is a need to move away from the discipline of criminology completely. These feminists feel that “working within the traditional framework of criminology will neither yield answers to central questions about women nor liberate women from their oppression” (Boritch, 1997: 78). Cain argues that feminists must go beyond the limits of traditional criminology because there are no tools within existing criminological theories with which to achieve liberation (Cain, 1990, as cited in Boritch, 1996: 78). She suggests that we must start with the social construction of gender, and place women’s life experiences into context if we are to make any sense of female criminality. Some criminologists have attempted to accomplish this by turning to more traditional feminist theories such as liberal feminism and socialist feminism.

The origins of liberal feminism lie within western Europe and the societal transitions of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Andersen, 1993: 288). The philosophy of liberalism rests on the principle of individual liberty and an emphasis on human reason as the foundation for humanitarian social change (Andersen, 1993: 288). The main thrust of liberal feminism sees subordination as “rooted in a set of customary, and legal constraints that blocks

women's entrance and/or success in the so-called world" (Tong, 1989: 2). This argument centers around the belief that if women were given the ability to compete fairly in society, they would achieve equality (Brym, 1995: 20.14). Society, however, has come to believe that women are intellectually and/or inferior as compared to men and have excluded them from the academy, the forum, and the marketplace (Tong, 1989: 2). Liberal feminists seek to change inequality "through legal reforms aimed at increasing women's opportunities rather than through fundamental challenges to the construction and existence of gender categories" (Boritch, 1997: 79).

One of the models for servicing female prisoners is the equal rights model, rooted in liberal feminist theory. It maintains that female prisoners should have access to the same quality and quantity of programs as their male counterparts. The argument is that female oppression and discriminatory treatment in prison can only be eliminated through continued equalization under law (Chesney-Lind and Pollock, 1995: 155). Thus, proponents of this approach have lobbied for equal rights and have opposed laws that produce differential treatment of men and women.

Socialist feminism combines elements of both the radical and Marxist positions by proposing that gender *and* class relations play equal roles in women's oppression (Bohm, 1997: 132). This theory was originally developed in reaction to Marxist feminism, criticizing it for implying the abuse women suffer from men have fewer consequences than that the proletariat endures from the Bourgeoisie (Tong, 1989, as cited in Belknap, 1996: 12). Socialist feminists assert that Marxism has blurred the true economic and social roles

of women and that class alone cannot be held responsible for the tangled relationship between the family, reproduction, and productive relations within society (Andersen, 1993: 341). Because class alone is not sufficient in explaining women's subjugation, patriarchy must be added to form a dual system of domination (Belknap, 1996: 11).

Socialist feminists believe that it is important to be aware of both class relations inherent in the system of production, and the construction of gender categories in labor and domestic care (Boritch, 1997: 79). They argue that patriarchy and capitalism cannot be separated but that the two are intertwined and equally important sources of gender inequality (Boritch, 1997: 79). In this dual system, the relations of production, that is the economic system of production, "gives rise to class relations and exploitation of workers by owners," while the second part of the system, the relations of reproduction, "are the ways in which person's organize their activities so as to reproduce, socialize and maintain the species" (Gibbons, 1994: 167). These modes of production lead to the formulation of patriarchal gender relations in which males control the labor of power, as well as women's sexuality (Gibbons, 1994: 167).

Socialist feminists "advocate reform strategies based on a concept of substantive equality which emphasizes differences between men and women as well as diversity among women in terms of their life circumstances and vantage points" (Boritch, 1997: 179). What this promotes then is an approach that will include the offender in attempting to seek out types of programming and intervention, which are based on her life experiences, and that will provide her with an opportunity to learn and/or maintain the skills needed to

manage her own life and those of her children's. Some believe that the suggestions advocated by the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women in 1989 can help women make better choices, as well as shatter the devices that are currently controlling them (Carey, 1996: 116). According to Carey (1996: 116), recognizing existing "problems of poverty, abuse, and victimization of female offenders, and supporting greater choices through counseling, educational, and vocational training, that pertains to individual needs, promote empowerment and choice."

The special needs model for servicing female offenders is rooted in radical and socialist strains of feminist theory. It argues that equalization ignores gender differences between male and female prisoners, thus leading to inadequate treatment of female offenders (Jackson and Stearns, 1995). Proponents of the special needs model emphasize women's unique child care responsibilities. They also point out how the medical and health care needs of women are quite different from those of their male counterparts. For example, female offenders have special gynecological health problems and have a higher prevalence of mental disorders compared to male inmates (Blanchette, 1997: 37).

This thesis will show that neither the special needs model nor the equal rights model is practical in informing policy at the NLCCW. The inmates interviewed for this study clearly placed more emphasis on basic habilitative needs than some of the more abstract specialized programs and services associated with both of these models. Inmates, for example, were more concerned with the quality of their food supply and a lack of fresh air than with equality in educational and vocational programming.

#### 1.4.1.1 "Creating Choices" for Female Inmates

Due to the dire situation at the Prison for Women (P4W) in Kingston Ontario, the government collaborated with the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and established a Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women. The objective of this Task Force was to review issues and concerns of federally sentenced women and to use the findings in an attempt to present policy suggestions that would effectively address their treatment needs. The Task Force's report, *Creating Choices* (1990), calls for a new women-sensitive correctional model characterized by five guiding principles that are to form the basis of future program development.

The first principle recognized is "Empowerment." The Task Force acknowledges that there is a correlation between women's involvement with the criminal justice system and the inequities, hardships, and suffering experienced by women in Canadian society (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 106). These experiences, combined with feelings of guilt, fear, anxiety, alienation, and confusion, have resulted in a group of women with exceptionally low self-esteem. Low self-esteem not only reduces a woman's ability to plan for the future and to believe that she can make meaningful choices that will help her live with respect and dignity, it also increases self-disruptive behaviour and violence against others (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 106). It is because of these problems that the Task Force is vigorously promoting programs that will enhance self-esteem and empowerment.

The second principle centers around "Meaningful and Responsible Choices" (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 107-108). The Task Force maintains that if women are to have a

sense of control over their lives they need meaningful options which will allow them to make responsible decisions. These decisions must relate to their needs and must be made in the context of the women's lived, past, and present experiences. These women have traditionally not made meaningful and responsible choices because they have been, to a large extent, dependent on men, alcohol, or drugs and /or state financial assistance which has robbed them of the opportunity and ability to make choices. Such meaningful and responsible choices can only be provided within a flexible environment which can accommodate the fluctuating and disparate needs of imprisoned women. Women need to break out of their dependent cycle through experiencing the success related to making sound, responsible decisions. The Task Force asserts that teaching women how to make responsible decisions will prepare them for the pressures they will experience upon release. However, life inside prison must better reflect life outside, providing a more realistic environment in which to foster self-sufficiency and responsibility (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 108). The women interviewed for the Task Force Report state "they want more control over their diet, more access to the outdoors, and more choice concerning medical care" (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 108).

The third principle discussed is "Respect and Dignity." Respect is needed among prisoners, among staff, and between prisoners and staff if women are to achieve the self-respect and respect for others necessary to take responsibility for their futures (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 109). Observations have shown that the behaviour of prisoners is strongly influenced by the way they are treated, and that if people are treated with respect and

dignity, they will be more apt to take responsibility for their actions. Women consulted by the Task Force spoke out against what they perceived to be arbitrary prison rules and regulations that humiliated them and made them feel powerless. The women claim they are denied their need for privacy, quiet, and dignity. Such rules and regulations leave women feeling that they have no rights or control. This feeling leads to “an overwhelming sense of hopelessness and a total lack of motivation” (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 109).

Fourth, women need to be situated in a “Supportive Environment.” The Task Force claims that “a positive lifestyle, which can encourage the self-esteem, empowerment, dignity, and respect for self and others necessary to live a productive, meaningful life, can only be created in an environment in which all aspects of the environment are positive and mutually supportive” (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 110). A good environment can enhance physical health, psychological health, and personal development. The environments in which federally sentenced women are situated, however, are often physically, psychologically and spiritually inadequate as well as lacking in fresh air, light, and appropriate nutrition. Social interactions based on dignity and respect, relationships with those deemed important outside the institution, and spiritual and cultural practices and experiences are also limited. Inmates are “denied the privacy, quiet, dignity, and safety which are so integral to an adequate quality of life” (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 110). How well a woman integrates herself into the community depends to a large extent on the amount and type of advocacy, advice, and assistance she receives. The Task Force maintains that this approach reflects the “healthy communities” concept now being



promoted by Health and Welfare Canada. This concept stresses both the interpersonal nature of the environment and the importance of the will of the people involved.

The last principle cited is "Shared Responsibility." The Task Force asserts that governments at all levels, corrections' workers, voluntary sector services, businesses, private sector services and community members must all do their part in taking responsibility. It is their contention that "the holistic programming and multifaceted opportunities which support an environment in which women can become empowered, can only be built on a foundation of responsibility among a broad range of community members" (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 111).

This thesis will examine to what extent these five principles have been incorporated into policy at the NLCCW. It will be shown, for example, that programs geared toward increasing self-esteem and empowerment were non-existent. Furthermore, not all prisoners possessed the intellectual capacity to make meaningful and responsible choices. As well, the CO staff - according to the inmates - did not always display respect for the prisoners and for their quests to improve basic services and to acquire more specialized rehabilitative programs.

#### 1.4.2 Labeling Theory of Deviance

Labeling theory of deviance, a symbolic interactionist approach, looks at the way in which people apply and internalize deviant labels. This theory holds that the formation of a person's identity is a reflection of how others define her (Akers, 1997: 101). Akers (1997: 101) identifies labeling as an interactive process, rather than a deterministic one and claims

that the individual continuously is self-reflexive, role playing, and negotiating her self-identity. Most research on deviance has been concerned with formal, official, and public labeling (Schur, 1984: 236). This type of labeling is done by official agents of society such as police, court, prisons, and correctional personnel who are empowered to enforce social, and legal norms. The term "criminal," for example, would be considered a formal label successfully applied by these social control agents.

In addition to formal labeling, we have the practice of informal labeling. This type of labeling, although stigmatizing, does not appear in statute books. These labels, enforced through people's unofficial interpersonal responses, will also be of focus in this study. After all, although informal, these labels are still perceived as "violations" that lead to stigma and punishment (Schur, 1984: 237).

It is believed that the individual who is stigmatized as deviant will not only use those labels (e.g., names, reputations) to form the basis of her self-concept, but will become more deviant than if she had not been so labeled. According to Schur (1984: 38), labeling, through stigmatization, results in a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the individual may act upon an incorrect definition of herself making it true. Thus, an individual who is treated as inferior and who has not had the privileges to develop and demonstrate the powers that would negate this may actually come to see herself as inferior (Schur, 1984: 38). Schur (1984: 39) asserts that such systematic devaluation implies a strong likelihood of impaired self-esteem, and the stigmatized person may also show "various patterns of withdrawal and defensiveness, passivity, in-group hostility, and identification with the

oppressors." An individual cannot have good self-perception, if that is not what is reinforced by others.

When applying labeling theory to female offenders, it is important to note that womanhood is already a master status. A master status overrides and proves more important than all other statuses. According to Schur (1984: 25), women are recognized and reacted to at least initially, and often exclusively, in terms of their femaleness. Only secondarily, if at all, do their other characteristics and virtues determine responses to them.

Schur (1984: 35) also contends that the master status is a devalued status and points to a number of factors contributing to this devaluation. First, he maintains that there is pronounced sex-inequality within our social and economic society (1984: 35). He claims that women are positioned in the lower echelons of the socioeconomic and occupational prestige ladders and are evaluated unfavorably as a result (1984: 35). Schur (1984: 35) also asserts that such categorical perceptions and objectification tendencies always show a measure of devaluation whether implicit or explicit. Furthermore, he maintains that women are devalued through "cultural symbolism," and states that "common language, mass media, and advertising, trivialize, slights, derogates, and unnecessarily sexualizes women" (1984: 35). Finally, he insists that femaleness is devalued on the basis of women's relation to definitions of deviance (1984: 36). It is his belief that both the multitude of specific "deviances" ascribed to women under the current gender-system, and the failure to strongly condemn male offences against women, explicate the low value placed on

femaleness (1984: 36). According to Barkan (1997: 226), labeling may be most influential during childhood and adolescence, when self-concepts are forming. Given the long histories of physical and sexual abuse among female inmates, it may very well be that the informal labeling process for female prisoners starts long before any formal labeling by law enforcement officials.

Following from Schur's interpretation, we know that when women are labeled as deviant due to a criminal act, they are actually seen as doubly deviant. Female criminality reflects transgression not only of the law, but also of traditional gender-role expectations (Boritch, 1997: 135). Evil woman perspective, for example, suggests that when an offence committed by a woman goes against the court's gender role expectations, the response to her may be more harsh than to males charged with the same offence in a similar situation. This has been illustrated through police and judicial responses to prostitution. Research has shown that men and women charged with prostitution are not treated equally, in that "women are more likely to be arrested and convicted and to receive harsher sentences" (Boritch, 1997: 134). This theory implies that female defendants are on trial for their legal infractions as well as for defying gender roles.

When discussing rehabilitation, it becomes clear that, in order for female inmates to conceive of themselves as functional and productive members of society, they must be labeled in a positive, as opposed to a negative, light. Otherwise, negative labels will just reinforce the negative self-concepts that have developed before and during incarceration. Given these assumptions made by labeling theory, the thesis seeks to uncover what sorts

of negative labels were imposed on inmates and by whom. The inmates' own perceptions of the effects of formal labeling will be one subject of discussion. Also considered is the impact of negative informal labeling of inmates by COs.

#### 1.4.3 Deprivation Theory

One of the most widely cited pieces of literature on imprisonment is Gresham Sykes' "The Society of Captives" (1958). After studying a maximum security prison in New Jersey that housed 1200 adult male inmates, Sykes describes what he sees as a social system in which there is an attempt to create and maintain total social control. This control derives largely from the organization of institutional rules and operations. Given that women have historically been either housed in male institutions or institutions replicating the male model, they too have been subjected to these same control mechanisms. According to Sykes, social control results in pains that may threaten an inmate's personality and sense of personal worth. The pains of imprisonment and some of their impacts, as described by Sykes, are outlined below.

The first pain discussed is the loss of liberty. Sykes (1958: 65) states that this deprivation is actually a double one, "first by confinement to the institution and second, by confinement within the institution." When people are confined to prison, they become totally isolated from the rest of society and the only things that may break this barrier are visitation and mailing privileges. Unfortunately, most inmates have few visitors and the isolation becomes very painful because it creates loneliness and boredom. Sykes (1958: 65) argues, however, that what makes the deprivation of liberty hurt most deeply is that it

“represents a deliberate, moral rejection of the criminal by the free community.” The criminal is not allowed to forget that, because he has committed a crime he has given up all right to status as a “full-fledged, trusted member of society” (Sykes, 1958: 66). It is a constant threat to the prisoner’s self-conception and is continually reinforced by reminders that he must be kept apart from “decent” men (Sykes, 1958: 67).

The second pain is the deprivation of goods and services. Sykes (1958: 68) professes that, while the prisoner’s physiological needs (food, water, shelter, medical care, and the chance to exercise) are met, the standard of living provided by the prison may “bore an inmate to death” because it fails to provide the symbolism that people invest in their possessions. He asserts that in western culture, material possessions are such an integral part of who we are that to strip a person of them is an attack on their deepest layers of personality (1958: 69). Furthermore, the inmate “must carry the additional burden of social definitions which equate his material deprivations with personal inadequacy” (Sykes, 1958: 70).

The deprivation of heterosexual relationships is yet another pain endured by prisoners. Sykes (1958: 70) maintains that by being in prison, a man is “figuratively castrated by his involuntary celibacy.” It is only through the circulation of pornography that the prisoner’s sexual impulses are kept alive. The lack of heterosexual intercourse is frustrating for men and weighs painfully on their minds during imprisonment. Sykes (1958: 71) argues that this causes psychological problems generating anxieties concerning masculinity. Latent homosexual tendencies may be activated, for example, and may

produce strong feelings of guilt (Sykes, 1958: 71). Being cut off from heterosexual relationships also threatens the prisoner's image of himself. The inmate is shut off from the world of women which, according to Sykes (1958: 72), by its very polarity gives the male world much of its meaning. "Like most men, the inmate must search for his identity not simply within himself but also in the picture of himself in the eyes of others and since a significant half of his audience is denied him, the inmate's self-image is in danger of becoming half-complete, fractured, a monochrome without the hues of reality" (Sykes, 1958: 72).

The fourth deprivation is that of autonomy. When in prison, the prisoner is subjected to a vast number of rules that are implemented to restrict and constrain certain behaviours. For example, the prisoner is told where to sleep, what to eat, and what language may be used in a letter. According to Sykes (1958: 73), what is most irritating to the inmates is the triviality of much of the officials' control. The loss of autonomy is total and imposed and most see it as a pointless gesture of authoritarianism. "Regulation by a bureaucratic staff is felt far differently than regulation by custom" (Sykes, 1958: 73). Most prisoners express hostility against their dependence on the decision made by their keepers. Prisoners, for example, may not be granted parole and then be left in the dark as to why. Sykes (1958: 76) maintains the frustration of the prisoner's inability to make choices, along with frequent refusals to provide explanations for rules and regulations, involve a threat to the prisoner's self-image because it reduces the prisoner to a weak, helpless, dependent status of a child.

Finally, Sykes talks about the deprivation of security. According to Sykes (1958: 77), the prisoner is thrown into “prolonged intimacy” with other men who have a past history of violent and aggressive behaviour. Even though the prisoner does not see himself as the type of person that would violate another person, he is suspicious of other prisoners. Sykes (1958: 78) contends the prisoner’s loss of security arouses anxiety on two fronts. First, violent acts of aggression may occur and this calls into question the individual’s ability to cope with it in terms of his “nerve.” Second, he is anxious about how his reactions to this will affect how the world will view his manhood.

It must be noted that although women are subjected to similar prison conditions as their male counterparts, they are believed to experience the ‘pains of imprisonment’ more acutely than men (Matthews, 1999: 296). This is not because women are less resilient than men but because the material, physical, and social conditions of their imprisonment are significantly different. Matthews (1999: 296) states that “differences in perceived domestic responsibilities, lesser experience of confinement, limited criminal careers, as well as histories of physical and sexual abuse, suggest that a considerable percentage of women are already socially and personally ‘damaged’ before entering this alien environment.” Also of significant importance, and more prevalent among women, are their childcare responsibilities.

As a result of the pains of imprisonment, “the individual’s picture of himself as a person of value - as a morally acceptable adult male who can present some claim to merit in his material achievements and his inner strength - begins to waver and grow dim”



(Sykes, 1958: 79). This picture not only conflicts with, but is actually detrimental to, any form of rehabilitation because the benchmarks of successful treatment are teaching inmates assertiveness and mutual respect (Quinn, 1999: 300). In fact, Quinn maintains that the contradiction between treatment and the demands of punishment, cost cutting, and control, are at the root of many correctional failures.

The pains that have been described here constitute some of the characteristics of a 'total institution.' A total institution is Erving Goffman's term for describing places that completely encapsulate the lives of those who work and live within them (Champion, 1997: 123). According to the deprivation thesis, living in a total institution results in a set of norms, languages, roles, and traditions that help prisoners adjust to these pains (Adler, Mueller, and Laufer, 2000: 367; Reid, 1991: 597). Inmates have a choice of either consolidating with fellow inmates or retreating in order to satisfy their own needs. While some decide to become full members of the prison social system, others withdraw into their own worlds and isolate themselves from other convicts (Clear and Cole, 1997: 274-275).

Clear and Cole (1997: 274-276) outline four doctrines used to describe the lifestyles of inmates as they adjust to prison. The first, "Doing Time" is used to depict those inmates trying to serve their prison terms with the least amount of hassle. These are the inmates who will do whatever is necessary to make their stay the most comfortable and to get released at the earliest possible date. These prisoners conform to inmate codes, get involved with activities, and form friendships with other inmates. Other prisoners may

“glean.” “Gleaners” take advantage of any available opportunities that may be perceived as helping them enhance their lives in some way. These are the individuals who “find themselves” through different types of programming, whether they are vocational or otherwise. Third, Clear and Cole identify the “jailer.” “Jailers” refer to inmates who seek positions of power and influence in the prison society. These inmates are usually institutionalized individuals who know the institutional routine and see prison as a familiar place. Finally, Clear and Cole describe the “disorganized criminal.” These inmates suffer from psychological and physical disabilities and/or low intelligence. They cannot develop role orientation to prison life, and have difficulty functioning within the prison society. These prisoners may develop emotional disorders, attempt suicide, engage in self-mutilation, and violate prison rules.

Some of the pains of imprisonment as expressed by the inmates, are similar to those described by Sykes and are addressed in subsequent data analysis chapters. Dislocation from families, deprivation of over-the-counter medication, and fear of physical attacks by other inmates are some of the major pains discussed. Also, two of the adaptive roles identified as ways to deal with the pains of imprisonment are later applied to the female offenders profiled in this study. Some inmates were keen to adopt the “gleaner” role, while others were clearly “disorganized.” Furthermore, there were inmates who took neither of these roles but adopted different methods of adapting to prison life.

#### 1.4.4 Importation Theory

Contrary to the idea that prison subcultures form due to the deprivations of prison

life, is the belief that their origins exist prior to incarceration. Cressey and Irwin argue that prison society has its roots on the outside and is actually brought in by offenders when they enter prison (Reid, 1991: 598). In other words, the values and roles that are prevalent in prisons are actually those that have been imported from the street. (Duffee, 1989: 364). These values and roles are shaped by demographics such as age and education, as well as criminal histories.

According to Pollock (1997: 229), there has been mixed support for the importation model as applied to female inmates. One piece of evidence which supports the importation thesis is the indication that homosexual relationships are more common in female institutions. This has been attributed to the fact that society more readily accepts the expression of affection by women.

It is feasible to accept that both the deprivation and importation models have merit. Pollock (1997: 230) describes the theories as complementary and states that while “the deprivation model includes factors such as the organization of the prison and conditions,” the “importation model supplements these factors with pre-prison experiences and socialization of the inmates.”

The importation into the prison of some key offender background characteristics, such as level of education and criminal profiles, have clearly affected the interest towards upgrading both basic habilitative and rehabilitative services. For example, it will be shown how some federal prisoners politicized the issue of inmate rights and a lack of basic and more specialized treatment services. As well, the prison housed a group of intellectually

challenged women who were considered ineligible for enrolment in some programs.

#### 1.4.5 Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation

Rooted in the phenomenological perspective of personality (Carver and Scheier, 1992: 399), the theory of human motivation looks at the subjective experience of reality as an extremely powerful influence in a person's life. It holds that everyone takes their own unique frame of reference into their experiences of reality. This perspective also advances the idea that people must establish for themselves, what their lives will be like and that it is human nature to move toward greater health, self-sufficiency, and maturity, unless there are intense pressures to the contrary (Carver and Scheier, 1992: 399).

According to Carver and Scheier (1992: 411), Maslow is most interested in those individuals who appear to be the most fully functioning, the healthiest, and the best adjusted. Maslow eventually came to examine the concept of motivation and theorized about how motives are organized. He concluded that people are motivated toward fulfilling needs in a particular hierarchical order (see Figure 1-2). Human needs vary in their immediacy and power. Maslow (1970: 38) states that "basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency." It is not until the lower needs of the hierarchy are satisfied that higher needs begin to emerge (1970: 38). Maslow observes that needs low on the pyramid (physiological and safety needs) are deficiency-based needs that exist from deprivation (Carver and Scheier, 1992: 414). Satisfying such needs simply entails escaping from unpleasant conditions. The remaining needs are seen as growth-based. Satisfying these needs is not a matter of avoiding implications but a matter of

seeking growth.

Physiological (air, water, and food) needs are the most profound of all needs in the hierarchy (Maslow, 1970: 36). Maslow contends that if these needs are not satisfied, all other needs will become nonexistent or pushed to the back of our minds. When these needs do become satisfied, however, they become relatively unimportant to the individual in question.

Safety needs, while also necessary for survival, is less demanding (Maslow, 1970: 39). When an individual's physiological needs are being pacified, everything looks less important than safety and protection, and a person who does not feel safe, if the feeling is extreme and chronic enough, may be characterized as living solely for safety (1970: 39). Maslow (1970: 41) states that "the average adult in our society usually prefers a safe, orderly, predictable, lawful, organized world, which he can count on, and in which unexpected, unmanageable, chaotic, or other dangerous things do not happen, and in which, in any case, he has powerful protectors who shield him from harm." He believes that society generally makes its members feel safe enough from "wild animals, extremes of temperatures, criminal assaults, murder, chaos, tyranny and so on" (1970: 41). Maslow (1970: 41) states that if we wish to see those needs directly and clearly, we must turn to "neurotic, or near-neurotic individuals, and to the economic, and social underdogs, or else to social chaos, revolution, or a breakdown of authority." The threat of chaos, then, can be expected to produce a regression from any higher order needs that are of greater priority than safety needs (1970: 43). Only when the safety needs are met, can one focus

on those needs containing a more social distinction.

Next on the needs hierarchy is love and belongingness. It refers to the potential “pangs of loneliness, ostracism, rejection, friendlessness, and rootlessness” (Maslow, 1970: 43). Maslow (1970: 43) states that “disorientation, being torn from the individual’s home, family and friends, and neighbors, and being a transient or newcomer, as opposed to a native, can have destructive effects.”

Maslow theorizes that once love and belongingness needs are met, people seek to satisfy esteem needs. Everyone has a need for a stable, firmly based, usually high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others (1970: 45). These needs are classified into two distinct subgroups. First, there is a desire for “strength, achievement, adequacy, confidence in the face of the world, and independence and freedom” (Maslow, 1970: 45). Second, there is a desire for “reputation, prestige, status, fame, glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity and appreciation” (Maslow, 1970: 45). Maslow (1970: 45) asserts that satisfaction of self-esteem needs leads to feelings of “self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world.” Thwarting of these needs, however, produces feelings of “inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness” (1970: 45). These are the types of feelings that give rise to discouragement and compensatory trends. Maslow (1970: 46) claims “the most stable and therefore most healthy self-esteem is based on *deserved* respect from others rather than on external fame or celebrity and unwarranted adulation.”

The peak of human motive for Maslow (1970: 46) is self-actualization - the desire for self-fulfilment and to become everything that an individual is capable of becoming. It is at this level that individual differences are most pronounced and that individual needs will vary considerably.

In general, people must deal with needs at the lower levels of the hierarchy prior to attending to higher level needs. According to Carver and Scheier (1992: 414), there are two implications of this. The first is that, if a need begins to develop at a lower level of the pyramid while you are trying to satisfy a higher one, the more pronounced lower-level need can cause you to be pulled away from the higher level need. Your attention, in effect, is pulled downward and you are forced to attend to the more basic need. The second implication concerns the process by which people move up through this set of needs. According to Carver and Scheier (1992: 414), it may be precisely the freeing of your mind from the demands of low-order needs that makes it possible to become attuned to the tranquil call of the self-actualization tendency. The higher up the pyramid you go, the weaker and more subtle the motive. Self-actualization, for example, while the highest human motive, is also the most subtle and thus the hardest to notice.

The Theory of Human Motivation is used extensively in informing the data analysis. The needs, as expressed by the inmates, were clearly situated in the lower tiers of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Because the inmates spent the majority of their time addressing physiological and safety needs, higher level needs such as esteem and empowerment took on less meaning and importance.

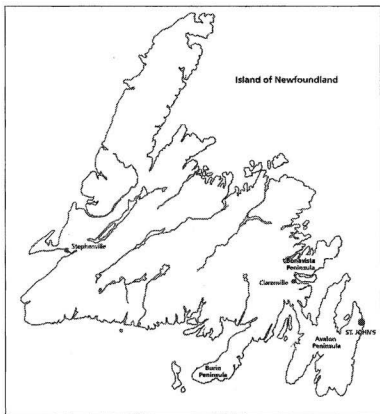
## 1.5 **Thesis Overview**

The thesis statement, the project's practical importance, and the theoretical framework used to interpret my findings have all been introduced in this chapter. Chapter 2 presents a selective literature review on female corrections. Key topics covered include the historical development of female corrections, types and prevalence of female offending, different methods of responding to female offenders, the architectural design of prisons, and CO service delivery styles. Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology adopted for the study. Included in this chapter is a description of the exploratory research design, data gathering methods, ethical considerations, and some methodological limitations associated with this project. Chapter 4 provides a discussion of social, political, and economic considerations that have helped form the context of policy development and practice in the area of female corrections in this province. The impacts of public opinion, the media, government budget constraints, new sentencing alternatives, and deinstitutionalization practices are considered. Chapter 5 focuses on offender demographics and the criminal profiles of inmates. Offender rehabilitative treatment needs are examined in Chapter 6. A distinction is made between the "criminogenic" and "non-criminogenic" needs of inmates, the perceived importance of each type of need, and to what degree these needs are being effectively met. Chapter 7 explores the structural design and location of the NLCCW, as well as the impact of these on rehabilitative policy development and delivery. In Chapter 8, CO work orientations are described. Some major differences in attitudes and behaviour are identified. Chapter 9 summarizes the main



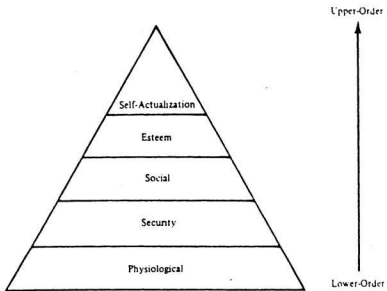
findings produced from this case study. A number of policy recommendations and avenues for future research are also outlined.

**Figure 1-1: Map of Newfoundland**



**Figure 1-2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Figure 1-2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **SELECTIVE LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature reviewed here is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive; its main purpose is to provide the necessary information for a sound interpretation of my data analysis. The first topic covered is the historical development of female corrections. In order to fully understand and appreciate the current status of women in Canada's female correctional facilities, it is necessary to analyze the situation from a historical perspective. By looking at how prison programming and services evolved over time, we can better understand the form of female programming in existence today. Next, the types and prevalence of female offending are reviewed. This information is important to consider because it forms the basis for determining how an offender is classified. Classification labels, in turn, determine where offenders are housed, as well as the type and amount of rehabilitative programs they need during and after imprisonment. Also considered in this chapter is the architectural design of prisons. Prison design is important in that it can facilitate or hinder rehabilitation. Some prisons have been constructed to suit the purposes of assisting with offender rehabilitation, while others are better suited to achieve more punitive goals. The chapter concludes by looking at CO service delivery styles. Literature on COs informs us that some styles of service delivery place more emphasis on rehabilitation than do others.

## **2.2 Setting the Stage: A History of Female Corrections in Canada**

In Canada, up until the mid 1880's, prisons were 'holding tanks' where offenders were kept until physical punishment was administered. The first prison was built in 1835, in Kingston, Ontario, and was a punitive penitentiary catering to men (Boritch, 1997: 171). It was a place where criminals, "through religious instruction, and hard labor, would do 'penance' and thereby be reformed" (Boritch, 1997: 171).

The first two women were sent to the prison within a year of its establishment and were confined to small attic space. From 1835-1846, federally convicted female prisoners were housed in this male facility, and were positioned wherever was convenient at that time, and in whatever way was least disruptive to male inmates (Boritch, 1997: 171). The first matron was hired in 1836, primarily to ensure productivity among women offenders (Berzins and Cooper, 1982: 401). During this time, the women were kept busy mending prison clothing and bedding for the male prisoners (Carey, 1996: 109). Finally, in 1846, because of complaints that women were being housed in the male dining area, female inmates were given their own cells (Carey, 1996: 109).

Between 1835 and 1846, the numbers of women at the Kingston Prison for Men fluctuated between two and fourteen (Boritch, 1997: 171). The new cells for the women were described as "small, dirty, and infested with bugs" (Carey, 1996: 109). The punishment of women (e.g., whipping and flogging) was so severe at this time that public protest led to the formation of the Brown Commission in the late 1840's (Carey, 1996: 109). In 1849, the warden was charged, and many forms of physical and sexual abuse

were revealed (Berzins and Cooper, 1982: 402). It was not until 1914, however, 65 years later, that a new wing for female offenders was added to the penitentiary. Boritch (1997: 171) describes the structure as forbidding, surrounded by five meter walls with barbed wire. The women were confined to cells without windows in an area that was almost the exact replica of the men's quarters.

That women are rarely mentioned in historical documents is indicative of the secondary status of women at this time. There is no evidence of any correctional planning specific to the needs of female offenders (Carey, 1996: 109). While the scarcity of the numbers was a primary determinant of the kind of treatment female inmates at Kingston received in the mid-19th century, it was not exclusive. As Schur (1984) has pointed out, women who commit crimes are labeled as doubly deviant. Female offenders were seen as "fallen women" and worse than men because of their extreme departure from the desired maternal role designated for women in general (Carey, 1996: 109). Because of their failure to meet gender role expectations, they were viewed as mentally subnormal, emotionally disturbed, sexually deviant, and evolutionary regressive. Women were regarded as more unruly and difficult to manage than men and were also thought to be incapable of reform or redemption (Boritch, 1997: 172). From the origins of the male prison in Kingston to the opening of P4W in 1934, the discourse used to explain female criminality revolved around biological and psychological explanations of women's abnormal and criminal behaviour (Carey, 1996: 110).

It may be noted that at this time conditions at provincial reformatories were no

better. The women housed at Andrew Mercer Reformatory in Toronto in 1879, for example, were regarded as childlike victims in need of protection and gentle guidance (Boritch, 1997: 175). They were also viewed as more “destructive, devious, and morally degenerate than their male counterparts, and consequently more resistant to reform” (Boritch, 1997: 175).

It is important to acknowledge that, at the same time (1879), a new movement began in the US and most certainly had an impact on the plight of female offenders in Canada. Women reformers, primarily middle and middle-upper class women, “thought of the female offender, not as a deviant but rather as a victim of male lust and power which afforded women few economic opportunities” (Feinman, 1983: 15). Instead of challenging gender inequality, however, the reformers attempted to work within its already established boundaries.

While the reformers were successful in improving the conditions of incarcerated women through obtaining separate prisons run by female administrators and staff, they chose to follow the model of Elizabeth Fry in London by reinforcing and perpetuating stereotypical sex roles for women (Feinman, 1983: 19). Women’s corrections would be a matriarchy where the correctional personnel would act as ‘mothers’ and would teach the inmate ‘children’ to be proper women in a prison environment, modeled after the home (Feinman, 1983: 19). Many of the reformers became professionals in women’s correctional facilities bringing with them the concept that, “traditionally, women were more virtuous and moral than men and therefore only they could uplift the fallen, by



applying for domestic acts to corrections" (Feinman, 1983: 19). The staffs, architectural design, and programs in all female correctional facilities were similar in that they reinforced traditional values, theories, and practices concerning the norms for women's behaviour and their place in society (Feinman, 1983: 19).

These attitudes and beliefs were still in existence when P4W opened in 1934, and profound similarities continue to exist in today's prison systems. Programs continue to be developed according to male models or traditional female stereotypes and fail to reach parity with the number and diversity of programs accessed by male prisoners. Vocational training, for example, has always played a large part in male corrections because it is in keeping with the desire of the criminal justice system and the general public to reintegrate these male offenders into the legitimate role of the breadwinner (McCorkel, 1996: 172). Such programs, however, have been largely absent from women's prisons because of the perceived notion that women require only rehabilitative care and domestic training.

Where traditional programming has been absent, women have been given the leftovers of what has been designed for men, and when there has been nothing left to pass down, they have been provided with an inferior replica of the male model (Berzins and Cooper, 1982: 405). It has been taken for granted that a smaller version of what is provided to men will suit women, and when that smaller version turns out to be costly, even that is dropped. Berzins and Cooper (1982: 405) insist that:

The very structure and fabric of corrections in Canada, the basic definition, working tools, mechanisms, philosophies, policies, methodologies, and procedures that form the backbone and flesh of our penological system, have all without exception been

born, raised, and have sometimes died male.

Perpetuation of this ideology will stifle attempts to reform female inmates.

### **2.3 Female Offenders: The Fallen Few**

Data on the number of female offenders, combined with the nature and extent of their criminal offending and their background characteristics, are vital in the development of criminal justice policies and the implementation of adequate programming and services. Needs are shaped by background characteristics and provide the information necessary for effective policy development. Without this information, programming and services for women in Canada's prisons will continue to be developed according to traditional gender stereotypes or will follow the programming trends in male facilities. In extreme cases, women may be ignored entirely. Until we can correctly identify the needs of the offender, we cannot service or provide the appropriate programs for them.

#### **2.3.1 Criminal Portrait**

##### **2.3.1.1 Types and Prevalence of Crime**

Providing an accurate criminal profile of female offenders involves reviewing the main classifications of crime as defined by official police statistics. Criminal offences, as defined by the criminal code, are situated into one of three categories: "property," "violent," or "other." The official data utilized in the following assessment derive from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) statistics collected by police agencies in 1997-1998. The most prominent finding revealed by official data is that the arrest rates for women are very low. In 1996, only 19% of all adults arrested were women as compared to 81% of men

(Kong, 1999: 135). With the exception of prostitution and abduction, the gender gap was most noticeable with respect to violent and other offences, but narrowed considerably with respect to property offences.

Most female crime is of a minor property nature. Property crime involves “unlawful acts with the intent of gaining property but do not involve the use or threat of violence” (Kong, 1999: 123). Theft, breaking and entering, fraud, and possession of stolen goods are all examples of property crimes. Women accounted for 23% of all those charged with property crimes in 1996 while men made up the remaining 77% (Kong, 1999: 135). Thirty-one percent of those charged with theft less than \$5000, and 31% of those arrested for fraud were women. When compared with the percentages of men arrested, women were most likely to be represented in one of these two categories.

Compared with their male counterparts, there are substantially fewer violent female offenders. Violent crime includes homicide, attempted murder, assault, sexual assault, other sexual offences, abduction and robbery. Women made up 15% of all those charged with violent offences in 1997, while men comprised the remaining 85% (Kong, 1999: 135). Also, women were responsible for only 16% of arrests for homicide and 17% of all arrests for assault (Kong, 1999: 135).

The remaining criminal code offences not counted in either of these sections are categorized under “other” (Kong, 1999: 125). Some of the offences in this category include weapons’ offences, mischief, prostitution, and arson (Kong, 1999: 125). Approximately 22% of all people arrested for these offences in 1997 were women, as

compared to 78% of men (Kong, 1999: 135). Women accounted for 56% of all those arrested for prostitution in 1997, making it the only crime for which more women than men were arrested.

It should be noted that, like all statistical data, UCR data are limited. Any research that is based on reported crime is somewhat distorted, due to the fact that reporting systems have screens that encourage some, but deter others, from reporting (Feeley and Little, 1991: 720). Also, police discretion is a key factor in determining who gets arrested and who does not. Officers, through their own volition, decide whether to make an arrest and to subsequently forward an individual to court. Police, for example, are likely to engage in differential treatment of offenders depending on both the situation and context of the event, and the amount of discretion allowed them (McCorkel, 1996: 164). The arrest of female prostitutes rather than male clients for “communicating” illustrates this point. Prostitution is actually a predominantly male offense when the ratio of customers to sex-workers is considered.

Two social conflict theories have been used to explain the sex differences in crime processing: evil woman perspective as discussed in Chapter 1, and the leniency or chivalry hypothesis. To recap, proponents of the evil woman perspective suggest that female offenders, depending on their demeanor and offence, are actually treated more severely than their male counterparts (McCorkel, 1996: 158). According to this perspective, women are often dealt with more punitively than men because they are seen as doubly deviant (Boritch, 1997: 134).

Supporters of the competing approach, the leniency model, argue that all women, regardless of race or class, are held in accordance with their image as powerless, and receive preferential treatment within the criminal justice system (Gomme, 1993: 142; McCorkel, 1996: 158). According to this theory, the low crime rates for women can be attributed to low numbers of arrests by police (Moyer, 1993: 71). This theory suggests that police compare female offenders to others (e.g., wives, mothers) whom they could not imagine acting in a criminal or a dangerous manner. They may also see women as less capable of committing the types of criminal acts that men do and/or they may provide women with preferential treatment because they want to protect them.

#### 2.3.1.2 Incarceration Rates

While official statistics cite that 19% of all criminal charges are against women, the incarceration rates are much lower. In 1997-1998, women constituted 9% of sentenced admissions to provincial adult correctional facilities and 5% of those federally sentenced (Reed and Roberts, 1999: 45).

In order to fully understand what type of offender gets housed in correctional institutions, we must take into consideration the factors that intervene between arrest and incarceration. McCorkel (1996: 163) states that "categorically the inmate population in women's prisons represents a tiny minority of female offenders who have been selectively filtered through various channels in the criminal justice system." It has already been stated that the discretion of police officers plays an important role in determining whom, among the apprehended offenders, will be referred to criminal court and who will not be charged.

Once in the courtroom, female offenders face other discretionary practices. Prosecutors know, for example, that judges and juries tend not to convict those women who do not have a history of social stigmatization (e.g., poor employment history, welfare dependency). Additionally, prosecutors are reluctant to prosecute and request the incarceration of women who “have a stable source of support, have children, are married, have a stable psychiatric history, and lack of a juvenile record” (McCorkel, 1996: 164). Judges and juries are also not immune from bias. Images of gender influence perceptions of practicality, blameworthiness, and suitable punishment. Studies have shown, for example, that marital status (married women are less likely to be incarcerated) is critical in deflecting punishments for women, although this is not the case for men. Women with children and a family are also treated more leniently than men with families (McCorkel, 1996: 168).

Given the nature of the selective filtering process, we can expect that the offenders who end up in prison include those who are the most socially and economically disadvantaged. These women are primarily working class women who have suffered many forms of abuse, poverty, and victimization. These female offenders generally do not have the financial, emotional, and intellectual means to challenge the oppression they encounter within the criminal justice system (Carey, 1996: 107). Thus, that these women are “especially subject to formal and informal patriarchal collective mechanisms of control through the state” is not surprising (Carey, 1996: 107).

### 2.3.2 Classifying Female Inmates

Classification, the process whereby there is some systematic collection of information on an offender, is directly linked with the dual function of control/punishment and rehabilitation. The classification process determines both the risks and needs of female offenders which, in turn, define the security level of the inmate and the type and amount of programming she receives. The first goal of classification is the assignment of offenders to a specific type of institution (maximum, medium, or minimum). Prison assignment begins with determining the risk of female offenders, that is, the likelihood of their escape in addition to the potential harm to the public if this should happen (Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1994: 191). Offenders are classified as maximum, medium, or minimum security risks. Those who are judged as likely to abscond, and to cause harm upon escaping, are classified as maximum security offenders. Those offenders who are perceived as likely to escape but unlikely to pose, or cause, serious threats to the community are classified as medium security. Finally, those classified as minimum security are those who are not likely to escape or to pose a threat to the public. Risk factors considered in the offender assessment refer to static personal characteristics and circumstances that may predict criminal behaviour (Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge, 1990: 24; Robinson and Porporino, 1989). Standard risk items such as alcohol use, drug use, and prior convictions are scored and weighted "to reflect the magnitude of its association with recidivism" (Porporino, 1989). These risk factors ultimately determine the allocation of offenders to a specific type of prison.

Classification label(s) assigned to prisoners also help determine the type and amount of rehabilitative programs they receive during and after their prison assignment. This is accomplished through the identification of both “criminogenic” and “non-criminogenic” needs of the offender. New programs in women’s prisons, for example, have focused primarily on the “criminogenic” needs of women (Bonta, Pang, and Wallace-Capretta, 1995: 292). “Criminogenic” needs such as employment, peers, and authority are dynamic and reflect risk factors. These are positively correlated with criminal behaviour and, when modified, are expected to produce changes in the likelihood of offender recidivism (relapse in criminal behaviour) (Blanchette, 1997: 40). Because risk factors have been reflected in “criminogenic” needs, it is of no surprise that those needs have been targeted for treatment. “Non-criminogenic” needs are needs such as anxiety and depression that are believed to have no correlation with criminal conduct (Gendreau, Cullen, and Bonta, 1994). These needs may not be a primary concern, as treatment of such problems is not expected to reduce offender recidivism (Bonta et al., 1995: 291).

The classification systems used in Canada and the US have been designed based on a male prison population (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 89); the “criminogenic” needs considered in the development and delivery of programs are the needs of male prisoners. This has proven problematic for female inmates. Because of the gender differences between men and women, “criminogenic” and “non-criminogenic” needs may be different for women than they are for men. Blanchette (1997) suggests, for example, that there may be certain health care needs that are “criminogenic” to only female offenders. She reports



that attempted suicide was the strongest predictor of violent recidivism in a sample of federally sentenced women, and that there was a higher rate of self-injury among recidivists as compared to those who did not re-offend. The fact that there is little or no evidence that institutional programming reduces recidivism in released female offenders (Blanchette, 1997: 36) indicates that classification may be a problem area to be explored more fully.

### 2.3.3 Programming Needs and Services

#### 2.3.3.1 The Gender Factor

Prison and rehabilitation may not be viewed as separate from the socialization process. Due to the differences in sex-role socialization, men and women experience life differently. "Men and women see the world through different eyes and different cultural experiences, and they react differently to it" (Lord, 1995: 266). They differ in terms of the crimes they commit, their roles, their risks of being violent, and their risks of recidivism (Lord, 1995: 266). Accordingly, parity with even the best male programs and services would not adequately serve the needs of female offenders. To attempt to extirpate gender differences within prisons while they exist on the outside would prove futile (Zaitzow, 1998: 172). It is for these reasons that this work will focus specifically on female offenders and may not be generalizable to the male prison population.

#### 2.3.3.2 The Socio-economic Status of Female Offenders

Many women find that, because they have fewer economic resources, greater domestic responsibilities, lower educational attainment, and fewer job skills than men, they

are unable to find work before and after imprisonment (Boritch, 1997: 189). Poverty has been one of the key factors identified as contributing to increases in female crime (Messerschmidt, 1986; Johnson and Rodgers, 1993). Johnson and Rodgers (1993: 98) suggest that "women's participation in property offences is consistent with their traditional roles as consumers and, increasingly, as low income, semiskilled sole support providers for their families." When such women are faced with financial difficulty or poverty, they are inclined to resort to property crimes such as shoplifting, check forging, and welfare fraud. According to Hinch (1994: 8), women frequently cite maintenance of a relationship and family need as their reasons for committing property crimes such as theft. Even women who have been in positions enabling them to embezzle have cited these same factors as their reasons for criminal behaviour.

It has been argued that occupational sex segregation and recent downturns in the economy have worked to the disadvantage of the female population and may be connected to property crimes (Andersen, 1993; Curran and Renzetti, 1994). Occupational segregation situates women in job ghettos with low status and low wages, and even though the numbers of women entering the paid labor force have grown during the last 30 years the greatest increase has been in low-level service occupations that offer low pay and few job benefits. Even when women have attained the same education as their male counterparts, they still earn on average significantly less (Curran and Renzetti, 1994: 275). Also, increases in unemployment see the minority, poor, and younger women forced out of even the lowest paying jobs, as middle class women snap up the few positions that are

available (Andersen, 1993: 258). The result of this severe economic discrimination is the creation of an “underclass of women for whom criminal activity is the only means of supporting themselves and their children” (Andersen, 1993: 258).

#### 2.3.3.3 Educational and Vocational Training

Given the link between the feminization of poverty and female crime, one might logically conclude that prison rehabilitation would include attempts to address this crucial issue. Offering educational and vocational training, for example, would appear to be a first step in ensuring that women become financially independent and gain the ability to support their children. Most researchers, however, have suggested that this is not the case, and have concluded that the vocational programs in existence in women’s prisons are still primarily based on traditional gender role stereotypes (Carey, 1996; Chesney-Lind and Pollock, 1995; Comack, 1996; McCorkel, 1996; Moyer, 1993; Zaitzow, 1998). Vocational programs, for the most part, adhere to traditional roles for women and include training in cooking, sewing, waitressing, homemaking, typing, and cosmetology.

Due to a number of lawsuits filed by women, educational programs have seemingly fared better. In 1981, the Canadian Human Rights Commission found that federal women offenders were discriminated against on the basis of sex, as evidenced by the fact that they had less access than men to training and rehabilitative programming (Cooper, 1993: 45, as cited in Boritch, 1997: 195). In response, the Correctional Service of Canada broadened the scope of educational and vocational programming at P4W in Kingston. Similar trends have occurred in the US. In America today, almost all women’s institutions offer some

basic education (Chesney-Lind and Pollock, 1995: 163). This is largely due to the fact that, in the 1980's and 1990's, women filed lawsuits claiming that failure to provide educational programs and access to law libraries was a denial of their due process rights (McCorkel, 1996: 170). Although such policy developments have been viewed by some as an improvement in women's programming, others are less convinced. Zaitzow (1998), for example, argues that adult education courses like vocational programming indicate sex role stereotyping. Some of the courses offered in various prisons include consumer education, family life education, child development, and personal grooming. These courses merely reinforce women's role as the domesticated homemaker.

Unfortunately, for the most part, the vocational and educational programming offered in women's penitentiaries fail to meet the needs of female offenders who are economically disadvantaged and who will, upon release, be the sole supporters of their children. Vocational programs, such as hairdressing, have been cited by female offenders as being useless in attempts to gain employment upon release (Boritch, 1997: 195). Many of those who manage to find work following imprisonment will most likely be forced into low-level service occupations with low pay and few benefits.

#### 2.3.3.4 Health Care Needs

Studies have shown that women come into prison with more medical problems than men (Lord, 1995: 257). They are sicker, have more recent and serious injuries, have had little previous health care, and have little knowledge of their bodies. The most frequent medical complaint for women prisoners, involves gynecological problems (Moyer, 1993:

200). Some of the gynecological problems that women experience include unintended, interrupted, and lost pregnancy, dysmenorrhea, chlamydia infection, papillomavirus infection, herpes simplex II infection, cystic and myomatic condition, and chronic pelvic inflammatory disease (Ross and Lawrence, 1998: 181). One of the latest studies on women's health in prison found an association between childhood forced sex and cervical dysplasia, a disease that if not treated could develop into cervical cancer (Coker, Patel, Krishnaswami, Schmidt and Richter, 1998: 595). This is an important finding, given the prevalence of sexual abuse among incarcerated women.

The second most cited medical complaint among female inmates is anxiety and depression, commonly referred to as "nerves" (Moyer, 1993: 200). Ross and Lawrence (1998: 181) claim that anxiety and depression are "the most important mental health problems among women prisoners and that women's mental health service needs have been shown to exceed those of men." This is not surprising given that women's mental illnesses have been medicalized more so than men's in the general population (Maticka-Tyndale and Bicher, 1996: 149). Maticka-Tyndale and Bicher (1996) claim that whether we consider general emotional distress or the specific distress associated with a psychiatric diagnosis of depression, whether we consider those in their teens or those in their fifties, women far outnumber men. This is despite the fact that epidemiological research has demonstrated that there is no sex difference in the overall prevalence of mental disorder. In addition, we must also recognize that women in prison are one of the most vulnerable groups of women in all of society. Most of these women are thrown into the prison system

with at least situational depression for obvious reasons such as high rates of physical and sexual abuse, compounded with substance abuse problems (Maeve, 1999: 50). Maeve (1999: 50) further contends that the humiliation ingrained with the notion of being sent to prison exacerbates depression for most women.

Women who enter into the prison system are frequently prescribed antidepressants, though few receive long term counseling (Maeve, 1999: 50). In this situation, as in others, the woman's life is decontextualized and the onus is placed on her to accept treatment that will enable her to better cope in her social environment (Maticka-Tyndale and Bicher, 1996: 166). Kendall (1996) argues that, through the process of focusing on the individual as opposed to social, political, and economic factors, we reduce the political to the personal and the structural sources of oppression are obscured and, thus, abandoned. Maticka-Tyndale and Bicher (1996: 161-162) state:

Briefly, the very structures of work, family, and community that deny women autonomy, place women in inequitable situations and relationships, overburden them with responsibility, expose them to abuse, and require them to adapt their own lives and needs to mesh with those of others. These are not specific and unusual stresses, as sought in epidemiological studies, but persistent conditions and environments that are ever-present reality in the lives of women. They comprise an oppressive and mentally unhealthy environment for women and make them more susceptible than men to distress.

Because the "ever-widening power of medical science" (Kendall, 1996: 126) places the source of sickness within the individual as opposed to larger societal constructs, physicians, especially psychiatrists, may be seen as exerting social control that ensures that people follow prescribed norms. The causes of stress, the ways in which stress is

perceived, and the treatments that are sought, are all influenced by psychiatric authority. While distress is seen and treated as an individual pathology, it will constitute social control. "It keeps women in their place, 'fixing' them when that place breaks them down, and returning them to that proper place" (Maticka-Tyndale and Bicher, 1996: 167).

Medicalization of women is compounded when they are forced into the prison system. Not only will they be medicalized for their distress, their crimes may be viewed as a sign of mental sickness and perceived as external symptoms of internal disorders such as a confused or tortured mind (Henslin and Nelson, 1996: 218). Furthermore, psychiatry may control other unwanted, bothersome or socially undesirable, behaviour by labeling individuals as sick and by subjecting them to medication or other forms of control (Szasz, 1974).

Self injurious behaviour is one manifestation of distress among female inmates. Self-mutilation, through the use of razors or other sharp instruments, has been a longstanding problem in female institutions (Boritch, 1997: 201). This self-abuse is rooted in feelings of low self-esteem often stemming from physical, sexual and/or psychological abuse (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 91). Psychologists speculate that this behaviour may institute a form of psychic release from tension and anger (Law Society of British Columbia, 1992: 8-45, as cited in Boritch, 1997: 203).

In addition to "mental health" problems, women experience a number of physical illnesses. Some diseases that are cause for grave concern include acquired immune immunodeficiency virus (AIDS), hepatitis, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and

tuberculosis (TB). Incarcerated females, like females in general, are among the fastest growing infected group of HIV and AIDS. In New York, for example, 20% of females entering prison are HIV positive. This is compared to only 11.5% of men. The incidence of TB follows a similar trend. From 1991 to 1992, TB among female inmates was increasing at a rate that was 59% higher than that for men (Greifinger, 1992, as cited in Ross and Lawrence, 1998: 183).

According to Moyer (1993: 200), "health care in all prisons tends to be disorganized and crises-oriented, with a heavy reliance on part-time doctors and mental health personnel." Despite the obvious need for medical attention in women's correctional institutions, prisons have been even more notorious for their neglect of women and their treatment needs (Ross and Lawrence, 1998: 176). It has been documented that access to medical care is difficult for women prisoners, and staff often patronize and minimize their requests for attention (Dobash, et al., as cited in Belknap, 1996: 109). Furthermore, transportation and scheduling also present problems with regard to accessing physicians and medical care (Belknap, 1996: 109). It has also been argued that, even when they do receive medical treatment, the personnel providing health services are not as well trained as those in men's prisons (Sobel, 1982, as cited in Moyer, 1993: 200).

#### 2.3.3.5 Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is yet another serious problem facing female prisoners. Substance abuse is the highest need area identified within the inmate group in Canada, with 38% of provincial offenders and 56% of federal inmates experiencing a problem (Robinson,



Porporino, and Millson, 1999: 66). These statistics may be misleading, however, in that the proportion of female inmates serving time for drug offences is much higher than that for men (Boritch, 1997: 189). In one study of female federal offenders, 69% said that substance abuse had played a major role in their offending history (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 44).

In a study of five exclusively female prisons in the US, Gray, Mays and Stohr (1995) found that although overall, "the programming in women's jails fails miserably," of the programming offered, jails' best met the needs of inmates in terms of alcohol and drug abuse treatment. Forty-two percent of offenders who reported frequent drug use and 80% of alcohol abusers in the sample were involved in programming. Most of the offenders participating in alcohol programming were involved with Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).

Prendergast, Wellisch, and Falkin (1997: 318) report, however, that an earlier Bureau of Justice Assistance (1991) study indicates that women arrestees have had limited substance abuse treatment. Nearly three quarters had never been in treatment for substance abuse and only 4% were in treatment at the time of their arrest. Furthermore, they claim that there is a large gap between the number of individuals involved in the criminal justice system who need treatment and the number of available slots (Prendergast et al., 1997: 318).

Morris and Wilkinson (1995) also report disturbing findings in their study of 200 prisoners from three women's prisons in England. They discovered, for example, that out of 90 women who admitted to drug use, only 14 had been enrolled in any kind of

counseling. Furthermore, only 14 out of 50 women who felt they had an alcohol problem were involved in some sort of treatment program.

Prendergast et al. (1997: 318) state that, drug education classes, Alcoholics Anonymous or other 12 step meetings make up the majority of treatment programs for substance abuse. Where more intensive programs do exist, they have been designed by and/or for men. These programs often do not meet the needs of women who need substance abuse programs that consider physical and sexual abuse, physical and mental health problems, limited educational and vocational skills, and care for their children. Although there have been several programs designed for women offenders in the past decade or so, “there remain serious gaps in the ability of the criminal justice system to meet the needs of women offenders with substance abuse problems” (Prendergast et al., 1997: 319).

#### 2.3.3.6 Physical and Sexual Abuse

The lives of women are further complicated in that they are much more likely than men to have experienced physical and sexual abuse either in childhood or adulthood, or both (Boritch, 1997: 189). There is mounting evidence that suggests that female prisoners have disproportionately high rates of victimization, usually “incest, rape, and battering,” prior to their incarceration (Belknap, 1996: 101). Recent Canadian government statistics reported that 68% of federal female inmates have suffered physical abuse and 53% have suffered from sexual abuse (Boritch, 1997: 189). Combined, 82% of federally sentenced women and 72% of provincially sentenced women have been either physically or sexually

abused (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 43). The numbers cited for aboriginal women - 90% physical, 61% sexual - are substantially higher.

Approximately two thirds of the women who had experienced abuse expressed a desire for individual counseling to help deal with these issues (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 43). Unfortunately, there are very few services for survivors of physical and/or sexual abuse in provincial prisons. In fact, the "Survey of Institutional Programs Available to Federally Sentenced Women" found that only two prisons provided programs for sexual abuse/incest survivors. Furthermore, as Boritch (1997: 195) points out, the existence of programs does not necessarily mean that they are readily available. One inmate at P4W complained, for example, that one of the best programs at the facility involved sexual abuse therapy, but that there was a long waiting list and she did not know if her pain could wait. Carey (1996: 114) also claims that counseling and therapeutic services at P4W are minimal, and have been accused of failing to meet the psychosocial and medical needs of the offenders housed there. She states that P4W offers isolation, punishment and behaviour modification as opposed to much needed counseling (1996: 114).

#### 2.3.3.7 Child Care

Because society has evolved in such a way as to leave the main responsibility for raising children on the shoulders of women, imprisonment of women has yet another detrimental consequence. Two thirds of women interviewed in prison have children and up to two thirds of these are likely to be single parents (Boritch, 1997: 189). When these women are imprisoned, the ramifications are twofold. Both the women and their children

suffer. In the National Prison Survey (1991), 81% of incarcerated men with dependent children stated that their spouse, ex-spouse, or partner cared for their children during their period of imprisonment, compared to only 19% of women (National Policy Committee on Resettlement, 1993, as cited in Dauvergne Latimer, 1995). Apart from the fact that this arrangement has social, economic, and emotional ramifications, there has also been evidence to suggest that, upon incarceration, women with childcare needs have fewer supports in the community than men (Boritch, 1997: 189).

Contact with children is of vital importance to incarcerated women. Women in the provinces who have more frequent contact want longer visits with children, access to some free long distance telephone calls, as well as financial and other types of assistance to facilitate visits with their children when they live a long way from prison. Women who had lost custody of, or access to, their children, as a result of their imprisonment, expressed the need for legal advice and advocacy to help them regain custody or access (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 43).

#### **2.4 Prison Design and Rehabilitation**

Stinchcomb and Fox (1999: 262) write that, to a great extent, “the physical design of a correctional facility reflects its philosophy.” Over time, values shaping correctional policy change. During the 1950s and 1960s, prisons were built to serve the purpose of treatment. This model, which is a form of rehabilitation, assumes that the offender can be treated and given early release when s/he has been reformed (Allen and Simonsen, 1998: 63). The decline of the treatment model ensued in the 1970s and 1980s following

Martinson's "What Works?: Questions and Answers About Prison Reform" in 1974 (Martinson, 1974: 22). After doing an extensive study of more than 200 rehabilitative programs, he concluded that, "with few and isolated exceptions, the rehabilitative efforts that have been reported so far had no appreciable effect on recidivism" (Martinson, 1974: 22). During this era, corrections began to follow the punishment ideology, focusing on security and control as opposed to rehabilitation.

Clear and Cole (1997: 252) maintain that prisons constructed to suit the purposes of one era cannot be adapted to suit those of other eras or changes in the sizes and characteristics of prison populations. Unfortunately, prisons are built to last, which ultimately means that they may not be serving the ideological purpose of the current time. If a building is not designed for the purpose of rehabilitation, then it will not successfully serve that function.

Four basic prison models are in existence today, with some serving the function of rehabilitation better than others. The radial design prison was very popular in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century but is still in existence (Clear and Cole, 1997; Mays and Winfree, 1998). The prison is constructed in the form of a wheel, with spokes containing cells and remaining facilities. The main function of this design is security which is demonstrated by the control center at the hub that allows all movement to be monitored.

A second type of prison is the telephone pole design. This design serves the purpose of confinement as opposed to reentry into the community. It has a long central corridor that is crossed at regular intervals by living areas, work assignments, institutional

support facilities, and administrative functions (Clear and Cole, 1997; Mays and Winfree, 1998). These prisons, built mainly for custody purposes, are commonly used for maximum security prisons in the US.

A third design, the courtyard model, relies upon the walls of the institution to provide security and appears among some of the newer maximum security institutions for men (Clear and Cole, 1997; Mays and Winfree, 1998). In this type of prison, all the movement is shunted through a central courtyard, making that its defining characteristic. The functional areas such as the dining hall and gym are accessed in the entry yard area.

Fourth, the campus style prison is a design that has been traditionally used for juveniles and women and is believed to have the most rehabilitative potential (Clear and Cole, 1997; Mays and Winfree, 1998). These prisons are said to resemble small to moderate sized colleges with living units built to look like homes, and institutional support structures that look like classroom buildings and libraries. Inmates and staff must go outside to get from one building to another. Clear and Cole (1997: 254) believe this style is important for rehabilitation because of its humane features and because the buildings can be used more flexibly. Most facilities of this type serve medium and minimum security populations.

*Creating Choices* (1990) recommended that five new regional facilities be built in Canada and that these facilities follow a campus style design. The new accommodations would include cottages that could accommodate 6-10 women. Administrative functions would be carried out in a separate central core area as would programming, recreation,

and other social activities. These facilities would also be designed to more effectively facilitate visits between mothers and their children. Increased wellness through natural light, fresh air, color, space, privacy, and access to land would also be promoted. These facilities have recently been built in the following locations: Truro, Nova Scotia; Joliette, Quebec; Kitchener, Ontario; Edmonton, Alberta; and Maple Creek, Saskatchewan.

Critics (Zaitzow, 1998; Moyer, 1993) caution that while women's prisons are on the surface, more attractive than men's, this is actually deceptive. According to Moyer (1993: 197), "the casual, naive visitor and uninformed state administrators are often deceived by this environment into believing that women are receiving better treatment than men in prison." The architectural design, augmented by women wearing their own clothing and decorating their rooms, provide a casual appearance. However, as Zaitzow (1998: 162) states:

As the inmates point out there's only the appearance of a campus. Repression is every bit as strong as in men's prisons; it is simply more subtle. In fact, inmates have referred to the social control in women's prisons as "pastel fascism," control glossed over and concealed by a superficial facade of false benevolence and concern of the lives of inmates. What few possessions they have are often confiscated or destroyed, and they are subject to arbitrary body searches at any time.

### **2.5 Correctional Officers: The Role of the "Keeper"**

During the past two decades, both the public and policymaking sectors have come to value a more punitive approach when dealing with offenders. As a result, COs are now believed to emphasize the custodial role over the human service one. They place more emphasis on the control, movement management, and observations of inmates in prison

(Allen and Simonsen, 1998: 451) and less importance on helping prisoners cope with life behind bars, assisting inmates with institutional problems, and referring troubled prisoners to trained professionals (Johnson, 1996). A recent Canadian study conducted by Larivière and Robinson (1996) supports this belief. This study which looked at three dimensions (i.e., empathy, punitiveness, and rehabilitative support) of CO attitudes toward offenders revealed that a very large percentage of officers (76.2) held punitive views toward corrections. Comparatively, 53.7% supported rehabilitation and only 23.3% of those interviewed showed empathy toward inmates. This research demonstrates that although there has been an ideological shift toward punitiveness, many officers continue to embrace rehabilitation.

Because some officers are more custody oriented in their approach and others hold a stronger rehabilitative philosophy, the CO occupation is often described as segmented. Most studies have emphasized two different explanations of CO attitudes. The importation-differential experiences model (Van Voorhis, Cullen, Link, and Wolfe, 1991) maintains that people bring to the job different orientations and statuses such as age, gender, race, and education. These factors, in turn, influence the experiences and interactions of the workers. Three of these variables (i.e., age, gender, and education) are reviewed here.

More custody-oriented officers have tended to be younger persons while older officers, regardless of when they entered the profession, have been known to be less punitive toward prisoners and more keen about acting in a counseling role with inmates



(Farkas, 1999; Klofas, 1986; Klofas and Toch; 1982, Jurik, 1985; Cullen, Lutze, Link and Wolfe, 1989). One explanation has been that officers “mellow out” as they become older and gain more job experience. Over time, they may move away from their earlier custody-orientation to one that is more flexible and includes an interest in expanding their roles to include rehabilitation. One exception to this trend may involve the attitudes of those officers just entering the profession. Larivière and Robinson (1996) found that most new COs start work with a very positive attitude and are in favor of rehabilitation. After the first year on the job, however, such positive attitudes are replaced by skepticism and disillusionment.

The bulk of research has uncovered no association between gender and officer attitudes toward inmates (Jurik, 1985; Jurik and Halemba, 1984; Whitehead, Lindquist, and Klofas, 1987; Zupan, 1986). One reason that may account for this involves how women resolve the complexities of laboring as an officer in a men’s prison and in a well-established male occupation. Zimmer (1986) asserts that some women may rely on a more “modified role” limiting interaction with prisoners and relying on male officers for help while others cope by adopting the institutional role, whereby rules and regulations are strictly enforced. Pollock-Byrne (1990: 117) maintains that some women may acquire new patterns of behaviour on the job. They, for example, may learn to develop authoritarian behaviours, such as changes in voice tone and facial expressions, making them more like their male counterparts.

There have, however, been a number of exceptions to the major trends in research

findings on the association between gender and CO attitudes toward inmates. Farkas (1999), for example, found that although female officers were punitive in their attitudes, they also had a greater preference for counseling roles. In addition, Larivière and Robinson (1996) found that women, although scoring similar to men on empathy and punitiveness, were more likely to support rehabilitation to a significantly greater extent than men. Zimmer (1986) asserts that some women cope with working in a predominantly male correctional environment by using an "inventive role" which integrates counseling into their jobs as a means of more effectively performing their control functions or to assist inmates. Belknap (1995), in her study of 35 female COs in a co-ed institution, concluded that women's prior experiences and socialization cause them to perform the job differently than men. She insists that women have better communication skills and are less likely than men to use force (1995: 404). Larivière and Robinson (1996) suggest that women choose this profession for different reasons than men do. Women seem to prefer the intrinsic aspects of correctional work such as intervention and interaction and thus enjoy greater job satisfaction in treatment oriented settings.

The job model, by contrast, argues that work factors such as seniority, role conflict, satisfaction with work, feelings of safety, and time of shift are more important in understanding one's approach to the job. The existing literature indicates those job variables rather than individual traits are more significant in explaining variation associated with CO attitudes. A recent study (Farkas, 1999) found work variables to be more strongly associated with CO attitudes in comparison with several individual background

traits. For example, seniority has been positively correlated with preference for rehabilitative programming, with officers who are longer on the job being more in favor of such initiatives (Farkas, 1999; Toch and Klofas, 1982). Furthermore, role conflict has been linked to less enthusiasm towards adopting the counseling role, punitiveness, and social distance. The latter may reflect officers' uncertainty and confusion over what role to embrace in the recent "get tough" era. Several investigators have maintained that an enhanced job description, including more human service responsibilities, enhances correctional work and makes it intrinsically satisfying (Toch and Klofas, 1982; Cullen, Link, Wolfe, and Frank, 1985; Johnson, 1996; Johnson and Price, 1981). Larivière and Robinson (1996) found that pro-empathic and non-punitive workers were, without question, happier workers. They were not only less stressed and more satisfied with their work, they were also typically more supportive of the missions of the Correctional Service. Farka's (1999) study indicates, however, that COs did not find the nature of their work itself to be satisfying. Rather, they found more satisfaction with extrinsic matters such as pay benefits and job security. Role conflict in the correctional profession has been used in part to account for officers' lack of intrinsic job satisfaction on the one hand and their more positive orientations toward extrinsic work dimensions on the other. Finally, Quinn (1999: 315) maintains that COs who fear their safety are believed to be more authoritarian and punitive, whereas those who are not fearful seem to be much more flexible and able to develop positive relationships with inmates.

Although there appear to be some patterns as to what factors may contribute to CO

attitudes toward inmates, there are some obvious disparities in the literature, suggesting that more work needs to be done in the area. Stojkovic and Lovell (1992: 279) have concluded that the research is actually inconclusive and there are no consistent attitudes among officers toward inmates, and that the reasons why some officers are punitive and others supportive of rehabilitation are not apparent.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The literature encourages us to anticipate a number of key problems for servicing female prisoners in Newfoundland. Most notable here is the comparatively small cadre of mainly non-violent prisoners with short prison stays and the cost effectiveness of designing particular rehabilitative treatment programs to attend to the needs of some or all women. The impacts of these key dynamics relating mostly to offender demographics are investigated in the data analysis chapters to follow.

Prisons have been built with mostly male prisoners in mind, and have been located far away from major city centers where the better quality support services can be accessed by prisoners more readily during incarceration. The design of prisons also reflects the fact that protective security concerns are a more important correctional goal than offender rehabilitation. The thesis, thus, attempts to describe the location of the NLCCW, its physical layout, and the degree to which these dynamics either facilitate or hinder the goal of offender rehabilitation.

Literature reviewed here also informs us that the degree to which offender rehabilitation services are delivered can be shaped by the specific type of work orientation

embraced by COs. One work orientation is focused around providing support services to inmates while the other is more centered around inflicting punishment towards, and asserting control over, inmates. The thesis, thus, aims to explore the degree to which the COs at the NLCCW embrace rehabilitation as their most important correctional goal.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter details the design of the research study and the different methods used to collect the data, along with the rationale for the use of these methods. The first section of the chapter focuses on both the qualitative and exploratory nature of the project. This section is followed by a discussion of the type of sample used and the process employed to gain access to the study population. The methods used to collect my data are also discussed. These include semi-structured interviews, selective observations, and secondary sources. The chapter concludes by addressing some ethical considerations and a number of methodological limitations experienced in the field.

#### **3.2 Qualitative Research**

The data used in this thesis were collected using a qualitative method. Qualitative research involves the process of extracting meanings, definitions, concepts, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and description of things while engaged in the observation of people in their own surroundings and interacting with them in their own language (Berg, 1995: 3; Kirk and Miller, 1980: 9). A qualitative approach was chosen because it best suited the scope and objectives of the research problem. The study's main purpose was to identify, describe, and explain the types of rehabilitative needs associated with female prisoners at the NLCCW, and to determine the extent to which there was a gap between what female

prisoners felt they needed in terms of programming and services and what was actually provided. Addressing this question qualitatively would allow for an understanding of the problems from the perspective of those who were most affected by them (female prisoners). In order to extract meaningful data and to fully understand the perceptions of the research participants, there was a need to maintain a certain closeness to them. This was accomplished through situating myself in the prison context, observing the daily prison activities, and interacting with the inmates and prison staff.

### **3.3 Exploratory Research**

This research project was exploratory in nature. The primary purpose for conducting exploratory research is to investigate areas or questions that have been ignored or under-explored in previous studies. Comparatively little research has been conducted on female offender rehabilitation in Canada, and the few studies carried out to date (Blanchette, 1997; Bonta et al., 1995; Carey, 1996; Hannah-Moffat, 1994; Leblanc, 1994; Kendall, 1994; Prendergast et al., 1997) have limited their focus to federal offenders. The preference to study federal female prisoners, most notably those at P4W, is interesting considering the fact that most female prisoners are now serving time in provincial institutions. Thus, it is the prisoner who appears to be the most isolated and who potentially must endure the most serious pains associated with prison - like female prisoners in Newfoundland - who have received the least academic attention.

Exploratory research may also be used as a foundation for follow-up studies. For inductivists, exploratory research is theory generating, that is, theory is not something you

start with but something you build (Palys, 1997: 19). After immersing oneself in the prison setting and assembling the data, meaning begins to emerge from the empirical observations. By using this approach, one is able to acquire new insights that help identify important variables and questions of interest. For example, when I embarked upon this study, I was aware that some female prisoners at the NLCCW were being detained under the Mental Health Act. Incarcerating the mentally ill has recently sparked much debate, as it is questionable whether prison can offer these individuals any type of help in the form of rehabilitation or otherwise (*Soundings*; The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, Annual Report, 1997-1998). After spending many hours at the prison, I realized that incarcerating the mentally ill was not only affecting their own well-being but was also affecting the well-being of other inmates and correctional staff. A follow-up study could probe deeper into the social, economic, and political factors surrounding the move to incarcerate mentally ill persons. It may also explore how the practice of incarcerating these individuals: 1) affects the mental health of other prisoners; 2) presents new protective security challenges for COs; and 3) deflects CO time and energy away from striving to meet the rehabilitative needs of other inmates.

When doing exploratory research, 'breadth of coverage' is crucial so one must maintain a broad scope that incorporates many perspectives and allows for maximum flexibility in gathering data (Palys, 1997: 79). In this study, 'breadth of coverage' was achieved by collecting triangulated data. In triangulation, the researcher gathers evidence from multiple sources in order to address the questions at hand from different angles or



points of view (Baker, 1994: 244). In this project, triangulation was achieved through the use of semi-structured interviews with four different informant groups, selective observations of prisoners and staff, and the use of secondary documents. These methods are discussed further in subsequent sections.

### **3.4 Sample**

A non-probability purposive sample - one where people are sought out because they meet some criteria for inclusion in the study - was chosen to carry out the project. Exploratory research favors strategic sampling of insightful informants who are very familiar with a situation and/or the research site being studied (Palys, 1997: 79). A sociology of female corrections requires an exploration of the target group (inmates), as well as an exploration of those groups that are involved in the delivery of social control (COs and administrators) and rehabilitative programming and services (treatment staff). All of these individuals were expected to offer valuable information for this project.

### **3.5 Gaining Access**

Gaining access to a prison for the purposes of doing research requires somewhat different tactics from those used to meet with individuals who are not constrained under the care of an institution (Maxfield and Babbie, 1998: 270). In such cases, the researcher must consult with a sponsor through letters, phone calls, and formal meetings in order to gain initial access. This study was no different. Request for access to the research site, along with a copy of the thesis proposal and interview schedules, were sent to the Director of Corrections in March 1999 (see Appendix I).

A meeting followed shortly thereafter and the Director enthusiastically assured me that he was in full support of the project. This administrator placed no time restrictions on the data collection period and promised full access to the prison. He also indicated that he would further assist with my entry into the field by contacting the Assistant Superintendent at the prison and by informing this person of the nature of the project. It might be noted that such cooperation on the part of senior correctional administrators is unusual.

### **3.6 Data and Methods**

#### **3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews**

The data for this project were derived largely from 27 semi-structured interviews carried out between April-June, 1999. Eleven of the 27 respondents were female prisoners who were then serving time at the NLCCW. The remaining key informants included five COs, three correctional administrators, and eight treatment staff in paid and volunteer positions.

This type of interview was chosen because it gives both the researcher and interviewee freedom to move beyond the initial questions. This is in keeping with the desired flexibility that is essential in exploratory research. An exploratory researcher must be prepared to follow conversations and topics wherever they might lead. When one inmate was asked, for example, if she was satisfied with the training she was receiving while in prison, she quickly moved beyond this question and began discussing how poorly she felt she had been treated by some COs. Although I did not initially question this

woman about CO behaviours, letting her digress, allowed for the emergence of an issue that was of importance to her.

Handwritten notes were used to record the information collected from all interviews. Passages were written verbatim when possible so as to preserve the viewpoints expressed by the study group. Written notes were employed because this method was believed to be less threatening than using a tape-recorder. The notes were recorded on a lined interview schedule in order to prevent any confusion as to what questions were being addressed. The handwritten notes were converted to typed form immediately following the interview in order to increase accuracy and to prevent coding difficulties. Take note that quotes presented in the data analysis chapters are written in such a way as to preserve the specific language and dialect used by the different informant groups.

#### 3.6.1.1 Inmates

The first subjects interviewed were the inmates (see Appendix II). There were three reasons for employing this strategy. First, due to the fact that female prisoners have traditionally been ignored in the criminological literature, it made sense to focus the research strategy around them and their attitudes toward prison programs. Also, some of the inmates would be released shortly after my arrival and it was necessary to interview them prior to their departure. Finally, it was crucial that the inmates be aware of the fact that it was their first hand experiences that would form the core of the study. Interviewing them first helped convey this message.

I participated in one rapport building session with the inmates as a group, one week

prior to starting the actual interviews. There were 15 women incarcerated at the time of the meeting and the majority of them gathered in the multi-purpose room to hear about the aims and methods of the project. The multi-purpose room is designated for inmate socializing, dining, TV viewing, and other social events. I began the meeting by introducing myself and discussing the purpose of my research. Next, I explained how I wished to proceed with the interviews. I concluded the meeting by stressing that their participation would be completely voluntary and that all information would remain in strict confidence. I answered all questions asked by the inmates including questions of a more personal nature. Some of the questions asked, for example, revolved around my place of residence and my role as a mother. These rapport building tactics were aimed at gaining the trust of the inmates as trust is of utmost importance when one is interested in gaining both accurate and detailed information (Babbie, 1989).

I expected this information session to last no more than 30 minutes and was pleasantly surprised when the meeting lasted for four hours, interrupted only by dinner. This development indicated that the women were anxious to talk with me and that my presence was already becoming normalized. As I became more familiar with the women and with the prison routine, the reasons for their eagerness to converse with me became much clearer. First and foremost, these women had pressing issues and there was no ombudsman to whom to voice their concerns. I believe that I was seen as an outlet, someone who would listen to the problems they felt they experienced. Second, many of the women, most notably those not attending school, were bored with the prison routine

and welcomed any diversion. This can be seen through the remarks made by one inmate when I asked her if she would participate in an interview the following afternoon: “No problem, it will be something to break up the day.” Finally, none of the women imprisoned had resided in the Clarendville area prior to incarceration, and some had no visitors since their confinement. I was someone “different” with whom to talk - someone who did not work at the prison or have any direct affiliation with it.

Ten of the 15 inmates had initially consented to participate in the project. I proceeded to interview these women according to their slated release or court date, beginning with those who were scheduled with the earliest release. At the end of the interview process, I had interviewed nine of the original 15 inmates. Of the remaining six inmates, one had changed her mind, two had refused immediately, and three were not approached because I did not feel confident that they had the intellectual capacity to understand the nature of the project or the consent form. The final two inmates interviewed were incarcerated after my initial visit.

The majority of the interviews took place in the visiting room. When this space was occupied, I resorted to the laundry room or the lieutenant’s office. These interviews lasted anywhere from 40 minutes to one hour and 45 minutes.

#### 3.6.1.2 Correctional Officers

Of the 13 COs employed at the prison, five agreed to participate in the study. During my first two weeks at the prison, I introduced myself to each officer individually. I informed the officers of the nature of my work, and communicated my intent to interview

all willing participants. To ensure that the officers remained informed, I placed a memo outlining the purpose of the study on the staff bulletin board. Furthermore, four copies of my research proposal were placed in the staff room and personal copies were made available upon request. Because their participation was viewed as crucial, I approached each officer at least one more time on an individual basis, prior to exiting the field. Interviews (see Appendix III) with COs ranged from one hour and 30 minutes to four hours in duration.

#### 3.6.1.3 Rehabilitative Support Staff

The third study group, consisting of eight individuals, included those people directly involved in providing specialized rehabilitative support services to the inmates. Five of these persons - a mental health counselor, an addiction's counselor, a psychiatrist, a classification officer, and an educational instructor - were in paid positions. The remaining three were volunteers. In some incidences, these individuals were contacted by the classification officer and in others, they were approached by me at the prison. Four of these interviews took place at the prison, three were conducted at the workplace of the participants, and one was carried out at my Clarendville residence. All of these interviews (see Appendix IV) lasted approximately an hour.

#### 3.6.1.4 Correctional Administrators

The last group interviewed (see Appendix V) consisted of three correctional administrators. They included the Director of Corrections, the Assistant Superintendent, and a Supervisor. All of these people were approached or contacted by me for the

purposes of participating in the study. Two of the interviews took place at the prison and another was carried out in a provincial government building in St. John's. These interviews lasted between one hour and two hours.

### 3.6.2 Secondary Sources

Many official policy documents were used in the writing of this thesis. First, the *Bi-Annual Report (Adult Corrections)*, published by the Department of Justice in Newfoundland, provided useful information on such topics as rates of female incarceration, correctional expenditures for both the institutional and community-based sectors, and brief descriptions of programs and services offered to prisoners. Second, a report titled, *Admissions Criteria for Adult Correctional Facilities in Newfoundland and Labrador*, sets out admissions criteria guidelines for the NLCCW as well as governing principles of the placement of provincial prisoners. This document also provided the current mission statement of corrections in this province. Also of importance to this project was, *Women on the Inside Need Friends on the Outside*. This report, released by the newly created Elizabeth Fry Society in Newfoundland, helped me gain some preliminary insights into the nature and extent of the rehabilitative treatment services made available to female prisoners in this province. This information was used to develop part of my inmate interview schedule. Finally, a memorandum, indicating the government budget for the NLCCW, provided crucial information on the allocation and actual expenditures of monies for that institution.

I also did a detailed review of recent videos and newspaper articles that focused on

the latest issues and controversies involving corrections. Close attention was paid to female correctional facilities, including any program and service delivery provided. I viewed CBC footage of recent controversies surrounding the NLCCW, as well as a *Soundings* program that reviewed the process of incarcerating the mentally ill in this province. The programs were pertinent in designing questions for my own study. Some of the more useful newspaper articles centred around problems facing women at the NLCCW (*Evening Telegram*, April 2, 1998), pains of imprisonment for women (*Evening Telegram*, July 22, 1996; June 1, 1996; May 6, 1995), and the reintegration of female offenders into society after incarceration (*The Muse*, 1995, March 24).

Information through these means allowed me to fill in the gaps of information not known by one or more of the study groups. They also allowed me to identify any major inconsistencies in the information contributed by the different study groups.

### 3.6.3 Selective Observations

Observation is a useful data gathering technique when doing exploratory research because it often reflects a dimension of reality that is untapped by other data-gathering methods (Champion, 1993: 176). It enriches our description of social phenomena and enables us to illustrate behaviours more graphically. In this study, observation was combined with semi-structured interviews and secondary analysis to help provide a more vivid image of the phenomenon under investigation, by either supporting or negating key findings gathered through the other methods. Having spent a considerable amount of time at the prison, I was able to observe a diverse range of phenomena. Some of these included



outdoor recreation, video night, inmate-officer interactions, deprivation of material goods, visitation practices, and the distribution of medication. During one interview, an inmate described to me the frustration she felt when her baby became “fussy” in the small visiting area. Actually observing this at a later date, animated that conversation and further validated the woman’s statements. Other women explained the frustration of going without prescribed medication for a number of days. Actually seeing these same women refused medication on the basis that the medication was not available, further substantiated these claims.

I opted for an ‘unstructured’ approach when carrying out and recording my observations. I was not “constrained by checklists and coding schemes” but simply recorded the observations that were relevant to the research objectives (Palys, 1997: 207). This strategy allowed for maximum flexibility, once again meeting the requirement of an exploratory research design.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

One of the most important ethical considerations in social science research involves obtaining the voluntary and informed consent of research subjects (Babbie, 1989). Individuals must not be coerced into participating in any study. Several strategies were used to ensure the voluntary and informed participation of my research subjects. First, all subjects were verbally informed of the purpose of the project prior to interviewing, and were reminded that their participation was voluntary. Second, prior to interviewing subjects, they were asked to sign a Respondent Release Form (see Appendix VI). When

necessary, I read this form to them to ensure that they fully understood the project's basic purpose and data collection methods. It might also be noted that this project was approved by a Faculty of Arts Ethics Review Board (see Appendix VII).

Another consideration is participant confidentiality. This refers to assurances made by researchers that all of the information obtained from a study will be used for research purposes only. Participant confidentiality was achieved through a number of different strategies. First, no authentic names have been used in my final research report, a research tactic designed to make it difficult to match individual responses with respective subjects. Furthermore, fictitious names have been used only once, thus making it impossible to associate actual people with assumed names. Also, my hand written interview notes were stored at a secure location, away from correctional personnel. These notes were not shared with anyone during or after my project's completion.

Finally, highly ethical research involves providing feedback, usually in the form of a written report, to research subjects following a study's completion. A final report will be given to the Director of Corrections following the completion of my data analysis. It will contain a summary of all aspects of the research process such as a review of relevant theory and research on female corrections, data collection procedures, major findings, and policy implications. I will ask the Director to make this report available to interested parties, such as female prisoners and staff at the NLCCW.

### **3.8 Methodological Limitations**

#### **3.8.1 Staff and Inmate Nonparticipation**

Although I approached all of the COs at the NLCCW for interview time, over half (8) chose not to participate in the research. Officers who did not participate in the study did not specify the reasons for their refusal. Other COs, inmates, administrators, and treatment staff, however, contributed insights in this regard. First, it was relayed that some COs felt betrayed by the report released by the Elizabeth Fry Society. These officers apparently felt they had been falsely and negatively depicted in this report and did not want a repeat scenario. A second reason given was fear of job loss. Some individuals appeared to be threatened by my level of education, and feared that a person such as I, may be a threat to her/his employment. Finally, according to some COs, the union with which they are affiliated discourages participation in research projects.

This lack of response was unfortunate in that I felt that these insiders had valuable information to contribute to the study. Despite this omission, I did detect some evidence of variation in their work orientations. This variation clearly had implications for the development and delivery of rehabilitative programming and services.

There was much less resistance from inmates. Still, one inmate gave no reason for not participating in the study, and another claimed that I was merely interested in my own work and cared nothing about the well-being of the inmates at the prison. I tried to effectively manage this woman's concerns by assuring her that the Adult Correctional Division in Newfoundland would receive a copy of my report with useful policy

recommendations.

### 3.8.2 Lack of Privacy

A private and relaxed atmosphere may have enhanced the quantity and quality of my data. Interviews with inmates were carried out in rooms that lacked privacy and were not conducive to interviewing. All of these rooms were in full view of the staff on duty, and I often saw inmates looking over their shoulder in the direction of the control room during my interviews with them. Furthermore, the visiting room was quite small with uncomfortable furniture, and was often extremely warm.

### 3.8.3 Time Considerations

Time considerations precluded further exploration of some relevant topics raised by one or more study groups. For example, there was some discontent among female COs with regard to the duties they were expected to perform. One specific claim was that their work load was far more intense than that of their male counterparts. I would have liked to have further explored this issue, as this discontent may have filtered down to the daily interactions between female staff and inmates.

Time constraints were especially frustrating toward the end of the data collection period because the inmates had begun to talk more openly with me about a range of subjects. When I announced that I was leaving, for example, some inmates said, "you can't leave yet." The excellent rapport I had developed with this study group was also illustrated when one inmate invited me to a swimming outing the following week. Although I was eager to collect more information on various topics, I also realized that I

needed to exit the field for the purposes of writing the final report.

#### 3.8.4 Avoiding Sensitive Questions

The literature on female offenders clearly reports that they have a history of physical and sexual abuse. Given the sensitivity associated with this topic, I did not present specific questions concerning these issues. Rather, I was hoping that inmates would contribute this information in the course of talking about their families and their offending. This research tactic did produce some information about sexual and physical abuse, but most likely did not reveal as much as would have been revealed through direct questioning.

#### 3.8.5 MHAs: An Inaccessible Population

MHA is an informal label used by “normal” inmates, COs, treatment personnel, and administrators to refer to inmates with a history of mental illness and being institutionalized in mental facilities. Not all inmates fitting these criteria, however, would automatically be labeled an MHA. “MHAs” repeatedly display one or more behaviours that would be considered outside of the norm of the remaining prison population. An example of an “MHA” might be an inmate with schizophrenia who refuses medication for the illness. These individuals are usually very disruptive and low functioning, and are the “disorganized” inmates at the NLCCW.

While in Clarendville, I encountered three women labeled as MHAs and one other who was considered by COs to be borderline. It seemed prudent not to approach these mentally challenged persons for interviews. However, although I did not interview any of

these women, to exclude them from any kind of analysis would be a great injustice because they play a fundamental role in the daily operations of the NLCCW. “MHAs,” for example, are usually top social control and supervision priorities for the COs and very much dictate how an officer’s day is spent.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the key aspects of the study’s methodology. The procedures for gaining access to the prison and to the informant groups, along with discussions of interviewing, selective observation, and document analysis, have been included. Also considered were ethical considerations and methodological limitations.

One final point is worth noting before presenting the study’s main findings. The assumption here is that the accounts and responses contributed by all study groups, especially inmates, are accurate to a high degree and did reflect their actual lived experiences at the prison. Still, it is important to remember that subjects’ responses may have been shaped to some degree by such factors as agency sponsorship, knowledge on the part of each group that other groups were participating in the study, and the vested interests of subject groups.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF FEMALE CORRECTIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Canadian Corrections in general, and Newfoundland and Labrador Corrections specifically, do not exist in a vacuum, but in a dynamic social, political, and economic context. These forces combine to mold what direction corrections takes with respect to its mandate, as well as how it proceeds in executing that mandate. Public support, media interpretation, agency budgets, and changes in sentencing and health legislation, for example, all help shape prison populations and the quality of prison life. This chapter will examine how these social constructs combine to influence the policies that determine the NLCCW population, as well as the types of programs and services offered there. The information presented in this chapter sets the proper context for more detailed discussions on the following topics: offender demographics and criminal profiles (Chapter 5); offender needs and programming (Chapter 6); prison location and design (Chapter 7); and CO work orientation (Chapter 8).

#### **4.2 Defining Correctional Goals**

Most current correctional organizations place the majority of their emphasis on the control and punishment of offenders. While control makes the public feel safer, punishment satisfies the current sense of justice by mollifying the emotions of those who are injured or offended by an act. Although punishment can sometimes be used to help

shape offender behaviour, it is usually resented by inmates and produces bitter feelings toward those who impose it. Offenders are likely to feel victimized by punishment and use their anger to justify the basis for further offending (Quinn, 1999). Offenders already believe, for example, that their poverty, failed relationships, and other misfortunes are produced by their position in society and society's treatment of them. These beliefs are confirmed and intensified as a result of the experience of punishment (Quinn, 1999).

Supplementary to control and punishment are attempts to change offenders' behaviour through rehabilitation. While many contend that rehabilitating offenders is the most cost effective and efficient solution in the long run, it remains secondary at best in the mandate of most correctional institutions (Quinn, 1999).

Chapter 1 specified that the contradictory goals of control/punishment and rehabilitation have been incorporated into official policy for Adult Corrections in Newfoundland and Labrador. Closer inspection of policy documents more than hints that the security goals of prison are prioritized over rehabilitative ones. Witness, for example, the following rank ordering of factors used to describe the "governing principles" shaping the placement of prisoners in the correctional system: 1) security, 2) life safety, 3) health services, 4) social and cultural development, 5) patriation, 6) institutional transfers, 7) classification, and 8) least restrictive option (Admissions Criteria for Adult Correctional Facilities, 1995:2). Furthermore, subsequent chapters provide evidence that demonstrates that prison experiences, at least at the NLCCW, were clearly more painful than rehabilitative or reintegrative.



#### 4.3 **Public Beliefs and the Get Tough Movement**

The public seems to be asking government to design correctional policy that will achieve both punishment and rehabilitation yet they fail to understand how these two goals conflict with one another. By punishing offenders through status degradation and increasing deprivations, a form of fairness called retributive justice is achieved. Channeling large amounts of time, money, and effort in the bid to change the behaviour of offenders would deprive citizens of the sense of justice that punishment affords. Such expenditure may also be viewed as unjust given that what may be spent on offenders could be used to assist conforming members of society (Quinn, 1999). In fact, the *principle of least eligibility* (PLE) calls for offenders to be placed in circumstances slightly *less* comfortable than those of our poorest citizens (Quinn, 1999). In addition to controlling and punishing offenders, society expects corrections to release offenders back into society as productive citizens. The status or skills of offenders may only be improved, however, if the time and resources are put into rehabilitative programming. This represents a major source of conflict between expectations to control and punish on the one hand and to rehabilitate, on the other.

While recent public polls have indicated increasing support for stiffer punishments in response to offending, there has also nonetheless been some support for efforts that would potentially assist with offender rehabilitation (Goldberg, 1994; Sundt, Cullen, Applegate, and Turner, 1998). Despite expectations for corrections to rehabilitate offenders, the public has consistently resisted the construction of prisons in or near city

centers where the prisoners are likely to have more opportunity to access community support services and to maintain ties with significant others. This dilemma, known as the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) syndrome, arises out of exaggerated concerns about both the fear of crime associated with real or potential prisoner escapes and about possible decreases in homeowner property values (Griffiths and Cunningham, 2000: 86).

The NIMBY syndrome has recently surfaced in the St. John's area with a proposal to build a youth remand center in an established residential neighborhood. Public forums were held and there was a media frenzy. Pressure and protests from residents of the area were successful in persuading the government to look for a site elsewhere. In the end, government was forced to rebuild at the current existing site which is located on the outskirts of the city. We might expect similar pressure to mount with a proposal for a new correctional center for women in a residential urban area. The NIMBY syndrome, then, may influence the location of prisons which, in turn, affects accessibility to programs and community supports.

#### **4.4 Media Reporting of Crime and Corrections**

Public perceptions of the criminal justice system are influenced by media depictions of crime (Roberts, 2000). A frequent claim is that the public is not properly informed about the true nature of crime due to the media's focus on rare and sensational stories. In the case of female offenders, for example, most attention has been geared toward those with a history of violence and/or sexual immortality. The vast amount of media coverage given to Karla Homolka, Lisa Neve, and Mary Letourneau effectively illustrates this point.

With such traditional sensational emphasis on rare and mostly violent crime, Canadians believe crime rates have increased. This is despite the fact that, in 1997, the crime rate dropped for the sixth consecutive year. This 5% decrease produced a crime rate lower than in any year since 1980. Ironically, a recent public opinion poll showed that four out of five Canadians believe that crime had increased (Enviroics, 1998).

Distorted media coverage is one of the most important factors leading to public misperceptions and criticism toward the criminal justice system. Biased media coverage partially explains why the public consistently demands from political leaders tougher and more punitive responses to offenders, in the form of longer prison sentences and very few privileges. The fabrication of the reality of the crime rate results in feelings that the system has failed in its mission.

The country club character of prisons, rather than its painful characteristics, has been one common theme stressed in television and newspaper accounts of prisons (Roberts, 2000). Included here have been such catchy headlines as "Club Fed," "The Lakeshore Hotel," and "Must Our Prisons Be Resorts" (McGovern, 1996). People may develop from such accounts the false impression that prisons are comfortable sites to pass the time as opposed to pain invoking institutions. Such coverage also contributes to the idea that offenders are rewarded for their offending.

The media also rarely publicizes the successes of government agencies such as the correctional sector. Rather, the incompetence of such agencies is highlighted through reports on the social control problems associated with prisons. Several recent stories, for

example, have emphasized successful or attempted escapes by prisoners. In one of these cases, a prisoner was not apprehended until eight months after he had escaped from Her Majesty's Penitentiary (*Telegram*, February 6, 1999). Similarly, two inmates, one of whom was a federal prisoner, had managed to flee after jumping the razor-wire walls of the same institution (*The Express*, July 21-27, 1999). These two individuals were apprehended 24 hours later.

Contorted media coverage, in turn, helps create the unfavorable impression that the safety of the public may be at risk. Relatedly, the emphasis by the media on the social control of prisoners means very little coverage is directed toward offender rehabilitation. A case in point would be the media's failure to acknowledge the successful reintegration of offenders into the community (Quinn, 1999). The media, then, give the public a very biased view of the correctional process which, in turn, leads to a loss of faith in offender rehabilitation that may not always be justified by the facts (Quinn, 1999).

#### 4.5 Agency Budgets

As Quinn (1999) points out, correctional policy development is shaped by financial considerations made by government. Because the general public opposes tax increases, governments look to decrease public spending. When public spending is decreased, less funding is diverted to government funded social institutions. Furthermore, the criminal justice system is in fierce competition with other social services such as education and health care that are regarded by constituents and legislatures as more important. For example, while three cents of every dollar of government spending went into the total

criminal justice budget for 1997, the figure was much higher for education (twelve cents). Correctional expenditures amounted to much less than three cents for each dollar, however, because the justice bill includes policing, court, and correctional services combined. It is also worth noting that policing services consume the greatest portion of the justice budget. The percentage (0.5%) of recent (1993-96) annual budgets for corrections in this province has been extremely limited (Bi-Annual Report, Adult Corrections Division, 1998:i). Budgetary competition with other social sectors as well as within the criminal justice division, then, can potentially produce cost cutting in lower priority government services such as the correctional department (Roberts, 2000).

Consistent with this fact, prison administrators did indicate that many of their policy decisions were hampered by insufficient funds. Most notable here were past attempts to build a new prison for women closer to the St. John's area. The Director of Corrections claimed that he had proposed to have the NLCCW moved to St. John's in 1998 because that was his preference. He further informed me that this proposal was rejected due to the fact that a new facility would cost in excess of five million dollars. I requested the proposal but was refused on the basis that it was an internal government document and could not be released.

Budgetary limitations also factored into the relocation of the NLCCW from Stephenville to Clarendville. When the Director of Corrections was asked why he believed the prison was recently relocated, he pointed to two main reasons: access to better programming by inmates; and downsizing. This is revealed in the following dialogue:

Respondent (R): We relocated the men the year before we located the prisoners there...no, actually the prison was only vacant for about four months. The idea was to move the women closer to St. John's. About 60% have been from the eastern area and there are a lot more services there.

Interviewer (I): So why not go directly to St. John's?

R: We didn't have a facility, we couldn't stay in Stephenville because it didn't meet accessibility requirements. We would have had to put in a new elevator that would have cost 250,000. ....and as well, the building was too large for our needs. The decision was a political one, and the decision could have been made to placate the area of Clarendville...

The Director more than alludes to the idea that moving the women closer to St. John's would increase their access to services as well as bring them closer to their families. My data confirm, however, that this has not been the case. As we will see in the upcoming chapters, women are not transported to St. John's for programming purposes and are also, for the most part, still very much isolated from their families.

The size of the building and the need for a potentially costly upgrade appear to be the most likely causes for the move. The male inmates who had been housed in Clarendville had all been transferred to other institutions leaving the Clarendville Correctional Center vacant. At the same time, the Stephenville site needed upgrading. It was more economically feasible for the government to move the women from the prison in Stephenville to Clarendville than to upgrade the Stephenville facility.

Low numbers of female offenders have always been used to justify the lack of expenditure on programming and services afforded them. Comparatively few women have recently been incarcerated at the NLCCW and this consideration has been used by program administrators as a major justification for not channeling additional monies

toward upgrading the quality of prison services for women in this province. Data indicate that the average annual inmate count at the NLCCW has been relatively low compared to the total number of male prisoners who have been viewed as the more obvious group to service. Of the 1451 individuals sentenced or remanded to adult correctional institutions in 1997-98, for example, only 56 were women. The male prisoners are housed in five different prisons across the province, while only one facility is assigned for female prisoners. Although per diem costs are substantially higher at the NLCCW, all but one of the male facilities cost more to operate during 1997-98 (between \$1,668,000 - \$6,453,400) compared with the NLCCW (\$970,700) (Annual Report of Adult Corrections Division, 1998:50).

It was also pointed out that there were not enough female prisoners to justify spending any of the funds that the federal government currently makes available to Newfoundland corrections in exchange for servicing federal prisoners in provincial facilities. By making this statement, policy administrators are acknowledging they are not in a position to achieve equality in correctional service delivery. The roughly \$200,000 annually has been channeled to meet the needs of only male inmates, despite the fact that the NLCCW has recently housed federal female prisoners (see Chapters 4 and 5). As will be shown, these federal prisoners also have treatment needs for which they are interested in receiving assistance. The Director also indicates that *provincial male* prisoners are benefitting from this funding - funding that has been provided for *federal female* inmates. He explains:

...Absolutely, we do not offer the same diversity and quality (of programs for female inmates) as we do in some of the male institutions. The problem is that the numbers are low. We have been able to substantially upgrade the male (programming) because of the exchange of services agreement with the federal government. There is \$200,000 in funding available from the federal government to support federal offender programming. We have been able to train our staff to deliver programming inside that meets federal programming standards. However, because we don't have very many federal female inmates, it's hard to justify the federal government to do some sort of programming. It's very difficult to justify spending part of the \$200,000 to train staff to deliver programming when there are so few inmates in that facility. They'll train our staff as long as they target federal inmates. However, if there are seats available, provincial (male) inmates can take advantage of them.

There is also some indication that government has recently attempted to allocate fewer resources toward prison related initiatives including the building of new prisons. Witness the recent closure of one prison for men in this province. The new initiative involves directing more monies toward community corrections for programs such as probation and electronic monitoring (EM) (Micucci, Maidment, and Gomme, 1997). As a result, expenditures channeled toward community corrections went from 7% in 1992 to 12% in 1996 (Bi-Annual Report, Adult Corrections Division, 1998:i). This indicates that less of the correctional budget is being allotted to prisons and prison reform.

#### **4.6 Determinate and Conditional Sentencing by the Courts**

The current sentencing structure in Canada is, by and large, determinate (Verdun-Jones, 1995). Here the power to set the sentence rests with the judge and the penalties assigned are based solely on the person's crime and prior record. Judges can only choose between a range of years set by government and each offender knows exactly how long



s/he must serve when sentenced. Under this approach, only 'good time' can reduce the length of the person's sentence.

Determinate sentencing structures do not take treatment into consideration. Rather, the focus is completely on making sure that punishments "fit the crime." This type of sentence is popular because it seems to reflect current public demands for tougher punishment and it makes early release difficult (Quinn, 1999).

Due to punitive public attitudes toward offenders, and the use of determinate sentencing, Newfoundland has had a relatively high rate of incarceration. There is some suggestion, however, that the high incarceration rate in the province may be changing as a result of the creation of new conditional sentencing legislation. Bill C-41 was proclaimed into law in 1996 and permits adult offenders sentenced to less than two years in prison to serve their prison term in the community, providing the judge can be satisfied that the prisoner would not endanger public safety (Cunningham and Griffiths, 1997). The standard and/or special conditions outlined by the judge can include one or more of the following: 1) abstaining from such things as alcohol, other drugs, and owning a firearm; 2) providing financial support or care for any dependents; 3) doing as much as 240 hours of community service; and, in particular 4) attending a treatment program. The conditional sentencing law has seemingly been vigorously enforced in Newfoundland. In Canada, during 1997-1998, admissions to provincial/territorial institutions declined by 9% (Reed and Roberts, 1999: 42). In Newfoundland and Labrador, during the same year, the numbers were much higher. There was a 25.6% decrease in the number of sentenced

admissions to prisons in this province. Furthermore, according to the Director of Corrections, the conditional sentencing has had a particularly marked impact on women.

He states:

The judges in this province have used conditional sentencing and have used it more than in other provinces. It has had a particular impact on women. About one quarter of all conditional sentences in this province apply to female offenders. That's a lot considering that it's about a 90% to 10% in terms of probation. We have 320 inmates in custody and only 10-20 are women.

The data support this claim. The number of admissions to the NLCCW in 1997-1998 was 56. This was down from 95 in 1996-1997 (see Figure 4-1).

Because the offenders eligible for the conditional sentence are provincial offenders, we would expect the ratio of federal inmates to provincial inmates to increase at the NLCCW. A large percentage of federal prisoners would also increase the average sentence length. Statistics confirm this observation. While the median sentence of imprisonment at the provincial/territorial level was 44 days in Canada in 1997-1998, the median sentence in this province was substantially higher at 90 days (Reed and Roberts, 1999: 42). The inmate population is thus changing to a higher risk/needs population in which offenders are serving longer terms of imprisonment. This is substantiated by correctional administrators who state:

We're not seeing low-needs individuals coming through the door. The good inmates are not coming in anymore. Our population has changed. The institution has changed, we're seeing more aggressive type inmates.

See, there's a lot of sentencing alternatives over the years and the people I have worked with have changed (population is changing). I have seen change but only

when people have wanted to change and rehabilitate themselves. Right now with the sentencing alternatives people don't fall under the guidelines. The people we get now are institutionalized and don't know how to go about changing their lives or living independently or knowing how to function on the outside. Two thirds of them have been throughout the system and have already been institutionalized in foster homes or the Waterford (Mental Institution) or Whitbourne (Juvenile Detention Centre). Now they're graduated up to adult offenders (children from the Whitbourne Detention Centre). I don't know when or how to start to change their way of thinking.

While the offenders now incarcerated at the NLCCW are higher needs individuals, these needs have not been taken into consideration with regards to available programming. If anything, it appears that the amount of available programming has decreased as opposed to increased in recent years. If these offenders are high needs individuals who are aggressive and suffering from a variety of mental illnesses, it would be feasible to have greater access to a wider variety of services and programs.

#### 4.7 **“Trans-institutionalization?”**

As will be shown in Chapters 5-8, the prisoner population was partially comprised of some mentally ill persons who presented an assortment of problems for the remaining prisoner population as well as COs. There was evidence in the findings to support the criminalization thesis. This thesis maintains that prisons have recently replaced mental hospitals as sites for confining the mentally ill. The assertion is that mentally ill individuals are incarcerated for disorderly behaviours such as panhandling and other minor crimes because there is no other convenient place to house them (Quinn, 1999).

A number of factors have combined to produce a movement for de-

institutionalization of mentally ill persons. In this province, a program called, *Bright Futures*, was recently implemented as a way to release the mentally ill from hospitals, most notably the Waterford, into the community. New drug therapies could treat many of the disorders that previously required commitment to mental institutions. The movement's goal has been to treat such people in the community where costs were lower and they could more easily be reintegrated into society. Funding, however, was never provided for community mental health centers and drug therapies were ineffective due to the lack of supervision. The Director of Corrections explains how a variety of changes in the health care system have impacted upon the population of his facilities:

The Waterford didn't build in community supports. They're (administrators) finding that the people (patients) who had been discharged under the *Bright Futures* program - they're (administrators) seeing them (patients) coming back pleading to be readmitted because the community supports are not there. The problem with the Waterford is four-fold. (First) The mental health institutions are trying to move more people out in the community - deinstitutionalization, but what is happening is transinstitutionalization (movement from mental institutions to correctional institutions). (Second) Changes in admissions criteria (It has become more difficult to get admitted to the mental institutions). Also, a third problem is that the mental health system itself is relying on the justice system to now charge people who set fires or assault staff. This practice has only developed within the past ten years. (Fourth) All of the new medication is also allowing people to move people into the community.

Mentally challenged inmates are of the most concern to administrators. Correctional officials contend that these offenders are being directed to a correctional system that does not have the resources to accommodate them. An administrator states:

The ones we're concerned about are the psychiatric and mentally challenged, and

people with behavioural problems. That's the Ellens, the Rheas, the Patsys. Take Ellen, 140 admissions to the Waterford hospital. How do we expect her to come in here and for us to successfully rehabilitate her? It's an unrealistic goal, it doesn't make sense. The judges need to be aware of what is available and what is not available in here. How's a 70-day sentence going to make a difference to someone who has been looked after their whole life? I can see white collar workers availing of school and doing fine if they were here but they get released because they don't fall into a violent crime category.

These, as well as other major problems associated with housing this type of special needs inmate, will be addressed throughout the remainder of the thesis.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has further set the context for more detailed discussions on offender demographics, treatment needs and services received, the problematic location and design of the prison, and the type of social control and/or support services delivered by COs. Some key social values combine to shape policy development in female corrections. Policy makers, for example, have been known to respond to public pressure. In this regard, the public has recently been calling for stiffer punishments for offenders and have not been entirely supportive of strategies aimed at assisting with offender rehabilitation. Also, public pressure (i.e., NIMBY) has resulted in prisons being located far distances from offenders' families and the community services required to better facilitate rehabilitation. The public also demands that prisons possess less than comfortable conditions for prisoners which, in turn, suggests very little support of a rehabilitatively oriented corrections system. Sensational media coverage about crime and about prison conditions also contribute towards the incorporation into correctional policy of punishment and

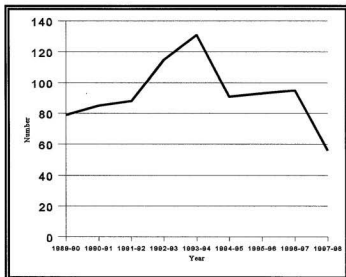
control philosophy, not offender rehabilitation.

Economic restraints also have limited efforts to upgrade the rehabilitative potential and effectiveness of female correctional facilities. Insufficient funds have precluded the construction of a much needed modern and practical facility. Also, because there are considerably more male than female offenders in this province, the vast majority of correctional dollars have been channeled towards them.

Some recent sentencing structures have combined to present challenges for meeting the needs of female prisoners. First, due to determinate sentencing policy, the courts are more concerned with making punishments fit the crime than they are about rehabilitative treatment considerations. Second, the relatively new conditional sentencing option has meant that prison populations are now classified as a much higher risk and also in need of more rehabilitative treatment.

Finally, the recent move towards relying more on incarceration and less on mental institutions has produced a higher concentration than in the past of mentally ill persons in the correctional system. Not only are correctional institutions ill equipped to service this population, the presence of "MHAs" has hindered attempts at rehabilitation for other inmates. This problem will be discussed further in later chapters.

**Figure 4-1: Number of Women Sentenced to the NLCCW, 1989-1998**



## CHAPTER FIVE

### OFFENDER DEMOGRAPHICS AND CRIMINAL PROFILES

#### 5.1 Introduction

As previously stated, the demographics and criminal profiles of offenders are essentially what determine the risk/needs classification of the inmates which, in turn, shapes the type and number of programs they may require or be eligible to take part in. This chapter begins by describing the demographics of the offenders interviewed. Offender demographics are followed by criminal profiles of the inmates. Crimes committed, as well as sentence length and time served, are the topics covered in this section. The chapter concludes by considering some potential consequences of demographic characteristics on programming alternatives, and by summing up the theoretical constructs discussed in the chapter.

#### 5.2 Offender Demographics

##### 5.2.1 Age

Table 5-1: Age Reported by Inmates Interviewed

MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY AND RANGE	YEAR
MEAN	26.6
MEDIAN	24
MODE	19
RANGE	18-42



As Table 5-1 illustrates, the inmates interviewed for this study were of a comparatively young age. The majority of the women interviewed (8) were less than 30 years old and half of those (4) were under 20. This group of women was somewhat younger than the average national age (i.e., 32) of female offenders (Dell and Boe, 1998). This discrepancy may be due, in part, to the fact that in Atlantic Canada in recent years, there has been a steady trend showing the younger the adult females, the greater the rate of procession through the court system.

#### 5.2.2 Marital Status

Table 5-2: Marital Status Reported by Inmates Interviewed

STATUS	NUMBER OF WOMEN
MARRIED	3
COMMON LAW	3
SINGLE	5

As indicated in Table 5-2, over half of the women interviewed were married or living in common law relationships. This is somewhat inconsistent with a prior study which reports that 65% of provincially sentenced women are single (The Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton, 1993).

### 5.2.3 Number of Children

Table 5-3: Number of Children Reported by Inmates Interviewed

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	NUMBER OF WOMEN
0 CHILDREN	4
1 CHILD	4
2 CHILDREN	3

Table 5-3 reveals that the majority of the inmates had children. The children's ages ranged from nine months to 21 years. Only four of the mothers had at least one child living with them. One woman reported that her children were now independent adults. Another inmate said that her child had been taken by child protection services and was now living with foster parents. She also claimed that she was ordered by the courts to have no contact with her son until three years after her release. In a third case, a woman indicated that her child was living with her husband's parents but that she was in the process of trying to regain custody of the child. Another inmate who had custody of one child informed me that a second child lived with her mother. She stated that she was content with this arrangement.

The number of dependents reported by the inmates in this study is low in comparison to those of other reports. One report on provincially sentenced women, for example, stated that, typically, the provincially sentenced woman expects to be the sole supporter of two or three children younger than 16 years (The Elizabeth Fry Society of

Edmonton, 1993).

#### 5.2.4 Education and Job Status

Table 5-4: Educational Achievement Reported by Inmates Interviewed

SCHOOLING	NUMBER OF WOMEN
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	6
HIGH SCHOOL (Completed)	5
SOME COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	5

As Table 5-4 demonstrates, all of the women in my sample had completed at least some high school. Almost half of the women (5) had finished high school and those remaining (6) had attained between a grade nine and eleven education. Almost half of the women (5) also had completed some post-secondary training at the university or college level. One woman had completed courses in language at the university level, while others had completed courses in day-care work, computer drafting, pharmacy assistance, accounting, secretarial, computer applications and business administration at a college level.

This level of education is high when compared to the findings in other studies. One report, for example, stated that provincially sentenced women have less than a grade nine education (The Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton, 1993). The Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women reported that two-thirds of its sample either had not completed high school or did not have any training past that (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 45). A higher level

of educational achievement in my sample may be explained by the fact that I did not interview one segment of the prison population ("MHAs"), a segment that was potentially less educated. If these women had been included, the average level of educational attainment for my sample may have been much lower.

Less than half of the women (4) were employed full-time at the time of their arrest. One woman worked as a travel agent (6 months), one worked in the fast food industry (4 months), one worked for a research company (3 ½ years), and another person was employed by her partner as an office administrator (almost 1 year). Other jobs held by the women over the past five years included the following: camp coordinator for kids (funded by a government grant); babysitter; telemarketer; teacher (travel and tourism); kitchen helper (hospital); and laborer (newspaper press). A few of the women (3) had not held any type of job over the last five years. Here we see evidence of the feminization of poverty. These women, when, or if, employed at all, appeared to be situated into sex segregated, low-skilled and/or low-level service occupations.

These findings are consistent with those of other studies. The Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women found that most of the women in that study also had worked at low-paying, unskilled jobs in shops and offices, bars and restaurants, as nurses aides, childcare workers, or at unskilled manual work (*Creating Choices* 1990: 45). Furthermore, 15% had never had a legal paying job. Another study on provincially sentenced women found that most had not been employed for more than three years in any single job (The Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton, 1993).

The inmates were extremely articulate and aware with regards to the limitations of educational and vocational training for ex-offenders. When one inmate was asked if she planned to further her education, she replied that she had already inquired about some programs, as well as researched the process of acquiring work in the field after completion of the necessary training. This woman, through her research, determined which employers would be more apt to do a criminal background check, and then eliminated these career choices from her list. According to her, the fact that some employers will not hire people with a criminal record as part of their policy limited her choices for pursuing an education and planning a future.

In all, over half (7) of the inmates were painfully aware that the formal labeling process had produced harsh ramifications in their quests for employment and education.

This is clearly revealed in the following discussions:

I can't get a job I'm a criminal. No one wants to hire me because I'm a criminal. I might go to Ontario or Calgary if I get out. My sister and brother are in Calgary. My sister is driving a rock truck for \$16 an hour. She gave up a management position to do that. She said that they don't ask for no letter of conduct...

I tried to apply for nursing school but I wasn't accepted because I had a criminal record. They go back and check and if you have a criminal record, they won't accept you.

*R:* Right now there's not too much I can do at all. I'll have to wait seven years because I'll need a letter of conduct.

*I:* For all jobs?

*R:* Yes, I can't go to be a cashier because they're not gonna hire someone like me, theft, theft, theft. How do they know I'm not gonna rob their store? I gotta go to college and get my degree, I got lots of time to do it anyway.

The “criminal” master status and consequent stigmatization are now at the very root of the inmate’s self-concept and she believes that this is hindering her from achieving some of her future educational and occupational goals. Because society has closed doors to education and employment that are open to other “non-criminal” members of society, the inmate is forced to conceive of herself as a devalued citizen.

Society, on the one hand, promotes conformity to societal norms and laws and encourages former inmates to adhere to these formal and informal regulations. The same society, on the other hand, takes away many of the opportunities that would provide the means that would allow an offender to behave in a desirable law-abiding manner. Furthermore, the inmates in this study are already positioned at the lower tiers of the socioeconomic ladder as is indicated by their work experience (i. e., in low-paying, sex-segregated occupations), or lack thereof. When these women are released, society’s reactions to them on the basis of their “criminal” behaviour will further disadvantage them with regards to finding work and/or pursuing an education.

Possessing a certain degree of knowledge and having the ability to express oneself in an articulate manner also gives women a better edge when it comes to voicing their needs and politicizing their plight. One inmate, for example, was pro-active in writing letters to prison administrators and politicians in attempts to procure an investigation into a matter in which she felt her rights had been violated. This woman felt that she had been mistreated by one particular CO and requested that the incident be investigated. The inmate was also very astute in explaining that she thought that the investigative process

that followed was unjust because corrections directed one of its own employees to inquire into the incident. She states: "I have been very vocal here lately; first when I came in I wasn't, but lately I have been."

Relatedly, other prisoners spoke of their rights at the NLCCW relative to their rights at other correctional facilities. The knowledge imparted by the women who had spent time at other prisons affected their own perceptions as well as the ideas of other inmates. The following accounts from two of these prisoners serve as illustrations:

*R:* I was incarcerated 14 years ago for fraud, a period of nine months in Vanier in Ontario.

*F:* Is that a provincial prison?

*R:* Provincial

*F:* How would you compare it to here?

*R:* (Inmate smiles and shakes her head). It's like looking at an old beat up truck (NLCCW) and a Cadillac (Vanier) ...and corrections have supposed to have changed. There (Vanier), correctional officers were real correctional officers, they cared about you, they worked with you. There were all types of programs. The school was away from the main building. You either worked or you were in school. They had crafts, they had movies. There was something going on all day long. They had regular nurses on staff. Here it's (drugs) administered by a correctional officer and sometimes it gets mixed up. Big difference between Vanier and here.

*R:* Boring (NLCCW), nothing to do to pass the time. In federal, you got Gym, you can walk around outside. You got work, you got school. Your day is pretty full. After supper, there's recreation, weight rooms, and gym. Don't have any of that here. In Truro (NOVA) they work with Corcan, they built a piece on the prison.

*F:* What do you think of their canine project?

*R:* (Inmate's face lights up with a big smile). Oh yeah I forgot about that. I think it's great, training dogs to help disabled people. I worked in maintenance, mowing lawns, all different kinds of work. ...It's a lot better (Federal), there's nothing done here. Some girls are here for 18 months. It's a long time to be stuck here (NLCCW). Five times out (side) since I've been here.

The effects of sharing such information with other offenders will be discussed further in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

#### 5.2.5 Ethnicity

Table 5-5: Ethnicity Reported by Inmates Interviewed

STATUS	NUMBER OF WOMEN
CAUCASIAN	8
OTHER (MICMAC, INNU)	2
UNKNOWN	1

The inmates' ethnic status is contained in Table 5-5. Most of the women were Caucasian, and only two were members of local native groups. These findings are inconsistent with the results of other studies. In a previous review of provincially sentenced women, 58% were aboriginal (The Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton, 1993), and in a separate study of federally sentenced women almost 30% were native offenders (*Creating Choices*, 1999).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Because my study group lacked ethnic diversity, and because both of the native women interviewed felt that they did not have needs specific to their ethnicity, my data analysis, unlike most others, does not grapple with the special needs of native offenders.



### 5.2.6 Residence

Table 5-6: Place of Residence Reported by Inmates Interviewed

RESIDENCE PRIOR TO INCARCERATION	NUMBER OF WOMEN
URBAN NEWFOUNDLAND (ST. JOHN'S)	9
RURAL NEWFOUNDLAND	1
OUT OF PROVINCE	1

Table 5-6 indicates that the majority of the women (9) resided on the Avalon peninsula, more specifically, in the St. John's area. Of the remaining two women, one was from the west coast of Newfoundland and the other lived in Ontario.

### 5.3 Criminal Profile: "Rob, Rob, Rob, Because I Can't Get a Job"

The criminal profiles of the women were diverse, with crimes ranging from property violations to violent offences. Over half of the women (6) interviewed described being charged with property crimes. Crimes committed in this category included fraud, theft, and break and entry. Fewer women (3) reported being sentenced for "other" crimes such as harassment, uttering threats, and malicious damage. Only one woman revealed being charged with a violent offence, that of sexual assault. The remaining person said that she was not charged with any new crime, but was sent back to prison for a 30-day assessment after violating a condition of her parole. She informed me, however, that her criminal record was lengthy and contained a number of violent offences such as use of a firearm,

forceful confinement, armed robbery, and assaults.

When contextualized, the reasons provided by the women for committing their crimes lend support to the socialist feminist contention that the economic organization of capitalism and the cultural system of patriarchy that produces men's dominance over women influence the lives of female offenders, contributing to their criminal behaviour. Over half of the women (6) in my sample were charged with property crimes, most of which cited financial difficulty as contributing to their criminality. Two women stated that financial considerations were the sole reason for their crimes. Another woman explained that shoplifting had begun as a means of survival many years ago but had now become an addiction. Yet another inmate stated that she needed money for drugs but attributed her use of drugs partially to the fact that she did not have paid employment. She states:

Yes, I'd love to have a job. To have a routine schedule because it would give me something to do other than worrying about getting drugs, drugs, drugs, or money for drugs. I robbed everything in my apartment right down to the forks and knives...

In analysing the employment records of the women, along with some of their statements regarding the consequences of their economic situations, we can see that poverty is a common theme among the majority of the inmates interviewed. The following inmate describes the difficulty of relying on government funding to provide subsistence for her family:

I am on social assistance. I have \$300 rent to pay and I only get \$225 a month for rent. They only give me \$225 because I rent from my mother in law. So I have to come up with \$75 between my two monthly checks. I get \$348 every two weeks

and I have to take out \$112 (half of 225) for rent and then \$35 (Approximately half of 75) every two weeks to make up the remainder.

Another woman talks about the frustration of not being able to afford store orders at the prison:

I can't afford to get a canteen here either. I have to see people with their chips and cheesies and bars and cigarettes. I'll get my six crispy crunch bars when I leave here....

A link between male control and abuse, and criminal behaviour, also surfaced through my interviews and informal conversations with the inmates. Almost half (5) of the women interviewed made reference to some form of male control or abuse as a contributing factor to their criminal behaviour. One woman convicted for crimes under "other" cited problems with her ex-partner and his girlfriend as contributing to her criminality. This woman felt that the control she had over the custody of her child was taken away by the baby's father and his new partner. The woman retaliated against them both by committing various offences.

Another woman charged with criminal harassment responded with the following, when asked why she had committed the crime:

I was asked by another party to drop off some stuff at another person's workplace. The person who asked me had some charges against him. It was my husband. He spent 41 days in jail but now he is out. All the charges were mostly on my husband. He's on probation til' January 2000.

The control that this woman's husband held over her was reinforced in a discussion concerning the couple's son. She informed me that her husband had asked his parents to

take custody of the child without her consent. She said, "When I found out, I flipped." "Flipping," however, appeared to have been in vain given that this woman still had not regained custody of her son, two years later. The woman also stated that emotional support from her husband had sometimes been lacking since she had been incarcerated. The fact that she could not afford to place store orders suggests that he also provided little financial support.

The inmate charged with sexual assault did not give a clear reason for her criminality. She did inform me, however, that her therapist had attributed her crime to previous sexual abuse by an older male relative during childhood. The woman painfully relayed that she had aborted a fetus fathered by the relative at the age of 14. Another woman who had also been previously sexually abused by an older relative felt that this traumatic experience was her reason for initially becoming involved in criminal behaviour. One of her first offences was an assault on this man. She states:

The old bastard (male abuser) croaked two weeks after it was aired (television documentary on her criminal career). I'd like to think I had a little hand in that.

This woman, not surprisingly, had very negative feelings about her abuser and showed no remorse upon his death. The inmate also practiced self-mutilation, a further manifestation of abuse that leads to some type of formal social control, usually time in segregation.

When I asked her what type of feeling she got from slashing her arms, she said:

Your heart rate decreases, the anxiety goes away, it's such a relief. One of my friends used to burn herself with cigarettes. She would light the cigarette and roll it around her arm like this (Inmate imitates her friend burning her arm). I would never do that, I would never burn myself. We were allowed to have razors in our

rooms at Kingston (P4W). I always kept one broke open in case I needed to use it (for slashing).

Because self-mutilation is punishable at most prisons, the abused woman suffers twice; once at the hands of her male abuser and again by a male-dominated criminal justice system that has yet to grasp an understanding of female dominated issues such as this one.

Yet another woman felt that her criminality was a “symptom of an abusive relationship” in which her husband was “very controlling.” She engaged in check fraud after her husband denied her access to bank accounts. She states:

I couldn't have any friends. I wasn't allowed to leave the house without permission, and he would take all the phones with him. He cut me off from bank accounts.

These are all clear examples of how male domination in both the home and marketplace can have adverse effects on *some* women. Maeve (1999) succinctly describes some of the effects of the convoluted lives of many female inmates:

Poverty alone does not explain the fate of incarcerated women. What I, and others, do claim however, is that poverty in conjunction with unrelenting abuse does lead to nihilism, despair, and ultimately self- and community- harming behaviours. These behaviours are frequently criminalized and result in women's incarceration.

The present economic organization of capitalism has produced a society in which many women continue to live in poverty, one of the main factors already identified as contributing to increases in female crime. Some women, such as those in this study, when faced with financial difficulty, resort to property crimes such as shoplifting, check forging, and theft. Also of importance is the belief that class and patriarchy pressure men to

commit violent crimes such as sexual violence and crimes of abuse as a means of reinforcing both patriarchal and class relations. This study indicates that such control and abuse may contribute to, or manifest themselves in, criminal behaviour by the woman being violated.

### 5.3.1 Sentence Length and Time Served

The length of sentences being served by the women varied considerably. Ten women were sentenced, with sentences ranging from 44 days to two years.<sup>2</sup> The mean sentence was just over eleven months. Two of the women were serving federal sentences of two years and a third offender sent back for assessment was also classified as a federal offender. These sentence lengths are comparatively high, partly due to the fact that the prison houses both federal and provincial inmates. Most of the women (9) said they were recidivists, and four of these reported that they had been previously incarcerated. At least two revealed that they had been charged as juveniles.

Time actually served, including time on remand, ranged considerably from seven days to eleven months. The average amount of time served was just under four months.

Sentence length is an important determinant of what types of programs get implemented at correctional facilities, as well as taken advantage of. If the average sentence length at a particular prison is short, it would not be feasible to implement programs that are long in duration. Also, the sentence length of an individual inmate may

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<sup>2</sup>One of the women had not been sentenced but was being held for a 30 day assessment.

disqualify her from some programs. If a program takes ten months to complete, for example, it would not be feasible for an offender with a three-month sentence to partake in that particular program.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

Ideally, a prison would house a large number of offenders with the same demographics and criminal profiles. Where there are many inmates with similar programming needs, it becomes much easier for governments to justify the expenditure for the implementation of programs. Treatment is much more challenging, however, when there are a small number of inmates and a large variation among the program demands. As indicated, the size of the female prisoner population is quite small. Policy documents show that there are approximately only 10 to 20 provincial and federal female offenders incarcerated at the NLCCW on any given day. As indicated in Chapter 4, low numbers of female prisoners have been used by administrators in this province as a rationale for not allotting sufficient funds for a higher number and quality of programs and services requested by inmates.

Furthermore, these inmates constitute a rather eclectic clientele. While generally, the study group was comparatively young, high school trained, had children, were mostly property offenders, were unemployed or underemployed at the time of arrest, and resided in a major urban area prior to incarceration, they had some rather specific and diverse needs. Moreover, the needs of prisoners labeled as MHAs are greatly removed from those of the general inmate population. Inmate needs will be discussed to a greater extent in the

following chapter.

The accounts shared by the women demonstrated some support for the labeling theory of deviance. The inmates felt stigmatized because of their criminal status and, as a result, believed they would be considered devalued candidates for school and/or paid work. Due to this consideration, the women conveyed a rather bleak outlook towards conventional pursuits and goals that would be available to them following release from prison.

There was also some support for socialist feminist theory. First, the majority of the women linked their property offending to their impoverished situations. These conditions were the result of a lack of monetary resources due to unemployment or underemployment. Second, the data analysis shows evidence of women in a dependent role vis-a-vis men. In some cases, they cited instances of excessive control and abuse by men. These considerations, in turn, were linked to their participation in crimes such as assaults and property offences.

Importation theory is also useful to incorporate into the data analysis. Some inmates imported characteristics into the prison which, in turn, excluded them from participation in certain programs. The woman convicted of sexual assault, for example, explained that she was exempt from programs in which inmates' might disclose histories of sexual abuse. Inmates labeled as MHAs were also considered to be unsuitable for some programs. A person with schizophrenia who refused medication, for example, would not be able to participate in educational programming. As well, the female prisoner population included a



small cadre of prisoners with relatively higher levels of education and who were knowledgeable and articulate about the subject of inmates rights. This group politicized the issues of basic living conditions at the NLCCW and the availability of more specialized treatment services.

## CHAPTER SIX

### OFFENDER NEEDS AND PROGRAMMING

#### 6.1 Introduction

Both “non-criminogenic” and “criminogenic” needs, as identified and discussed by the inmates, will be the main focus of this chapter. The “non-criminogenic” needs that are addressed revolve around health care and familial support. Education and vocational training, as well as programs centering around substance abuse, sexual abuse, shoplifting and financial management, are the “criminogenic” needs considered. Because “criminogenic” needs are positively correlated with criminal behaviour, administrators place most of their focus on them. The quality and quantity of data suggest, however, that it is those needs deemed “non-criminogenic,” such as health care needs, that offenders label most critical. It is for this reason that I will focus on the “non-criminogenic” needs first, and then follow with the less emphasized “criminogenic” needs. The chapter concludes by discussing the problematic nature of a classification system that: 1) divides needs into “criminogenic” and “non-criminogenic;” and 2) prioritizes the former over the latter. Also reviewed are some of the problems associated with meeting the “criminogenic” needs that administrators set out to address.

#### 6.2 “Non-Criminogenic” Offender Needs

##### 6.2.1 Health Care Needs

Access to adequate health care was not only the most demanding “non-

criminogenic” need of the inmates but the most pressing need of inmates overall. In this section, the efficiency of the “reactive” health care services at the NLCCW is called into question by the inmates that are housed there. Reactive health care pertains to the treatment of offenders after they become ill and is differentiated from “preventative” health care which focuses on the prevention of sickness through proper diets, exercise, and health education (Henslin and Nelson, 1996: 566). Inmates at the NLCCW feel that they should have better access to a general practitioner (GP) and a psychiatrist, as well as over-the-counter medications and all other medications prescribed to them.

A large majority of the inmates (10) cited various types of health problems. These problems ranged from modest conditions and illnesses such as borderline thyroid, borderline Diabetes, insomnia, skin rash, headaches, bed-wetting, eczema, and sinus problems, to more severe problems such as infection, liver problems, bad back, Hepatitis B, asthma, bleeding ovarian cysts, depression, post traumatic stress syndrome, scoliosis, thyroid, anxiety disorders, and bipolar disorder. Also, one woman had received stitches due to a slashing incident at the NLCCW and another had broken her finger in a cell door and was electrocuted by a food cart. Scattered throughout this list of ailments are occurrences of gynecological problems and mental health concerns, the two most cited areas of medical complaints among female inmates. Also worth noting is an incident of Hepatitis B - a growing concern for corrections in North America and one incident of self-mutilation, another prevalent issue in most female prisons.

There are two doctors - a psychiatrist and general practitioner (GP) - contracted by

corrections in this province to attend to the prisoners' health care needs. The psychiatrist resides in St. John's and is scheduled to make biweekly visits to the NLCCW. According to reports from the prison, 70% of the inmates use this service. The GP is stationed in Clarenville and visits the prison once a week. All inmates see the GP at least once while incarcerated. Both doctors, however, may be called at any time in case of an emergency. Given the numbers and types of health problems experienced by the inmates, it is no surprise that they relied heavily on the advice and instruction of these physicians.

#### 6.2.1.1 Psychiatric Services

It became obvious through my interviews with inmates and COs that a psychiatrist had been noticeably absent from the prison for weeks. The only contact made with the physician that had been contracted out to deliver psychiatric services to the institution was in the form of telephone conversations with correctional personnel. It was not revealed to me how many conversations were held with the psychiatrist or to whom they pertained.

The Director of Corrections saw the lack of visits to the prison by the psychiatrist as a dilemma and believed that correspondence by telephone was an insufficient service that might eventually lead to problems. His thoughts on this matter are as follows:

Dr. Black is in St. John's and she makes trips out. It is my understanding that she hasn't been out there for two months. She is consulted by phone but that is not the way to deliver that particular service. Getting enough information to get a diagnosis and treatment plan is fraught with all kinds of problems and liabilities. I just had a meeting with her yesterday on these issues. We don't have a lot of other alternatives. We could escort them to St. John's...

Although the administrator suggested that they "could" escort the inmates to St. John's,

no inmates were transported to the city for psychiatric treatment and/or evaluations.

The psychiatrist on contract with corrections had been injured in an accident and was unable to continue her visitation to the prison until her condition improved. This would take approximately two months. The psychiatrist explained that the Director had been made aware of this development and she believed it was his responsibility to provide a replacement. While both the psychiatrist and the Director of Corrections talked openly about the dilemma, neither were willing to take responsibility for the dire situation but instead placed the onus on the other. No replacement was hired and the inmates did not have access to another psychiatrist. Although the administrator did not cite financial considerations as a reason for not transferring the inmates to St. John's, it is reasonable to conclude that this was a factor. Given that an individual had been contracted to deliver this particular service, it follows that funds would not be allotted for additional psychiatric assistance.

Almost half (5) of the inmates had seen, or expressed an interest in seeing, a psychiatrist. The inmates were appalled at the quantity of visits made by the psychiatrist in recent months. In fact, they viewed it as such an injustice that one of the prisoners asked to meet with me on behalf of many other inmates to discuss the fact that a psychiatrist had not been present at the prison for two months. She stated:

Doctor Black is supposed to be here every two weeks. It has now been two months and there is not any indication of when she is coming back. If that's the case, they should have someone else in her place.

Some other inmates (4) spoke openly about this problem during interviews and

informal conversations. One inmate who suffered from a number of illnesses stated the following when asked if she would like to see any improvements to the prison's current health care policy:

*R:* Yes, I've been here for three weeks and there hasn't been a psychiatrist here for three weeks.

*F:* Not that you know of?

*R:* No, there has been no one here, if there was I would be the first person they would see. She's (psychiatrist) off for six weeks. If the doctor is going to be gone then you should have a replacement.

Correctional officers at the prison were candid in their discussions about accessing psychiatrists. Over half of the officers interviewed (3) felt that the present service was inadequate. When one CO was asked how she felt about the health care services at the prison, she responded:

They're not good. There's not enough psychiatric intervention and interaction. We got a psychiatrist that comes out bi-weekly. She hasn't been here since March 11 (two weeks ago). That's what's in the diary anyway, maybe that was only a call. There's no scheduled visits for here. The inmates don't know when she's coming... I would like to see better scheduling. We need access to a psychiatrist daily, not bi-weekly, if need be, but once a week for sure... .

While the inmates interviewed are speaking exclusively of themselves, COs are speaking with regards to the entire inmate population. This population invariably includes "MHAs" - inmates who potentially require the most psychiatric intervention. When these inmates do not receive treatment that will enable them to meet their basic needs (e.g., bathing and eating), this creates more work for COs, forcing them to take on a "nursing" role. The following account of an officer's daily activities illustrates just how time-consuming caring for "MHAs," in this case Mara and Janet, can be:

You go down and you see how much blood, and feces and urine is in Mara's cell and you see if Charisse needs her diaper changed before she gets out, and you gotta get Charisse up first because she's on 24 hour watch. Clear everybody else out and see what kind of mood they're in. Then you take 20 minutes to explain to Janet why she can't have a cigarette til' after breakfast. Then there's breakfast, then ½ hour to get Mara out of bed and into the shower and make sure she gets under the water and washes herself, and help her put on a sanitary napkin. Janet doesn't think she needs a pad, so you have to frisk her and make sure she has one on. Then you gotta go and put all the bloody, shitty laundry in because you can't get the laundry girls to do that. Then you help Mara clean up from her breakfast. The day goes on like that. Very much dictated by the MHAs here and their needs and their demands. They determine if you're gonna have a good day or a bad day. Then you gotta referee between the young ones with the stereo and the others who like it quiet. (Also) Depends on escorts and blood runs. A good day is when I got time to sit down with someone and make a connection and no one ends up in segregation. Like tonight, tonight was perfect. You have to make sure that no one is suicidal.

Because those inmates who are low functioning require so much time and effort from the COs, those officers who are most oriented towards rehabilitation have less time to spend with other inmates. As the above officer stated, a good day for her is defined by having the time to talk with an inmate and to connect with her. When other inmates, such as those who are mentally ill, are very demanding, this may not be possible.

Psychiatric intervention may mean a change in medication. A psychiatrist has the authority to alter medications that may result in a more fully functioning individual. This, in turn, would place less demand on COs. The psychiatrist may also recommend a transferral to a hospital for inmates who, for whatever reason, cannot perform the most basic tasks. The following quote from the psychiatrist indicates that some of these inmates may need to be moved:

Some really need to be transferred in (from prison to Waterford). People who are psychotic or suffering from depression. One inmate is severely depressed. It's tense upstairs (at the Waterford hospital). The sickest patients in the prison system; you try to send them upstairs.

The following quote from a CO reveals the importance of having a psychiatrist present at the prison for evaluating patients:

Like Lori, a cop came up from Marystown and asked "what's wrong with her?" The girl is strung out on something. She hasn't seen Doctor Black (psychiatrist). The woman told me that the doctor (on the outside) gave her all kinds of medication because he was sick of seeing her. She don't know if she's in the world or out. Over 100 admissions to the Waterford and hasn't been seen by a psychiatrist because it would cost overtime for an officer to come in and take her to the Waterford.

The police-officer had apparently known Lori before her incarceration and indicated that he thought she was not behaving as usual. There is evidence here to support the idea that medicine functions as an "institution of social control." Lori had been prescribed medication by a physician who hoped to temper her behaviours, not the least of which included more visits to his office. A more in-depth discussion of the use of medication as a control mechanism will follow later in the chapter. COs believed that this woman was "over-medicated" and needed to have her prescriptions altered, but had not been seen by a psychiatrist because of financial considerations. When there is no psychiatrist present, however, the officers have no choice but to put these offenders' needs ahead of the others because those needs are much more compelling in nature.

The CSC (Commissioner's Directive, Health Services, 1997) reports that essential health care services in correctional institutions will include:



Mental health care provided in response to disturbances of thought, mood, perception, orientation or memory that significantly impairs judgment, behaviour, the capacity to recognize reality or the ability to meet the ordinary demands of life. This includes the provision of both acute and long-term mental health care services.

The data suggest that the NLCCW is falling short in its bid to provide these services to inmates. One of the more obvious confirmations is the NLCCW's failure to provide mental health care to those inmates who are "unable to meet the ordinary demands of life." To the contrary, the data lend support to literature which claims that health care in correctional institutions tends to be disorganized and prisons neglect the medical needs and treatment of female prisoners.

#### 6.2.1.2 General Practitioner Services

In addition to dissatisfaction with the quantity of psychiatric services, inmates also felt that other medical services were not sufficient. These medical services included access to, and adequate time spent with, the GP on contract. All of the inmates had seen this physician at least once during their incarceration. Some (4) of the women were not pleased with the amount of time the doctor spent with patients. When asked if they were satisfied with the health care offered at the prison, two of the women responded:

...The doctor is rushing you, only five minutes. Half the time he forgets you need blood work. I had an AIDS test done and six weeks later I got it...

I think the doctor has to take more time to sit down with the patient and hear them out.

Not surprisingly, it was those inmates with the most severe medical problems that

expressed the most complaints of this nature. Accounts from other women with minor or no health concerns confirmed, however, that the doctor did in fact spend very little time with inmates. This is revealed in the following excerpt:

I've seen the doctor once. I don't know his name. It was a man. I think everyone has to see him when they first come in. He didn't do anything, just asked me if I had any problems. I was only in there for about 30 seconds.

The above accounts portray hasty visits to the doctor's office. The fact that one woman did not know the doctor's name and spent only 30 seconds in his office reveals that the routine is a speedy one and may not be as thorough as it could or should be. Because the inmates feel rushed, they may believe that the problems they experience are not worthy of attention and, in turn, abstain from future visits and potential treatment.

Other (3) inmates were dissatisfied with the number of visits made by the GP:

The doctor comes in once a week. If the doctor don't come in, they don't get anyone else.

The doctor only comes in once a week. Anything could happen during the week and you got to wait. Unless it's an emergency and then you're confined for the next 24 hours.

I was here for a week before I could see a doctor...the man only comes in once a fuckin' week...

These women obviously felt that one visit a week from the doctor was inadequate. One reason for this revolves around the policy of emergency health services. If an inmate needs to see the doctor in an emergency situation, she is confined to her cell for 24 hours following the visit. The logic behind this policy is that the inmates' medical conditions need to be closely monitored after their release from the hospital. A couple (2) of inmates

felt that the confinement was unnecessary and saw it as a form of punishment and control.

When asked if they would like to see any improvements to the prison's current health care policy, two women replied:

I'd like to see the lock-downs stopped. If we have to go to the hospital we should be able to go without worrying about having to get locked up.

If my asthma acts up, I'm supposed to go to the hospital to have a mask put on my face. When I come back I'll get locked down for 24 hours. That's just the rules here. Just because you need medical attention you have to be locked down. You're punished for something you can't help. I wouldn't go to the hospital last night, I suffered it out. They couldn't care less if I died in here.

If inmates feel that treatment of a medical condition is not worth being locked in a cell for 24 hours, they may, like one of the inmates above, leave the medical concern unattended.

Unfortunately, time constraints precluded me from speaking with the GP on contract at the prison. It is worth noting, however, that doctor shortages in this province have, in recent years, been an ongoing problem. Physicians frequently complain of being overworked because of doctor shortages, especially in rural areas. This may be one factor contributing to the poor quantity and quality of doctor visits at the NLCCW.

### 6.2.1.3 Prescription Drugs

Two of the most disturbing findings in the data involved: 1) the lack of availability of over-the-counter medication; and 2) the delay in delivery of prescription drugs. Given the types of illnesses and conditions experienced by the inmates, it is not surprising that the list of medication required by them was lengthy. Medication cited by the inmates included the following: antibiotics, inhalers, lithium, atavan, atazol 30's, gravol, diazepam,

milro, skin creams, primerin, birth control, hydrocortisone, benedryl, sudafed, anaprox, valium, and antipsychotic injections.

The Director of Corrections stated the following with regards to the official policy on the distribution of medication at the NLCCW:

The staff are authorized to issue certain types of over-the-counter medication, not prescribed, but they do have that authority (to issue over-the-counter medication) and it is within their discretion.

With respect to prescription drugs, the COs maintain that it is policy for the doctor to leave the prescription with the officer in charge who will then ensure that the prescription gets to the hospital. The hospital calls when the prescriptions are filled and an officer goes to pick them up.

At the NLCCW, however, an inmate does not know when she will get the medication she has been prescribed. According to the women, as well as some COs, inmates may have to wait for medication for days or even a week after the doctor prescribes it. This was so disturbing to the inmates that, once again, they sent in a spokeswoman to ensure that their concerns about this particular matter were heard. The concerns, as expressed by her, are as follows:

A lot of women in here have run out of medication. Some have been out of medication for three or four days. We are talking atavan, valium, sleeping pills. All kinds of medication...and a lot of girls are now going through drug withdrawal...

These sentiments were reinforced by the remarks of other women:

The only other thing is the way the medication is being handled. From the time it's

ordered to the time you receive it, is in upwards of a week. I don't need my Atavan every night (implying that there are inmates who do). One of the girls ran out of sleepers Saturday and she didn't get them. She went four days without sleep. Justine has been out of Valium since Sunday and she still hasn't received hers...

As soon as you see the doctor you should get your cream. I was talking to the COs, asking them how come the girls are a wreck going through withdrawal. They said, you need to get your facts straight, you don't know what you're talking about. Some didn't sleep for four nights because she didn't have her sleeping pills. I'm still a human being, I am not a piece of shit or a dog... When a prescription is needed, you shouldn't have to wait a week for it. If you have someone on valium and they run out of it, and they've been on it for a long time, they're gonna go through withdrawal. They (staff) know when medication is running low so they should have medication in here. The way the system works with medication is disgusting.

In addition to the women's accounts, I witnessed first hand a lack of both prescription and over-the-counter medication at the NLCCW. I observed several (3) incidents where COs informed inmates that medication was unavailable. One of the most haunting of these occurrences involved two women requesting medication just before a nightly lock-down. One of the women entered the laundry room where I was conversing with an officer, and was extremely upset that her medication had been reduced without her knowledge. Another woman appeared shortly thereafter and asked the officer for over-the-counter medication for a headache. The CO informed her that the prison was out of this type of medication. The inmate was so desperate that she requested another inmate's acetaminophen. The officer told the woman that, under the prison policy, she could not dispense another woman's medication. A third inmate who had been sifting through some of her personal items in the laundry room looked at me in total disgust and asked: "Can

you imagine, no atazol in the prison?"

COs did agree with the inmates' assessment of this situation, as is illustrated by the following remarks:

... We're out of atazol now. One woman wanted her ASA she brought in with her, but we're not allowed to issue it to her. We're always running out of meds. The whole procedure they have for medication distribution is all screwed up...

Lots of times we run out (of medication). On Sunday nights you're supposed to do up a count, call down to the hospital and see if they need to refill the prescription. Sometimes the inmates don't go to see the doctor, and they don't know that there are no repeats. Sometimes it's oversight on the staff's part. In Stephenville, the doctor came the same time every week. When he came, Jennie (CO2) always went in with the doctor. Never ran into problems like this in Stephenville. There is something wrong with the way we deal with the low medication issue. The doctor has to be asked (by staff if someone needs a refill).

These statements suggest that when the NLCCW moved from Stephenville to Clarendville changes were made with regards to health care policy. According to the COs who had worked in Stephenville, the doctor had a scheduled visit at the prison once a week and the same female CO2 (CO supervisor) always went in with the inmate and doctor. At Clarendville, however, different female COs go into the doctor's office with the inmates at different times and the medication is administered by male officers. Male COs administer the medication because it is one of the few duties they are allowed to perform. The health care processes at the NLCCW now seem to involve many more people, thus creating much room for error. These COs thought that lack of organization within the institution was definitely an area of concern:

We run out of prescription drugs sometimes - too often - because there shouldn't be a need. Stuff is not followed up on (by staff in the institution). One week one

officer is in (the doctor's office with the inmates), next week another officer is in. He (GP) should come in the day, not in the night. His clinic should be one day a week.

He (GP) left yesterday and leaves the prescriptions here or eye doctor referrals or dentist referrals. The officer in charge will get them in the hospital the next day. When Cathy (administrator) is here it gets done but when Lou (administrator) is on, it doesn't get done. Hospital calls and we go and pick it up (medication). All the medication is recorded in a book.

There are several areas where connections might not be made. Some inmates may not know that they need repeats on their medication, the officer in charge might be late getting the prescriptions to the hospital, the hospital may be taking longer to fill the prescriptions, or an officer may be late in picking up the medication. Where the breakdown occurs does not change the bottom line: inmates must go without medication that has been prescribed to them for days or even a week at a time.

Being prevented from taking an aspirin for a headache and/or not having access to prescribed medication are products of total social control that, in this case, originate in the (dis)organization of institutional operations. In his discussion of the deprivation of goods and services, Sykes (1958) does not describe the deprivation of medication as a pain associated with imprisonment. To the contrary, he insists that the prisoner's physiological needs, including medical care, are met. The data presented here, however, suggest otherwise. A lack of both prescription and over the counter medication has caused a great deal of "pain" for the inmates involved. That the NLCCW is not meeting needs that were met at a maximum security institution for men in 1958 is particularly noteworthy.

Not having access to the same amenities as the general public is also a constant

reminder to the inmate that she is seen as “less than” a “full-fledged” member of society and creates further erosion of an already low self-concept. The statement, “I’m still a human being, I am not a piece of shit or a dog...,” suggests that inmates do, in fact, believe that the staff at the NLCCW see them as less than human. According to Schur (1984: 38), this type of labeling and systematic devaluation may result in a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the individual may act upon such a definition of herself and come to see herself as inferior. Furthermore, she will become more deviant than if she had not been so labeled.

#### 6.2.1.4 Medicalization as an Institution of Social Control?

At least four of the inmates interviewed had been prescribed sedatives and/or antidepressant drugs *since* their incarceration. One inmate talks about the consequences of failing to ingest these medications:

*R:* Seen the doctor probably two or three times.

*I:* Any prescription drugs?

*R:* Yes, diazepam, and they got me on sleeping pills.

*I:* What’s diazepam for?

*R:* I was prescribed it on the outside. It’s for to relax ya’. If I didn’t have that, I’d be schized out. I ran out yesterday, I don’t have anymore left. Last night, I felt like puttin’ the place up, turnin’ it into a party place. That’s what’s wrong with me, sure you seen me, you know what I’m like. I just got prescribed them Thursday and I haven’t got them yet.

*I:* And the sleeping pills?

*R:* To help me sleep. I just got prescribed them since I been here, I don’t have them yet. If I can’t sleep then I get to take one, if I can, I won’t take one.

In this type of situation, medication may be administered by physicians in attempts to curb “inappropriate” behaviours, such as “puttin’ the place up.” Labeling this person as “sick” and subjecting her to medication in attempts to control socially undesirable behaviour is a



blatant form of social control. There is also evidence to suggest that the crimes these women have committed may potentially be viewed as related to their “sicknesses”. The fact that the psychiatrist declared that “most of them (inmates at the NLCCW) would qualify under some sort of personality disorder” lends credence to this claim.

Getting inmates to take the medication that they have been prescribed does not appear to be a problem. In fact, the previous section suggests that inmates actually *crave* the medication and become rather upset when they cannot acquire it. Remarks from the following inmate indicate that medication was her way of dealing with some of the pains associated with being imprisoned:

*R:* I'm on valium, one a day and one a night for anti-anxiety. The psychiatrist wanted me on them because I was really low on myself when I came in here. Atasol 30's for headaches and gravol because the atasol upset my stomach.

*I:* So what were the valium for?

*R:* Depression and anxiety. I stopped taking them Tuesday. I'm not taking any drugs when I get out. When I came in, I was a state. I had to deal with the loss of Mark (partner) and Katrina (child). Mary Riggs was here (the woman who had allegedly abducted her daughter) makin' it hard on me, tellin me how good Mark was. Being on a unit with someone who abducted my daughter, I couldn't cope with it.

Although the inmate stated that it was the psychiatrist who “wanted” her on the medication, she opted for medication as a method to help numb the pain of the circumstances surrounding being in prison.

The psychiatrist believed that inmates were approaching both her and the GP in attempts to obtain different varieties of medication. She states:

...We (Psychiatrist and GP) came to a meeting of the minds. He would order the painkillers and I would stick to psychiatry. If I'm concerned about a patient, I'll write a note to him and leave it for him and ask him to investigate. They (inmates) test us both to see what they can get....

The psychiatrist explained that inmates who had never taken sleeping pills in their entire lives were now requesting them. She believed these inmates were asking for sedatives to distribute to other inmates. There may, however, be a different explanation. These inmates may feel that the medication is a necessity that will help them sleep through nights when other offenders are making it impossible for them to settle. This is an important consideration to keep in mind when reading the architectural design segment in Chapter 6.

As we recall, Clear and Cole (1997) outline four concepts that have been used to describe the lifestyles of inmates as they adapt to prison. Within these adaptive lifestyles are descriptions of how inmates deal with the pains associated with imprisonment. Nowhere, however, is it suggested that inmates may deal with these pains by telling physicians they are under "mental" duress or having difficulties sleeping in attempts to get medication that will help paralyse the pains. This type of behaviour is likely more prevalent in female institutions given the vulnerabilities of the women housed there. Furthermore, as Maeve (1999: 50) states, the humiliation ingrained with the notion of being sent to prison exacerbates depression for most women. This is not surprising given that, when women commit crimes, they are actually seen as doubly deviant: first by transgression of the law; and second, by failing to adhere to traditional gender-role expectations (Boritch, 1997: 135).

How women deal with distress is influenced by the type of resources they have available, and by the responses of those close to them and those they encounter in their search for an explanation and relief (Maticka-Tyndale and Bicher, 1996: 160). There are very few resources available to women in prison and given the desperation of their situations, it is highly likely that they would be willing to cling to any resource available. One of these resources is a psychiatrist who has the ability to solve their “immediate” dilemmas by providing the necessary medication. Maticka-Tyndale and Bicher (1996: 162) point out the dangers in this approach:

As benzodiazepines decrease anxiety, they also erode awareness of the oppressive life circumstances that produced the distress. Among the social and cultural iatrogenic effects is that the oppression continues and women become less aware of any other way of dealing with their response to it. Women can easily become emotionally dependent on these drugs at the same time as they are becoming physically addicted to them.

#### 6.2.2 Other Health Concerns

There were also other health-related problems discussed by inmates at the NLCCW. These included: lack of doctor-patient confidentiality; the absence of a female general practitioner; cigarette smoke, lack of physical exercise and fresh air, and poor diet; and safety.

##### 6.2.2.1 Doctor-Patient Confidentiality

When inmates at the NLCCW see the GP, the policy is to have one female guard present during the appointment. Over half (6) of the inmates thought that the presence of a CO in the doctor’s office with the inmates constituted unethical procedure. Two of the

women stated:

...The problem with the doctor is that a female officer has to be there and if she doesn't agree with what you say she will say that she doesn't agree. The doctor and patient relationship should be privileged information.

My big concern medically is that I don't approve of the fact that there is a guard in there (doctor's office) with you. I know that when the doctor leaves, the guards go out and discuss with other guards what Doctor Shaw says. That doesn't work for me. Where's the confidentiality here? They (COs) say things in front of other inmates. I have a big problem with that. There's a couple of staff that don't know how to keep their mouth shut. It's (discussion of medical problems) in front of other inmates.

This is a delicate issue that is laden with a variety of problems. If the COs do, in fact, give their own opinions with regard to the inmates medical concerns, this is undermining the inmate's ability to know her own body and to express her needs. In addition, it is possible that COs may deliberately give the wrong information or otherwise attempt to influence the medical judgement of the physician. The practice of speaking about an inmate's medical problems with other COs and in front of other inmates can also be degrading to the woman in question and, in turn, may humiliate her.

These incidents indicate forms of institutional control and are further indicative of a loss of autonomy as described by Sykes (1958: 73). In this case, the inmate is constrained in her ability to make choices regarding her own health. Potential comments and repercussions from COs control every word that the inmate communicates to the physician. Sykes maintains that the prisoner's inability to make choices reduces an inmate to a weak, helpless, dependent status of a child (1958: 76). This is an extreme deviation

from the ideas presented in the new women-centred correctional model which emphasizes a need for women to have control over their lives and to make responsible decisions, given meaningful options. The Task Force maintains that making meaningful choices will decrease the pains of imprisonment and make women feel empowered and increase their self-esteem levels.

These forms of control may not only be detrimental to an inmate's self-esteem and self-concept, they may also lead to incidents where an inmate refuses to express medical concerns to a doctor. The following comments indicate that this is a legitimate concern:

You're in a rush. The staff are in there. There's no privacy with the doctor, so I forgot to mention it (prescription drugs that she had been prescribed prior to incarceration but had not brought into the prison with her) to him...I've only seen the doctor once and I was in and out in two minutes and I couldn't talk to him because there's a guard in there with ya'. I don't like talking about my personal information in front of anyone else.

Only the female COs interviewed commented on this practice. This was probably due to the fact that it is only the female officers who may be present in the doctor's office with the inmates. One of the COs interviewed was clearly not comfortable with this procedure and saw it as a breach of doctor-patient confidentiality. She stated:

I don't agree with the fact that inmates don't see the doctor alone. It's a violation of their rights. I don't agree with the fact that staff has access to all medical files (there's one file for both GP and Psychiatrist.). I've had doctors give people their HIV test results in front of me. This is highly confidential.

#### 6.2.2.2 Female General Practitioner

Other inmates (5) were concerned with privacy of another nature. They felt that

because the NLCCW was an all female institution it should be serviced by female doctors.

The following complaints are indicative of their feelings:

I think that in a female institution there should be a female doctor for us to see. I know four or five girls who pretty much refuse to let Doctor Shaw do a pap test.

*R:* I still think we should have a female doctor though.

*I:* Why?

*R:* Just personal things, if you want to get a pap smear or an internal exam, more comfortable talking to a female than a male doctor.

A CO also echoed the same feelings when she stated:

*R:* We need access to a female MD for pap tests. Those girls are not gonna let a male do it. I wouldn't either if I had the abuse issues they have. Dr. Shaw, when he can, he will get a female doctor to do it. They're trying to get her into the clinic.

*I:* Is that the institution trying to get her into the clinic?

*R:* No, that has nothing to do with the institution.

The practice of employing a male physician in a female institution is fraught with problems. If inmates do not feel comfortable enough to talk about gynecological or other health issues with the doctor, they may ignore the problems and leave them unattended. This could lead to health deterioration in some inmates, especially those with gynecological problems. This is alarming given the high incidence of these types of health concerns in female prisons.

#### 6.2.2.3 Cigarette Smoke, Exercise, Fresh Air, and Diet

Inmates also voiced their concerns about the density of cigarette smoke, a lack of exercise, a scarcity of fresh air, and poor quality food at the NLCCW. Only two of the inmates interviewed did not smoke. Both of these women complained of the smoke during

interviews and informal conversations. They were repulsed that inmates had to eat in an area designated for smoking. One of the inmates stated:

Everyone has to eat where people smoke. When meals come out there is no smoking but when the meal is over smoking resumes.

This inmate claimed that she had to be prescribed an inhaler since being incarcerated and believed that it was due to the amount of smoke to which she was exposed. The other non-smoker was on a 24-hour watch and was not permitted in her cell during the day. She remarked that this was "particularly bad" because of the density of smoke in the multipurpose room. Because I spent a considerable amount of time in that room conversing with inmates, I can empathize with these women. I had left the prison on several occasions with a headache and sore eyes, both of which I attributed to cigarette smoke. Others also spoke of their disdain for these conditions, as is illustrated by the following comment from one of the volunteers at the prison: "The smoking environment is terrible; they need to get a bit more space."

A recent *Bi-Annual Report* (Adult Corrections) cited "Physical Fitness" as part of the programming available at the NLCCW. Upon interviewing and talking with various individuals, however, I discovered that the only physical activity embarked upon at the center consisted of 30 minutes of aerobics, three days a week. This activity was facilitated by the school teacher who took the last 30 minutes of class to conduct the sessions. Furthermore, one of the inmates pointed out that, realistically, it only happens twice a week because "there is always something going on."

Some inmates (3) complained that this amount of physical activity was just not enough:

I would also like to see more exercise. There is no place here to exercise. The school teacher tries to give classroom time during her last 30 minutes of class for aerobics. She has an aerobics video that is about 20 minutes long.

*R:* From 3:30 to 4:00 it's a half hour work out with Britta (school instructor).

*I:* How do you like that?

*R:* It's exercise, it's good.

There's no gymnasium here or nuntin', that ain't very healthy either. Exercise does the body good.

Although the women seemed keen to be involved in exercise activities, one administrator thought that they lacked motivation in that area. The administrator stated:

We have a recreation program. If you don't feel good about yourself...it's hard to get them motivated. A lot of them are lazy and set in their ways and they would sit in there and smoke all day long...

Once again, there is evidence of negative, informal labeling - this time by an administrator.

Both the dilemmas of unwanted cigarette smoke and a lack of physical fitness programming may partly be attributed to a lack of space at the NLCCW. There is no space available, for example, to have a designated smoking area. There is also not enough space for any type of recreational activity with the exception of aerobics or other stationary exercising. Lack of space within the facility will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Some inmates (4) also felt that they did not get enough time outside and thought that this was particularly unhealthy. Two of the women stated the following with regard to



access to fresh air:

Not enough outside time...lucky if you get out once a week. I have been here for as much as three and a half weeks without fresh air. The institution is not that busy, the staff is too lazy. One or two staff on different shifts try to get them out for fresh air, it is the same staff all the time.

There is one thing I have to say. I've been here for 16 days today and I have had a total of about an hour and a half of fresh air. There have been nice days but there has been no attempt (to get them outside). There's no outdoor recreation.

The decision to take the inmates outside is made by those COs on duty. They decide if and when the inmates go out, as well as the duration of the outing. This is completely subjective and may depend on the work orientation of the officers on duty. While the more support-oriented officers were willing to take offenders outside, those who were more control-oriented resisted. CO orientation will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

Some of the inmates were also not happy with the catering company that serviced the institution. Diet was one of the first topics discussed during my initial rapport building session. During this first visit, inmates complained that they did not get some of the items listed in the menu, specifically vegetables. At least four of the inmates stated that the food at the NLCCW was terrible. They were also not happy that they had to have permission from a physician prior to requesting low fat meals. Food was mentioned several times later during successive visits. One woman who required low fat food for health reasons was visibly upset when she stated the following:

I asked them for extra fruit and extra salad. They were doin' it for a while, but then they stopped. Some days I get it, some days I don't, depends on if the caterer remembers it or not. Sometimes they sends me up french fries with gravy. I was eatin' too much grease and I was gettin' sick and throwing up. My liver enzymes

are up so high. My enzymes make me worse. I need to eat fruits and salads and drink lots of water. There's a couple of girls on low fat diets and sometimes they get french fries, too.

Another woman stated the following when she was asked if anyone had given her any diet or nutritional information:

No, eat what you gets or starve. French fries, french fries and more french fries. Not fit to eat, it's shockin'. Do you know what we gets in a jigs dinner (traditional Newfoundland meal consisting of boiled vegetables, salt beef, and a roast of meat or chicken)? A little tiny piece of salt beef, potato and carrot...

Although the health care policy of the CSC ensures that emphasis will be placed on health promotion/illness prevention in support of providing essential health services (Commissioner's Directive, Health Services, 1997), there appears to be no such preventative health care ongoing at the NLCCW. A proper diet, regular exercise, access to the outdoors, and "clean" air within the prison would all be examples of attempts to promote health and prevent illness. That none of these practices have been implemented calls into question the following policy statement regarding health care delivery in correctional institutions:

Health Education and Promotion programs shall be provided to meet the identified needs of individual offenders and specific offender groups.

(Commissioner's Directive, Health Services, 1997)

Once again, we see a discrepancy between the services provided at the NLCCW and the Task Force's suggested principles for future program development for female offenders. The Task Force insists that a lifestyle which encourages the growth of self-esteem can only be created in a "positive" environment. They advocate an approach which

reflects the “healthy communities” concept promoted by Health and Welfare Canada. A prison which lacks clean and fresh air and a lack of nutrition and exercise falls drastically short of meeting such a standard.

When the previous four problems are combined, they become the recipe for a tired, unmotivated, inmate population. One can envision a group of women sitting around in a hazy, smoke-filled room, with no place to exercise and no access to fresh air after consuming a meal with a high fat concentration. It is not unreasonable to conclude that this type of environment, one that ignores “non-criminogenic” health needs such as those above, is not an ideal environment for addressing those needs of a “criminogenic” nature. An environment that promotes lethargy and ill health will produce sick, tired, and unmotivated people.

#### 6.2.2.4 Safety

Some inmates (3) at the NLCCW were concerned with their own physical safety. One of the prisoners, for example, feared “Augusta,” an “MHA.” Augusta detested the inmate because she believed her to be a spy. During an outing, Augusta picked up a stone and was aiming it at the inmate when one of the COs observed and stopped her. The inmate claimed that if she would have to be hospitalized for an incident such as this, she would take legal action against the facility. This presents further evidence to suggest that some of these inmates are very outspoken with regard to problem areas at the facility and are quite willing to politicize their deprivations.

In another case, an inmate was anxious about contracting diseases through bodily

waste and blood, especially given the fact that there was one known case of Hepatitis B at the institution. She stated:

Then there was the woman, I'm going to be blunt here, she shit on her bed. She shit on her bed (stressed). Kyra and I had to clean it up. No one else here wanted to do it. I don't think it is fair. It's not the first time. The other day all her clean clothes were covered, we had to wash it all again. I was not pleased. Oh we were gagging, Kyra and I. I was fit to be tied.... Then someone peed to bed and put their sheets in the laundry. It gets pretty bad.... There is an inmate here with Hepatitis B. I'm worried about that. If I get Hepatitis B, they will be hearing from me. I was here with my finger wide open (from an accident)....

Both Sykes (1958) and Maslow (1970) offer some insight into the consequences of the deprivation of safety. Sykes (1958) contends that the prisoners' loss of security arouses anxiety. This anxiety, in Sykes' study, supposedly stemmed from: 1) questioning oneself about having the "nerve" to deal with violence; and 2) worrying about how their reactions to the violence would affect how others saw him. While there is no doubt that anxiety has been aroused in these inmates, the causes of the anxiety differ. Anxiety, in this case, arises from the actual physical harm that may come about as a result of an act of violence or negligence with regard to health care.

Maslow (1970: 39) theorized that whenever a person's safety needs are not being met the feelings may become so extreme and chronic that the person may be characterized as living solely for safety. He believes that one way in which we can see these needs directly is to turn to the "social underdogs," as I have done here. More pertinent, however, is Maslow's contention that if safety needs are not being met, one cannot focus on growth based needs, such as a need for self-esteem. If we recall, self-esteem growth

was one of the fundamental objectives of the “*Creating Choices*” policy document

### 6.2.3 Familial Support

Maintaining adequate contact with family and significant others was another major need expressed by the inmates. All of the women communicated an interest in having their loved ones visit them at the prison. Of the group, most (8) had been visited by family and/or friends while incarcerated at the NLCCW, and a few of those (3) had been visited by their children. One incarcerated mother had this to say about the importance of visitations with her daughter:

I'd like to see her every day of the week. CPU (Child Protection Unit) won't do it because the respite worker can't arrange it every day and child protection won't arrange it.

When asked if she would like to have access to more family visitation, another woman responded:

Oh yes, definitely. I got a niece she's two months now. I only been out for two weeks to see her...

Sentence length and place of residence influenced the amount of visitation. Of the few (3) women who did not have visitors, one was from out of province and two had been incarcerated for short periods of time (seven days and 20 days).

Familial support was difficult to maintain at the prison. This, as well as other issues surrounding the structural design and location of the NLCCW, will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

### 6.3 “Criminogenic” Offender Needs

Correctional policy and development in Newfoundland and Labrador have clearly centred around the “criminogenic” needs of offenders. According to the Director of Corrections, the most important goal of corrections is rehabilitation through “criminogenic” programming that allows for the offenders’ successful reintegration into the community:

Well, it’s the same for all offenders - reintegrating offenders back into the community, primarily through allowing access into effective programming that targets the criminogenic risk factors (Substance abuse, cognitive distortions, pro-criminal associations). We’re not sure if victimization is a risk factor but it’s still a problem...history of abuse, neglect, violence, family dysfunction...the problem is historical factors. It’s the experiences people have had. You can’t change those experiences but the programming you can give those offenders, coping skills, and cognitive ability, can help them deal with issues and rise above them.

This administrator claims that this is “the same for all offenders.” While targeting “criminogenic risk factors” may meet the needs of a male inmate population, my data suggest that women do not feel those needs are the most compelling. Furthermore, although literature suggests that victimization is correlated with criminal behaviour, the Director is less convinced. Policy in this province promotes programming that ignores such fundamental female issues on the basis that it does not fit into a “criminogenic” category.

I am not suggesting that the inmates I interviewed did not express interest in programming that administrators label as “criminogenic.” I am merely stating that on the basis of the quality and quantity of data, “criminogenic” needs emerge as secondary,

relative to other needs such as health care. This point will be analyzed further in the chapter conclusion.

### 6.3.1 Education

According to prison policy (memorandum) an instructor provides 15 hours of classroom teaching per week at the Center. The instructor's main responsibility is to deliver an ABE (Adult Basic Education) program.<sup>3</sup> Some post secondary programming (e.g., computer courses, introductory courses) is also offered to the women through the College of the North Atlantic.

Lack of education and training is seen as a barrier that prevents women from entering the work force. Because female criminality has been linked to their poverty status, removing that status should, in theory, lessen their need to commit crimes to support themselves and their children. I am not claiming, however, that education is a "quick fix" that will decrease the female crime rate. The problems that these women have experienced are extremely harrowing and convoluted and to reduce them to a lack of education or training would be a gross injustice. I am simply stating that education is a *step* "towards decreasing crimes of necessity" (Carey, 1995: 108) by helping to eliminate female inmates' cycle of dependence. While education and vocational programs can never rectify the oppressive experiences these women have suffered at the hands of a patriarchal society, educational programming in conjunction with other programs that address

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<sup>3</sup>During the 1998-1999 fiscal year one inmate completed the ABE program. Approximately 25% of the total population attended the program regularly that year.

additional issues prevalent in these women's lives, offer a glimmer of hope.

All of the inmates showed interest in furthering their education. Completing high school was top priority for over half (6) of the inmates interviewed, and most of these (4) expressed an interest in doing some post-secondary training. This is representative of the "gleaning" role as described by Clear and Cole (1997). There was major variation in interests among inmates. A few of the inmates (3) were interested in pursuing a career in social work. One of the inmates said the following about seeking work in this field:

I'd like to work with people like myself and people who have grown up in the child welfare system because I've been there and done that. You get social workers who say that they understand but they don't. You can't understand unless you've been in their shoes.

Some other inmates (3) were attracted to careers involving computers. One of these inmates who had already received an AutoCAD<sup>4</sup> certificate wanted to further her knowledge of computer drafting. Another was interested in computer applications, while the third was keen about a course called "Webmaster," with hopes of becoming a Microsoft certified engineer. Another inmate had started a course in cosmetology prior to incarceration and hoped to eventually finish it. Still, another inmate wanted to be educated in the field of criminology with hopes of someday practicing law. Finally, a different inmate wished to upgrade accounting and business courses at a community college level.

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<sup>4</sup>AutoCAD is an interactive drawing system designed to permit a user to construct or edit a drawing on a graphics display screen ([www.fbe.unsw.edu.au/Learning/AutoCAD/CadNotes/chap1.html](http://www.fbe.unsw.edu.au/Learning/AutoCAD/CadNotes/chap1.html))



With the exception of cosmetology - a course which prepares women for work in the service industry - none of the women were interested in pursuing positions that were low-paying and without room for advancement. Here we see the potential for a major shift away from the sex segregated, low-skilled and/or low-level service occupations in which these women were employed prior to incarceration. That these women can actually foresee a future in which they are independent, "productive" members of society is cause for optimism.

Many of the women (5) said they would have to apply for student loans if they subsequently pursued a post-secondary education. Other sources of financial help cited included social services, parents, partners, and a native status card. Dependence on government assistance and family members for financial support is indicative of the economic status of these women. Living in impoverished environments acts as a deterrent in the pursuit of furthering educational interests.

It was also clear that most of the women (8) had no desire to receive any kind of domestic training, such as cooking or cleaning, that would help them improve the skills they already had possessed or that would prepare them to pursue paid work in that area. When asked if they had been given any such training since their incarceration, the women replied that, with the exception of chores which were mandatory, they had not. The following comments regarding housekeeping prowess were typical of the responses provided when women were asked if they thought they needed this type of training:

No, I know how to clean my house and stuff, especially the bathroom. It has to be

spotless. With my bathroom, I'm like something with OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder). You never seen a cleaner bathroom as in my place. You might see dishes piled up, but the bathroom is spotless.

I clean showers every morning. Everybody has their assigned chores, that's mine. I've been cleaning showers since I was eight years old (inmate laughs). When we got old enough we left the shower the way we found it, pretty much spotless, no leaving water on the walls. Mom was a homemaker and you could eat off the floors. I guess because I grew up like that, that's the way I am now. Yuri (partner) hates cleaning so I can imagine what it's going to be like when I get home. The entertainment center is all black...

Here we see a departure from the desire for domestic training that supports and perpetuates stereotypical roles for women.

Most women interviewed (7) had either completed courses at the institution or were in the process of doing so. Courses completed or in progress included Business English, Marketing and Economics, Communications, Windows 95, Business, Entrepreneurialship, Accounting, Computers, Consumer Math, Career Awareness, and Personal Development. A small minority of the women (2) had, however, eventually quit school. One woman stated:

...I really wants to get into MUN (Memorial University of Newfoundland). I quit school in here, I couldn't concentrate. Velma (instructor) was a bit disappointed in me quitting, but I had too much to worry about. My worst mark was 58 in math and my highest was 96. I can do really well in school, it's just in here it's chaos...

The "chaos" this woman was referring to centred around insufficient health care, as well as a lack of space for studying, being housed with mentally ill inmates, and poor treatment by COs. These topics will be discussed further in subsequent chapters.

The remaining women (4) had not attended school at the NLCCW and, at that time,

had no desire to do so. Two of these women quoted short sentences as a reason for not participating in this type of program. In another two cases, the women said they would like to receive educational training but not at this particular institution. One of these inmates was a federal prisoner who had served time at federal institutions and was now awaiting a transfer. She felt that a federal institution could offer her more by way of educational programming, as well as basic rights and privileges. The other inmate was very unhappy with the health care policy at the prison and also alluded to several disagreements with staff as a major area of discontentment. In these two instances, some of the deprivations of prison, such as the loss of autonomy and goods and services, were instrumental in preventing these inmates from furthering any educational pursuits at the NLCCW.

#### 6.3.2 Vocational Training

Although there was no vocational training offered at the prison per se, there was a sewing incentive program that could have potentially given women experience with sewing and ironing. This program was set up with the intent to give inmates who were the least financially well off opportunities to earn small amounts of money that would, in most cases, be used to purchase tobacco. The women mend clothes by attaching buttons and zippers and they also do ironing. Most of the clothing mended comes from male correctional facilities. This type of work is similar to that carried out by women at the Kingston Penitentiary for Men in 1835.

This program is based on traditional gender-role stereotypes and gives women

experience in an area that prepares them for a low-level service occupation. It also perpetuates the idea that women must continue to be subservient in a male patriarchal society. One of the treatment personnel was passionate in voicing the opinion that sewing should not be the only wage-earning option for inmates:

I can't sew, I might be able to sew a button on but that's about it. If I came in here (without cigarettes) I'd be ready to claw your eyes out. I'd go pretty far for a cigarette, too, sometimes...Meanwhile I can knit or paint, or do a carving, but just because I can't sew, that shouldn't be the only thing. There are lots of people this day and age that can't sew.

The woman said that this is also problematic because it is the people who are the most disadvantaged, such as "MHAs", who need money for cigarettes, but they have very few skills. She said:

Even when you have someone who is low functioning, they would need that much support that you'd might as well do it yourself...you'd have to say, "ok put your foot on the pedal, put the material here".... so we have them ironing. And it's usually the people that don't have income that are the most socially disadvantaged.

Present here is a program that is available in the institution but is, for the most part, not accessed by the prison population. The people that most need the program cannot take advantage of it because they do not possess the skills, and others who do have the skills do not wish to partake in this type of programming.

### 6.3.3 Other Notable "Criminogenic" Needs

The majority of the women interviewed (7) expressed an interest in programming closely connected to the crimes for which they were incarcerated. Such interest is indicative of "gleaning." Two women incarcerated for property crimes, for example, were

enthusiastic about doing a financial management program. In three other cases, women communicated that they would like to see a substance abuse program offered at the institution. One of these women had committed her crimes while under the influence of drugs and another had committed crimes to pay for drugs. When asked if they thought they had a substance abuse problem, two of the women responded with the following:

*R:* I know I do.

*I:* What substance?

*R:* Mostly pills and booze.

*I:* Would you consider yourself an alcoholic?

*R:* No, more drug addict than alcohol.

With street drugs, with weed and hash. I went on crack for two weeks but give it up because it was really expensive and I know what happens to people on that stuff and I didn't want to go there. There's no hope for me and my weed, that's all I look forward to in the morning and night. I picture myself at 90 with a joint hangin' out of my mouth. That's why I'm so crooked in here but I'm over it now...

In a different case, an inmate wanted to see a program geared toward helping her with a shoplifting problem. For another person, the interest was in receiving counseling and treatment specific to sex offenders. This woman said:

Given my charge, I find it very difficult there are no programs for that. They're trying to set up something in St. John's with the John Howard Society.

No programs targeting these problems, the very types of programs that administrators advocate, were present at the NLCCW. The financial problems associated with implementing programs for a diverse clientele with varying needs were discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Problems with accessing these and other potential programs in the community are discussed in the following chapter.

#### 6.4 Offender Programming

Comments on the programs available at the NLCCW were, for the most part, favorable. It is not surprising, however, that inmates seemed to enjoy the programs they participated in given that all participants have full choice with regard to what program(s) they choose. If an inmate felt that a program was of no value to her, she could refuse to join or discontinue the program.

Most of the inmates (7) were involved in at least one of the volunteer programs.<sup>5</sup> Almost half of the inmates (5) took part in the Social Awareness Group.<sup>6</sup> The facilitator (Rob) initiated the start-up of this group by meeting with the classification officer at the prison and discussing what type of program he might offer. His background included a Bachelor of Arts, teaching criminology at a community college, and employment at a youth correctional facility. He felt that his past education and work experience adequately prepared him to deliver this service. Rob informed me that although the group focused on areas of interest within the formal side of the criminal justice system, one “strong issue” with inmates was how the family is impacted upon when the mother is incarcerated. This is not at all surprising given that the literature on incarcerated mothers suggests that this is a

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<sup>5</sup>Volunteer Programs as listed by the institution included the following groups: Social Awareness; Parenting Support; Christian Based Self-Awareness; Stress Management; Craft Program; and Alcoholics Anonymous.

<sup>6</sup>A discussion group for inmates interested in talking about current events and gathering information about services and systems in the province (i. e., parole, Emmanuel House, child custody laws).

major area of concern for most female inmates who have children.

Comments on this group were mixed and a couple of the women were concerned that the facilitator may have strayed from the program mandate. Two inmates had this to say about the group:

... We discuss certain topics every week. We've discussed sentencing, different types of sentencing, what families go through on the outside. We've discussed prisons in other countries. It started out as a good group, very together type of group. Lately things are getting off topic. He's putting some stress management in it. It's not a group I look forward to anymore. I don't leave feeling very good about myself. He'd say stuff like, people out there think you're scum, I don't think you're scum but people out there think you're scum. He needs to get back on track.

*R:* Thursday night is Social Awareness. What we do is discuss the justice system. Rob (facilitator) used to be a probation officer, now he's a social worker, but his group is fantastic. I really enjoy it, it's one of the few things I look forward to here. He touches on stress management but all of us do stress management with Chris. So when Rob started this, we were all stressed out. We all told him about it and he was understanding about it. He wasn't aware that we were doing stress management with Chris.

*I:* What sort of things do you do in that group?

*R:* Everything from paying back restitution to parole. This Tuesday, we're doing the article on Lisa Neve. Pick it apart and get everyone's opinion. It's not your everyday type of group where you sit down and pour your heart out. He's a pretty understanding person but he won't put up with no bull shit....

This group has the potential to educate offenders regarding their legal rights as prisoners as well as the community supports available to them. Such training may further assist inmates in politicizing basic rights and program development. However, the facilitator did go beyond dictated topics. His emphasis on negative labeling of criminals by the general population, as well as the implementation of stress management, for example, was a

diversion from the slated subjects and clearly disturbed inmates.

I had the opportunity to sit in on one of these group meetings during the end of my data collection period. The purpose of that particular session was to discuss Lisa Neve, Canada's only dangerous female offender at that time. All of the inmates appeared interested in the topic and had read related articles. About half way through the session, however, the meeting went off-track and other topics came up for discussion and debate. The women, for example, appeared to be very interested in talking about the injustice of being housed in a facility that lacked basic services and employed non-supportive staff. One inmate, at that time, stated, in a mocking tone, that a psychiatrist visits the NLCCW once every six months. Other issues discussed included a lack of fresh air and the ramifications of housing mentally challenged offenders. This lends further support to the contention that it is the more basic needs and issues that the women are the most concerned with.

Following the group, I asked Rob if things had run as they usually did as I feared that my presence may have upset the group equilibrium. He said that he thought that the women were more confident and outspoken than usual because they thought they had me "on their side." If the women did indeed feel more confident, this suggests that inmates who feel supported can feel better about themselves and be more open in their communications. This type of confidence in oneself builds self-esteem, one of the main goals for the rehabilitation of female offenders.



Some women (3) were participating in a Parenting Support Group<sup>7</sup> that had started the same month that I had arrived at the prison. Once again, it was the facilitator of the group who came to the prison and offered this service. This person had a Master's degree in Social Work, a degree in English, and a diploma in Public Administration. He believed that his background "definitely" prepared him to deliver support services to women prisoners. He stated that, while he had not worked with people in corrections before, he had worked with people who had similar problems.

Feelings about this group were also mixed. One woman said that the program was "all right" while the others had very opposing viewpoints. One of the women felt that it did not benefit her at all:

It was so repetitive. We listened to him tell us that if you don't want to spoil your kids you have to say no - for two hours. He's African or Jamaican. I don't even think he knew what he was talking about. I don't think I need that parenting class. I think if you had someone who had first hand experience....if it were a lady she would be more knowledgeable. I'm not saying that men are not good parents, just this particular man wasn't.

Another woman, however, expressed that she enjoyed the group:

I was in parenting skills, it's really good I only went to two groups because my daughter couldn't get in. We talked about child protection and when, and why child protection should interfere, how we feel about child protection being involved with the family. What to do when a baby cries. Do we spoil our children, how do we balance it out so we're not spoiling but not letting her cry either. When

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<sup>7</sup>The purpose of this group is to support women in their parenting roles and offer information on issues such as relationship building, discipline and child development. Afternoon sessions of one to two hours were held weekly at the institution. approximately 25% of the total population attended these sessions in the 1997-1998 fiscal year.

my baby cried, I always picked her up. When she went to foster care, it was a long time before she got off the pacifier and out of rocking. He asked me if I thought it was right. I said I think that's right for me. Picking my baby up an' cuddling her and if it is spoiling than I guess I am spoiling my child. That's how I show my baby I love her.

These data provide further evidence that incarcerated women have very diverse needs, and that programming suitable or needed by some inmates may not be suitable for all.

I have since been informed that the parenting program has been discontinued. No explanation was given as to why this happened. This is a key development given the importance that women place on their children. As one inmate stated: "My children are my life."

Two women were involved in the Christian Based Self Awareness Group.<sup>8</sup> The facilitator (Chris) had a Bachelors degree in Education and two Masters' degrees in the same area. She had been working with female offenders for six years and had completed a 3-week "initiation to prison" program at Springhill prior to working with offenders. She felt that this education and training had adequately prepared her to work with female offenders. According to Chris, this program was developed by two individuals at Acadia University specifically for male prisoners who were alcoholics. She said that it was a 10-week program but could go longer, depending on whether or not classes were missed.

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<sup>8</sup>The program compares biblical situations to the life experiences of women and provides an opportunity for the women to reflect on their situations. This 12 week program was offered weekly at the institution in one hour sessions. Approximately 50% of the inmate population attended this program during the 1997-1998 fiscal year.

One woman in this group said that it was “enjoyable” while the other stated it was:

...about Jesus and my faith in God. How much faith you have. We'll sit down and read a paragraph, in Easter it was about how Jesus rose. At the end of the group we'd have a thinking group, and write stuff like would we put ourselves in Jesus shoes.

Once again, we see evidence of women being fitted into programming that was originally designed for a male inmate population. One limitation of this group is that inmates who are incarcerated after the program has already started will not be able to join. Also, inmates who are not incarcerated for at least ten weeks will not be able to take part. The facilitator did say, however, that if an inmate wanted to ask questions about religion or God she would talk with them on a one-on-one basis.

Some women (3) took part in the Stress Management Program.<sup>9</sup> Chris was also the facilitator of this program. She said that she decided to do stress management on an individual basis rather than in a group because that route was a more private one. Chris stated that she met with the women once a week to talk about potential stressors and how to deal with them. The comments on this program were very favourable, as can be seen in this inmate's comments:

Stress management with Chris (facilitator) - one on one thing - very, very helpful. There's some things that she's helped me with that I don't think I would ask Al

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<sup>9</sup>This program provided women with the opportunities to learn techniques for managing stress and to discuss their present coping strategies. Approximately 50% of the population attended this program during the 1997-1998 fiscal year.

(partner) for. It's easier because she taught me in school. She knows my background and my family and the type of person I am. My time here would be a lot longer if she wasn't here. I guess you don't appreciate some things til' they're not here. When I was here last year and went home, I missed our conversations. She's amazing. She doesn't preach to you even though she comes from a very religious background.

No one I had talked to had informed me of a Craft Program.<sup>10</sup> It was, however, clear from my visits that cross stitch, as well as other craft activities, were particularly popular hobbies at the prison. Involvement in craft work was potentially something that was done to alleviate some of the boredom experienced by prisoners.

I was informed that there was presently no representative available to facilitate an Alcoholics Anonymous Group. Given the small size of the town, it is not surprising that a facilitator could not be acquired. This will be discussed further in chapter 7.

The only groups mentioned under Classification Offender Programming<sup>11</sup> were programs offered by the social work student (3 inmates)<sup>12</sup> as well as the Seven Steps

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<sup>10</sup>Volunteers from various religious groups provided the instruction and materials for craft projects. The women were given the final products to send to family or take with them upon release. Approximately 70% of the women attended the craft sessions during the 1997-1998 fiscal year.

<sup>11</sup>These included anger management, Social Work Student, Community Work Placement, and Seven Steps Group.

<sup>12</sup>A placement was completed by a fifth year student at our institution. Field instruction and supervision was provided through Classification for this student. The student provided individual counseling and co-facilitated four group sessions for women. The group sessions were of an educational focus and covered a variety of topics (e.g., assertiveness, relationships).

Program (5 inmates).<sup>13</sup> These were the most favourably talked about of all the groups. Unfortunately, Adriana (Social Work Student) was finishing up her work term just as I had started the data collection. I did not have an opportunity to talk with her. One inmate had the following to say about this group:

*R:* Education group with Adriana and Judy (outside volunteer). They ran a series of four sets of educational groups. They ran every second Monday for about two hours and I absolutely loved it. I found them informative, fun, there was a lot of sharing going on between the facilitators and ourselves.

*I:* Like a collaborative effort?

*R:* Yes. That is important to me. I'd like to see her (Adriana) come back.

*I:* What kind of stuff did you do?

*R:* We did a topic on addictions, we did a topic on assertiveness, a couple on healthy relationships. Adriana came in as a student and got the group on the go. She's an amazing woman, I'd like to see her working here.

*I:* Anything else you'd like to say about the group?

*R:* No, just that it wasn't long enough.

One of the limitations of this program was that it was only a few months in duration. Any inmate who was released before the program started or incarcerated after the program began would obviously not be able to partake in it.

The Seven Steps program was also popular among the inmates who participated in it. I spoke with one of the volunteers who helped facilitate this program. He had been involved with Seven Steps for ten years, one year of which was with female inmates. His

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<sup>13</sup>This group is co-facilitated by Classification and volunteers from the community. Two hour sessions are held weekly at the institution. This program is offered in most institutions, however, our group is one of few all female groups in Canada. Approximately 70% of the population attended this program during the 1997-1998 fiscal year.

educational background was in social work and he said he had no doubt that his past education and work experience had prepared him to deliver services to female prisoners. He explained that the group is ideally made up of offenders, ex-offenders, and volunteers. He also said that the mandate is about accepting responsibility for your actions as opposed to minimizing it. As one inmate stated:

It's a group that their mandate is about accepting responsibility for your actions and maintaining freedom once released and helping others to maintain freedom. It's made up of offenders, ex-offenders, and people from the community. I love it. It's been really, really beneficial to me. If you go in accepting responsibility, it starts the healing process. I hope it continues (at the prison) long after I'm gone...

The mandate of this group appears to fit nicely with the mandate of *Creating Choices*. It encourages women to take responsibility for their actions and allows them to make conscious decisions about how they might maintain their freedom upon release. This is carried out in an environment which is supportive while also holding the women accountable for their actions.

None of the women had been placed in a Work Placement Program. I thought that this was interesting given that many of the inmates did not pose a threat to public safety and were eligible for Temporary Absence (TA)<sup>14</sup> passes. The classification officer had the

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<sup>14</sup>(1)Where in the opinion of an officer designated by the lieutenant governor of the province in which a prisoner is confined, it is necessary or desirable that a prisoner should be absent, with or without escort, for medical or humanitarian reasons or to assist in the rehabilitation of the prisoner, subject to subsection (2) the absence may be authorized by that officer for an unlimited period for medical reasons and for a period not exceeding fifteen days for humanitarian reasons or to assist in the rehabilitation of the prisoner (McCormick, 1994: 224).

following to say about this type of programming:

I'm working on an employment program to start in the institution and it is in the proposal stages. Hopefully, we can incorporate that into the day-to-day here. For some, education seems futile. It's very nice to learn math but my kids need to eat. (We should) try to incorporate incentive programs. Community work may not be directly for money but it would be for some kind of a reward. Just for the experience, to get out in the community. I think that this is something that is lacking here for sure.

I'd like to see more community involvement in the institution, more community awareness, but it's hard to do because for the most part people (inmates) don't belong to this community. The other thing is you need a lot of time. We're not out there, reaching out to the community and they're not reaching out either. If the employment program works, it would be part of that, working in the community or the prison...

I try not to be negative about it. Last year we had an 18-year old girl, very bright. We had a couple of volunteers with a development group (Vandor North development) and so what we did was fangled a placement for her. She had responsibility (placed on her). There were days they'd go for pizza and she couldn't go. Totally voluntary, non-paid. She got a lot out of it, they gave her a certificate. They (people volunteering) were like, "let's do it again," but we didn't have anyone here that we could send, so it's hard to keep things going.

According to this account, the work placement program is still in its initial stages and is not organized to the point where everyone who is eligible can take advantage of it. It appears, however, that when work placement had been tried in the past, it had been successful.

One other program listed at the center was Community Health Programming<sup>15</sup> The

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<sup>15</sup>Counseling is provided on a weekly basis at the institution. An Addictions Services counselor and a Mental Health counselor provide service to the women based on

fact that no one mentioned this as part of their programming was interesting given the fact that I had seen inmates speak with the Mental Health counsellor at different times during my visit. The lack of conversation around this particular topic may potentially be related to sensitive issues explored in these sessions.

### 6.5 Conclusion

Classifying female inmate needs as “criminogenic” and “non-criminogenic” is a practice that has been established on the basis of a male inmate population. There is a false assumption that “the needs of women may only conflict in a supplementary, rather than a fundamental way, with the “normal” correctional approach” (*Creating Choices*, 1990). Not only has the prioritization of the needs of female prisoners conflicted with the way in which they themselves perceive their needs, the prioritization of “criminogenic” needs ahead of “non-criminogenic” needs is an exercise in futility for correctional administrators developing programs for a female inmate population.

Following Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory, it becomes clear that the lack of intervention of “non-criminogenic” needs, such as health care, has impeded interest in and effectiveness of programming that targets needs of a “criminogenic” nature.

As Maslow points out, human needs “vary in their immediacy and power,” and those at

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referrals from the Classification Officer. Short term inmates are seen by the Classification Officer and service is arranged as part of release planning. Follow up services in home communities are arranged through this program. Approximately 50% of the population received this service.



the bottom of the hierarchy (e.g., “non-criminogenic” needs such as health care) must be dealt with before those at the higher levels (e.g., “criminogenic” needs such as substance abuse programs) (Carver and Scheier, 1992: 411). This theory helps explain why the inmates at the NLCCW were much more preoccupied with and emotional about health care needs and familial support as opposed to other programming and service needs.

Lack of physician intervention is an immediate deficiency-based need in the minds of the inmates. Inmates at the NLCCW who are rushed during supervised doctor visits may not mention some of their health concerns and, thus, remain ill. An inmate who fears lock-downs or is not comfortable with the doctor may also leave her needs unattended. Finally, an inmate who has not gotten the medication she has been prescribed may go through withdrawal or remain in pain because of a lack of painkillers (e.g., aspirin). Furthermore, an inmate who is deprived of clean air, exercise space, nutritious foods, and safety, is still confronting physiological needs at the very bottom of Maslow’s hierarchy.

When we move away from the needs that are not fundamental for our physiological well-being, we transcend into what Maslow terms, “growth based” needs. The first of these needs is “love and belongingness.” Maslow asserts that when these needs are not met, individuals experience loneliness and rootlessness. Also, when people are torn from their homes, there may be destructive effects. When inmates in prison cannot maintain familial support and support is lacking from custodians, it becomes difficult for offenders to meet these needs.

If needs rooted in deprivation are not being met and inmates do not feel a sense of

comfort in their immediate surroundings, it follows that they will never be motivated to attend to self-esteem or self-actualizing needs. Administrators are trying to promote self-actualization through a number of programs that target “criminogenic” needs. When lower order needs such as health care and familial support are not being met, however, the lower based need will pull the inmate away from attending the higher level needs. This is illustrated in the following example: If an inmate is suffering from Hepatitis B (lower order, “non-criminogenic” need) and is sick because she has not gotten the correct medication and proper food, that inmate’s focus will be on maintaining her health as opposed to educational classes (higher level, “criminogenic” need).

Of particular interest here is the extreme emphasis that the *Creating Choices* document places on increasing self-esteem of inmates. It is the Task Force’s contention that female offenders have “extraordinarily low self-esteem” due to excessive amounts of sexism and racism, poverty, and physical and sexual abuse (*Creating Choices*: 1990: 106). According to the study, low self-esteem reduces a woman’s coping mechanisms that may lead to self-destructive behaviour or violence against others. It also reduces her ability to make plans, to take responsibility, or believe she can make meaningful choices. The Task Force maintains that increasing self-esteem is the *only* thing that will give women the ability to create a more rewarding and productive future.

Because most of the lower order needs are not being met at the NLCCW, acquiring enough motivation to increase self-esteem is probably not even conceivable for most of the inmates. Furthermore, if the lower order needs were to be met, taking responsibility

for one's actions and making meaningful choices are not at all plausible at this institution. If an inmate cannot be trusted to see a doctor alone, if an inmate cannot choose her diet, if an inmate cannot choose to exercise, the deprivations described by Sykes are such that any attempt to address self-esteem issues through "choice" are not an option.

Placing the erroneous and odious practice of prioritizing "criminogenic" over "non-criminogenic" needs aside, we see that even those needs deemed "criminogenic" and pivotal by administrators are, for the most part, being ignored. Administrators in this province are failing to carry out their own mandate with respect to rehabilitating female prisoners at the NLCCW.

According to the importation hypothesis, prison society is a sum of the values and roles of the inmates that enter into the institution. Along with, and embedded in, the values and roles are the specific needs that administrators deem "criminogenic" and needing to be addressed through effective programming. At the NLCCW, these needs, as defined by inmates, include educational programs, substance abuse programs, sex offender programs, and programs such as financial management that directly target property offences. In designing programs and services for female offenders, it would be more feasible to look carefully at the characteristics and profiles of the offenders beforehand.

It appears that at the NLCCW, this has not been the case. The profiles of the women have not dictated the type of programming and services that are offered. Almost half of the inmates, for example, had completed a high school education and were interested in pursuing secondary schooling. Some of these secondary programs could not

be accessed through the school program at the NLCCW.

Other programs desired by the inmates such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) were also not available. Furthermore, the programs and services that are available at the institution imply that most of them cater to those inmates who have a certain level of intellectual capability. Programming for "MHAs" largely absent. This indicates that programs are not necessarily developed in accordance with female "criminogenic" needs.

If programs are not produced on the basis of the inmate's profiles and needs, it begs the question as to what factors go into choosing programs for the NLCCW. For the most part, programs appear to be contingent on who is available in the community to offer the services. For example, when I talked with volunteers, I was left with the impression that the types of programming they offered was left to their discretion with permission from the classification officer. The programs that are implemented are developed on the basis of what the facilitator thinks s/he can provide as opposed to what the offenders need. While some of these volunteer programs provide a function at the prison, mainly to alleviate boredom, some of them do not get at the major issues facing the women. While the programs under classification appear to better target "criminogenic" needs, they too, are contingent on free delivery.

It is apparent that lack of consideration of the profiles and needs of female inmates impacts upon the quality and quantity of programming and services provided to female offenders in this province. The remaining chapters will focus on other problematic

circumstances and issues surrounding the delivery of programming and services at the NLCCW.

The Task Force claims that prisons should do an assessment that “looks at the whole spectrum of women’s needs from a holistic perspective, including needs relating to programming, spirituality, mental and physical health, family, culture, and release plans.” Within the current system in this province, women’s needs are prioritized in a manner which is not consistent with the actual needs of women. Only when the most basic needs of female offenders are addressed can administrators consider meeting higher order needs of female inmates.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### LOCATION AND STRUCTURAL DESIGN OF THE NLCCW

#### 7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how two external factors - location, and structural design of the prison - affect the quality and quantity of programming and services available at the NLCCW. The first half of the chapter focuses on the location of the institution. This section looks at how the site of the prison acts as a barrier to both familial bonding and the provision of programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous. The second segment of the chapter centers around how a prison designed for men is not conducive to housing female inmates. A short summary of the findings concludes the chapter.

#### 7.2 Prison Location: "...And We're Out Here in the Boonies"

The NLCCW is located in Clarenville, a small rural community in Eastern Newfoundland that boasts a population of approximately 5,500. The prison was strategically located between the Bonavista and Burin Peninsulas, areas that were formerly serviced by the prison (see Figure 1-1). Since the conversion of the prison to a female institution, the prison must house offenders from the entire province and, thus, the location is now less advantageous. A correctional administrator reported that 60% of all female inmates were living in the St. John's region at the time of their arrest. If we recall, the majority of the inmates in my sample resided in this area. St. Johns, the capital city of

Newfoundland and Labrador, is the largest city in the province and is located 180 km from the prison site.

Although the location of the prison was predetermined in that the structure already existed, the location of a women's institution in a remote rural area is not an anomaly. As Zaplin and Dougherty (1998: 333) point out in the US today the rural locations of most female facilities typically leave them inaccessible by public transportation and, thus, completely cut off from larger urban centers and friends and family. Because larger urban centers are more highly populated and thus have more facilities, they can contribute more by way of community involvement and programming options. It is, thus, of no surprise that the location of the NLCCW has proven problematic for the following two reasons: first, it greatly inhibits familial support and access to physicians - two important "non-criminogenic" needs discussed by the inmates; and second, it prohibits access to more effective rehabilitative programming that administrators deem "criminogenic."

### 7.2.1 Familial Support

#### 7.2.1.1 Visitation

As stated in Chapter 6, all of the women expressed interest in having visitors at the prison. The women incarcerated at the center talked quite openly about their families, especially their children. Administrators interviewed also pointed to the importance of the maintenance and nurturance of family bonds in a discussion about housing federal offenders:

...we do keep federal offenders but they do have the opportunity to go to a federal

institution. But we do try to keep them to keep the family unit together because it's an important part of the individual involved.

...different when they got small kids. The importance of the family unit as a whole is more important...

Because the prison is located in a rural area of the province, visitation by family members and friends has proven difficult. At least one half of the inmates talked specifically about the problems experienced with respect to visiting practices. Three of the four women who had custody of their children when arrested stated that they would like to have increased visitation under the present circumstances. When one woman was asked if she would like to see her kids more often she explained:

Yes, it's the distance, it's too long of a ride to have a three year old sit in a car. He's just not gonna do it.

The traveling time from St. John's to Clarendville is approximately two hours. This woman apparently felt that her young son would become restless during the road trip.

Inmates were also interested in being visited by other family and friends but again spoke of the distance and the expense of such visits. One inmate claimed that the cost of the travel was far too demanding for those who depend on government assistance for their livelihoods and that the limited visitation meant deprivation of emotional support from family members. When asked how many visitors she had seen while incarcerated she replied:

*R:* My mother, my brother and my aunt. All of them together.

*I:* Where do they live?

*R:* St. John's. For people on social assistance it's hard, the transportation.

*I:* Would you say it's financially difficult?



*R:* Yes, especially when people are on social assistance, they don't have much.  
*I:* Would you like to see anything about the visitation changed?  
*R:* The place (prison) should be closer for them to come visit. It would make it more pleasant for you, more love.

#### 7.2.1.2 Telephone Calls

Maintaining contact with family and close supports, through telephone calls, is also difficult due to the expense of collect calling. The women are allowed two 20-minute telephone calls per day between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. All calls are scheduled in a book stored in the control room so as to eliminate any confusion with regards to who has access to the phone at any given time. Some women, however, did make additional calls when the telephone was free. At the NLCCW, as in most prisons, the only way to make a long distance call is through collect calling. According to a representative from the local telephone company, a 20 minute call from Clarendville to St. John's would cost \$6.60 + \$2.50 surcharge + applicable taxes. The employee claimed that this policy has been a bone of contention for all correctional institutions nationwide.

Approximately one half of the women complained about the high cost of calling their friends and families. It is not surprising that these inmates were those that had been incarcerated for longer periods of time. Inmates were forced to reduce the number of phone calls afforded them, which ultimately meant diminished contact with individuals whom they had previously labeled as "supportive." When asked about the frequency of contact with family, two of the women stated:

*R:* Every night.  
*I:* For how long?

*R: Anywhere between 40 minutes and an hour.*

*F: Is it expensive?*

*R: My phone bill from March 8 to April 12 was \$709. The phone calls have been cut back in length.*

*R: My mother has a block on her phone, she can't afford the phone calls. I call some of my friends and my grandmother.*

*F: When do you usually call?*

*R: Between dinner and supper.*

*F: Is it expensive?*

*R: Yes.*

*F: Can you use a calling card?*

*R: No.*

While administrators and researchers indicate the importance of contact with the outside world, this is difficult to achieve when a prison is located in a remote area of the province far away from the homes and families of the majority of the inmates.

#### 7.2.2 Accessing Physicians

The acting psychiatrist at the prison had to be recruited from St. John's. This limited her amount of contact with the prisoners. According to the Director of Corrections, accessing a psychiatrist in the Clarenville area is not an option. He states:

With respect to the mental health services, although there is a psychiatrist in the hospital out there (Clarenville), they will have nothing to do with it (treating patients at the prison).

Because the prison was located in a rural area and no psychiatrist from that area was willing to treat the needs of inmates, the women at the NLCCW were deprived of psychiatric services for at least eight weeks. Furthermore, doctor shortages in urban areas are less of a problem. Accessing a female physician, for example, would require much less effort in an urban area such as St. John's as opposed to a relatively small rural community.

### 7.2.3 Accessing “Criminogenic” Programs

As stated in Chapter 6, the majority of the women were interested in seeking to address “criminogenic” needs - needs that are both diverse and specific. Unfortunately, partly due to the fact that the prison is located in a remote rural area, access to sufficient programming and services is severely limited. Treatment organizations, such as the John Howard Society (JHS),<sup>16</sup> are located in larger centers. Furthermore, organizations and facilities in the town of Clarendville had little direct involvement with the prison. This is an important detail given that Corrections Canada is now moving toward a more community-based agenda. One of the administrators was succinct in making this point:

If there is a quality program in the community we can access, we certainly would prefer it. It's consistent with the reintegration policy. Programming in the community is more effective than institutional programming. Programming provided by people in the community is more effective than programming provided by institutional staff.

A lack of programming in the prison and surrounding communities has left most women floundering in attempts to address their needs. An inmate convicted of a sexual offence, for example, had been incarcerated for ten months without any rehabilitative treatment. After having explained the frustration of not having had any help for her problem, she stated:

They're trying to set up something in St. John's with the John Howard Society.

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<sup>16</sup>The John Howard Society is a voluntary, non-governmental organization which works primarily to reduce crime by providing program opportunities for the rehabilitation of offenders ([www.johnhoward.nf.ca](http://www.johnhoward.nf.ca)).

The staff here say, "Vivian (inmate), you'd have been better off in federal time." There is absolutely nothing to rehabilitate myself in this issue. I'm coming out in two more months with no more knowledge than what I came in with. All it's doing is keeping society safe, it's doing nothing for me. I can't look at someone and say I wouldn't do it again, but I wouldn't say that I would either. I would have been better off in federal. The classification officer and guards told me that federal would be better because they have more programs. In Newfoundland, for female offenders, there's nothing. It's a shame that I would go out the same as I came in. If the approval is not for another month that would only be two trips to St. John's, and what can they do for two sessions?

If this woman had been in closer proximity to the John Howard Society, she would have likely started the program upon sentencing. Because she was imprisoned in Clarendville, however, she could not receive the programming deemed necessary.

Another woman wished to participate in a C-step<sup>17</sup> group. This program is also offered by the John Howard Society. She could not begin this program, however, until her time had been served at the NLCCW. When I asked the woman if she received any sort of training during her prison stay to prepare her for pursuing a paid job following her release, she stated:

No, nothing. Actually I just registered for the C-Step program. It's on the outside (not in prison), down behind the Basilica (Roman Catholic Church in St. John's). They came in here to do up applications for anyone who wanted to register...

Other inmates also had needs that they felt could not be met at the NLCCW. Two women expressed an interest in doing a financial management program and another three inmates wanted involvement in substance abuse programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous and

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<sup>17</sup> Program consisting of 8 weeks of classroom instruction and employment experience or educational training ([www.johnhoward.nf.ca/cogskills/cogSJ.HTM](http://www.johnhoward.nf.ca/cogskills/cogSJ.HTM)).

Narcotics Anonymous. One of these women stated:

Should have an NA program (at the NLCCW). All day the girls sit around and do nothing. All day there should be programs, but there's not.

There was no Narcotics Anonymous group presently listed in the programs offered at the NLCCW and I was informed that there was currently no one available in the community to facilitate an Alcoholics Anonymous group. These organizations are known to exist in larger urban centers where the acquisition of facilitators would not likely be a problem.

The location of the prison also hindered program delivery in less explicit ways. Inmates, for example, have to be brought to St. John's for court appearances. While in St. John's, they are housed at Her Majesty's Penitentiary, the largest male correctional facility in the province. One inmate explains missing two days of school because of a court date. Her story is as follows:

I can't concentrate on my work. For two days I couldn't go (to school). Tanya went (to St. John's) on Monday, and Julie and I went Tuesday. We had court on Wednesday and then we were supposed to come back. We wait til' the next morning, Thursday, so they told us 2:00 p.m., then 3:30 p.m. came and they told us we couldn't leave til' the morning. We were down there for a fuckin' week, (they) gave us men's boxers - I wasn't wearing dirty underwear. That ruling (to keep them at HMP) came from the pen. They didn't want to do a transfer after shift change. Mr. Lewis (Lieutenant at the NLCCW) couldn't overrule it. It's ridiculous. If I was remanded, I would have been brought back, but because I was sentenced, they could keep me there. You're supposed to have one hour a day recreation, and there is no window in the place. It's like a dungeon. It's quiet, but I find it really hard to be closed in. We didn't have enough clothes. We weren't prepared. Me and Tanya went through seven packs of smokes. The ladies working down there agreed with us. You don't get a night snack and one little drink with your meals, water, that's it. Wouldn't give me a store order because they thought we would be gone. I was complaining that much that she (CO) brought me in a Pepsi from her house. She told me she just took it out of the fridge and that it was

cold and to share it with Tanya. She called here (NLCCW) and said, "the girls (Tanya and Louise) are upset with no clothes and you're telling them they're going back, make up your mind."

This experience hindered the inmate's participation in the education program - a program designed to address a "criminogenic" need. Not only did the woman miss school, she was obviously extremely perturbed over the whole ordeal. Once again, if the prison had been located in the larger urban area, this type of problem would be minimized or nonexistent.

All of the COs interviewed also spoke of the problem of the location of the prison with respect to inmates receiving appropriate programming. When asked if he thought that any sort of programming could be designed and implemented in the future to improve the potential for offender rehabilitation, one CO said:

I think it should be looked at the same as half way house models. Cog (Cognitive) skills and behaviour modification. I think that some of their (John Howard Society) programs are good. Some programming they have is good stuff, especially cog skills.

Some COs believed that housing women in Clarenville without access to the programming they needed was actually a form of discrimination. These officers were cynical in their approach to the programming issue and implied that the women housed in Clarenville were out of site and out of mind for Correctional Services in Newfoundland and Labrador. They felt that administrators were apathetic with regard to female offenders and did not see a need to take the initiative to spend the money required to provide programming for them. These officers provided the following insights when asked if the goal of rehabilitation was being achieved at the NLCCW:

In St. John's, there's more programming.... The slowest part is getting help that they need. For example, if a person is a pedophile, they need counseling in that area. June Green (pedophile) still hasn't seen a counselor. Counseling should start at the beginning of the sentence. The problem is location, there's nothing in Clarendville and it's too expensive to transport....If you have someone that needs something, you have to weigh the cost with the needs. If they need something and it's not in Clarendville, it's bit of a discrimination. If there is a need it should be supplied. What it means is us transporting and I know there's a cost but it should be done. I truly believe that the pedophile (not receiving treatment) was a financial thing and I have a problem with that.

Not even close. I think that the justice department don't care about ten women in Clarendville and they're not willing to put money in prison because when they have to look at programming at the pen...50 men...it cost more to treat five women. That's all they see. They don't see people's lives. Women commit little crime, and instead they're punished for it... and we're out here in the boonies.

During the data collection period, it became obvious that administrators felt that offender programming did not warrant expenditure for transportation to the St. John's region.

Even administrators admitted that the NLCCW was falling short in its efforts to provide necessary programming, and that this problem was partly due to the location of the prison. When asked if he thought the goals of corrections were being achieved at the NLCCW, the Director responded:

No. They are at some of the larger institutions, particularly the Stephenville institution and the penitentiary here in St. John's, and to a lesser extent in Labrador. The kind of programming we need is in place in these three facilities. It's the core programming (we need), cognitive skills, social problem solving skills, substance abuse programs, sex offender treatment, and family violence program. They don't offer the quality programs at the women's center, in these areas that we need to have. We wouldn't have a sex offender treatment program because there wouldn't be enough. We've only had one sex offender and she is getting one-on-one treatment here now in St. John's.

By acknowledging that the programming needed by some of the women is available in

some institutions, mainly in Stephenville and St. Johns, this administrator is ultimately lending support to Skipton's assertion that when female inmates were transferred from Stephenville to Clarendville, they were moved from a prison that supported rehabilitation to one that was more punitive in nature (1997: 24).

### **7.3 Structural Design: Renaming the Clarendville Correctional Center**

The Clarendville Correctional Center (CCC) was constructed in 1982 as a minimum security institution accommodating up to 24 short-term male inmates from the Bonavista and Burin Peninsulas. The clientele serviced by the prison included minimum security prisoners, prisoners serving intermittent sentences, minimum security prisoners who had their parole or mandatory supervision suspended, federal inmates requiring a period of "time-out" for up to three weeks, and those minimum security prisoners detained under the Immigration Act.

The Clarendville Correctional Center while in operation was cited as having a voluntary work release program. This is not surprising given that the inmates housed there were minimum security risks and, thus, in all likelihood, eligible for Temporary Absences. The existence of this program was corroborated by a resident who had supervised some of the men on a project involving construction on one of the local community churches. Such a policy ensured that the men were out in the community for at least part of the day. This is in keeping with the feminist belief that the criminal justice system legitimates the traditional role of the male as the breadwinner by involving them in training or activities which reinforces that role.



The Clarenville Correctional Center was built only a few years after a federal government Task Force proposed a major shift away from the rehabilitative model in Canadian correctional policy (Task Force on the Creation of an Integrated Canadian Corrections Service, 1977) to a reintegrative one. The design of the prison, which closely resembles the telephone pole design discussed in Chapter 2, is indicative of a model that promotes punishment and control as opposed to rehabilitation. The control center at the prison is situated such that those people in the control room have complete view of most of the facility, including the school area and the multipurpose room. It is argued that this type of prison can lead to over determination in which:

decisions, space, movement, and responsibility is clearly and narrowly defined. All activities are scheduled, social contacts are predetermined. The physical setting is limited and monotonous...It is a condition in which groups can be easily supervised, where authority can be maintained and one in which accountability for personal action lies beyond the individual (Nagel, 1973, as cited in Clear and Cole, 1997: 254).

It has already been established that a diverse group of both provincial and federal female offenders with varying risk/needs classification are imprisoned at the NLCCW. Because of the radical change in clientele when the prison changed from the Clarenville Correctional Center to the NLCCW, one can conclude that the current structure would need to be altered to better suit the needs of a female population. For example, if the prison previously housed male federal inmates for up to only three weeks, changes would need to be made to the institution to allow it to now accommodate female inmates for up to and exceeding two years. Some of the inmates incarcerated at this institution are not

eligible for Temporary Absences or parole and, unlike the men, are strictly confined to the prison 24 hours a day for the duration of their sentences. If women are to be confined to an institution for such extended periods of time, it would seem appropriate that an accommodations assessment be carried out. According to administrators, the only change made to the prison when it became the NLCCW was the conversion of one inmate cell to a doctor's office. The only assessment that administrators were aware of was the report submitted by the Elizabeth Fry Society in 1998. Two of the administrators interviewed condemned the report, stating that it contained false information. They labeled it as "substandard."

### 7.3.1 Spatial Problems

Housing female inmates with varying security risks and needs in a prison constructed for minimum security male inmates has proven problematic. One of the largest problems cited as a result of the move was lack of space. For prisoners, the scarcity of space was most experienced in the areas of visitation and privacy. All of the inmates interviewed spoke explicitly of the lack of space or made implicit references to it. COs, treatment personnel, and prison administrators all concurred with the inmates. They, too, claimed that the prison is just too small and is not designed to effectively assist in the rehabilitation of offenders.

#### 7.3.1.1 The Visiting Room

The only visiting room in the prison measures approximately 6' x 12' and is actually labeled as an interview room in the original floor plans. This is very informative in that it

suggests that a room that is now being used for visitation was never designed for that purpose. Having more than one visitor at a time is virtually impossible in a room of this size.

There are two doors in the visiting room: one facing the control center, and one which opens into the main lobby. Because both the door and wall facing the control area are actually glass from the ceiling to approximately four feet from the floor, the visiting area is in full view of on duty officers.

On one of the walls is a scenic painting of a log, a chopping block, a boulder, and trees - a further reminder of the former function of the prison. While such a scene may have provided some purpose for the former inmate population, it may not prove as stimulating for a ten-month-old child and her mother. The furniture in the room consists of one table and two chrome and plastic chairs. The only other thing of note in the room is a telephone. This room does not constitute a "positive" environment, and is not conducive to quality visits with children and other family members.

It is, thus, not surprising that visitation constituted the most talked about problem regarding space. Even those women who were without visitors had utilized the visiting room for interviews or counseling at some time. Most of the women felt that the visiting area was confined and not favorable for valued visits with family and friends. This can be seen in the following remark in which one inmate criticizes the room as too constraining and claims that one of her visitors had felt claustrophobic and refused to enter the room except for the last ten minutes of the visit.

...No, not a good visiting area at all. In other institutions, there's a big area with a TV, pop and chip machine. In Springhill, visitors can get you a pop. Some type of music. I don't blame (visitor) for being claustrophobic in here sure. She wouldn't come in here (until the final ten minutes). Needs a bigger visiting area. They need pop machines, and TV, maybe toys for kids.

This inmate assigns a particular meaning to the room by drawing upon her prior experience in other correctional facilities. She articulates her thoughts on the space by comparing it to other rooms that serve similar functions.

Another inmate talks openly about some of the discomforts and problems she has experienced while spending time with her baby in the visiting room. She suggests that in order to have better quality visits with her child, she would need to have a bigger room with better air circulation. The inmate would also like to see the room less stringently controlled with unlocked doors and would like to have access to a telephone. Her thoughts are as follows:

...usually the baby gets fussy. But I could have her here all day if I wanted to, if there were no visitors scheduled for that day. This place is so small and crampy. When you got children what are you supposed to do?

This visiting room needs to be expanded, needs to be bigger, more air ventilation. I gets paranoid being stuck in a room like this. If an emergency happens, I won't get the staff's attention. If Jasmine (baby) started gasping or choking I wouldn't be able to do anything. The door shouldn't be locked. There should be more comfortable furniture to sit on, so the visitors can be more relaxed, instead of these hard chairs. You should be able to access the phone in case of emergencies.

During my initial tour of the prison, one of the treatment personnel stated that the inmates would probably complain that the visiting room was too small and that "they were right." A CO also commented on the inadequacy of the room for visitation with children:

...have something for women with kids. The only place women can visit their kids is the visiting room. That's crazy. We took (inmate name) to town to visit at the social services building. It was a room with toys. Compared to what we have, that's 100% better...

The design and location of the visiting room supports the idea that the prison structure better suits the purposes of control and security as opposed to any type of familial bonding. Social control and punishment, for example, are embedded in the design of the visiting room as well as the visitation practice. The room is under surveillance by correctional personnel and inmates are denied privacy with their visitors. Furthermore, both doors are locked upon entry, and it is left to the inmate to try and get a guard's attention if/when she wishes to leave the room. This took ten minutes during one of my interviews. Lack of privacy during visitation was pointed out by inmates as a harsh deprivation:

They should have more privacy for inmates and prisoners (looking over her shoulder through the glass). You got people comin' and goin' and you can see in. When the inmates go outside, they can look in at whoever is in here with their visitors. The staff are back and forth all the time.

Another inmate alluded to the security aspect of the building when she expressed that she did not want her children to come and visit her at the prison. She states:

*R:* Don't want them (children) to know that I am here.

*I:* What if circumstances were different here?

*R:* If there was another building where there were no uniforms and no bars, I would like to see them.

Different environment, different setting. Something more casual, if you don't want them (children) to know, you're here (in prison) they don't have to know.

In this situation, the controlled environment prohibits the uniting of a mother with her children. This is not an unusual finding. Many women do not want their children to know they are in prison because of shame and embarrassment of their criminal activity (Zaplin and Dougherty, 1998: 334).

#### 7.3.1.2 Coping with Other Inmates: "Welcome to the Jungle"

The only place you can go to vent is in your cell, and I got a roommate so I got no privacy.

...Everyone else can go to their room, but I have to sit and listen to it. I've had enough, I'm stressed.

These accounts indicate that the inmates at the NLCCW felt a strong need for privacy, and when that need wasn't met it resulted in emotional tension. Recall the woman from Chapter 6 who opted for medication as a way to deal with "being on a unit with someone who abducted her daughter." Lack of space and privacy was obviously also an issue for her.

Problems with space and privacy are intensified when the prison is housing "MHAs." These inmates can be exceptionally disorderly as was witnessed by me on many occasions. For example, during an interview with a CO at approximately 3:00 a.m., two inmates were being particularly disruptive. One "MHA" was kicking her cell door and screaming while another inmate was eating tissue to induce vomiting. I could hear these women from the staff room and doubted that other inmates could be sleeping through such pandemonium. Even when "MHAs" are confined to segregation, they may still be very unruly beating on doors and yelling. Because of the size and the layout of the prison,

there is nowhere an inmate can go to escape the ruckus. The following remarks illustrate:

I find it very confined here. If you could have the mental health patients on their own and the ones trying to commit suicide on their own, it wouldn't be as bad.

I done my work term. Three weeks at the Waterford (mental institution). By the time I get out of here, I'll be in as patient.

It's like a mental hospital or a daycare center. It's retarded here, like a forensic ward down in the fuckin' Waterford, planters assorted nuts.

...There's a girl out there now that's an "MHA." They're always locking her down because she makes the inmate population a bit tense. Then there's Dorothy ("MHA"), ...she's a slow eater and one night it took her a half an hour to eat a porkchop... because she is so slow eating, it makes the other inmates tense because they have to wait til' everyone is finished and the silverware is counted before they can have a cigarette... Sometimes I get uptight (because people are waiting) and I gotta go along with them but I feel like saying she gotta eat just like ye so relax.

The frustration of these inmates came through numerous times during my visits to the prison. One inmate spoke of the irritation of having a cell adjoining the multipurpose room. She explained that most people can at least go to their rooms if they wish to minimize the noise but that she had nowhere to go. During one visit immediately following the admittance of an "MHA," the population was extremely tense. The inmate was unrelenting in asking other inmates for cigarettes and yelling out to COs. One of the inmates sarcastically said that I had "missed a good day." Another inmate was singing a rendition of Guns and Roses' "Welcome to the Jungle," and subsequently stated that the prison was a "half-way house for mental patients." One of the most disturbing scenes I witnessed at the prison on that day involved one inmate sticking her pointer finger in her mouth and dropping her thumb imitating shooting herself with a gun. This occurred during

a time when one of the “MHAs” was being particularly loud. This, for me, symbolized the epitome of frustration and despair.

The COs interviewed were also particularly concerned with housing “MHAs” with the rest of the inmate population. One officer felt that housing the entire population together in such a confined space may negatively affect an offender’s mental health:

...we're the only female institution in Newfoundland, so we take all females that have a jail sentence. The type of female we have to take are at two ends of the spectrum, from Elena (“MHA”) to Penny (well educated and articulate). To deal with all that in such a small space with no way to separate them.... They're barred up in there, get them away from the “MHAs.” You're barring someone up with Elenas. You put sane people in with insane people, they could lose it.

COs also felt that housing these two segments together in such a confined space was detrimental in that it interfered with any rehabilitative progress that inmates might make or attempt to make. When one officer was asked if he thought the goal of rehabilitation was being met at the institution he responded with the following comments:

*R:* No...because of limited resources.

*I:* What do you mean by limited resources?

*R:* It's multifaceted. There is a lack of training, the physical plan is not indicative of quality programming.

*I:* What do you mean by that?

*R:* Well how can you have someone who's doing anger management, listening to this crap down the hall? (“MHA” is yelling and beating on the door). The building itself is what I have the most problem with out of all of this. The building in itself is a good building but it was meant to be a minimum security building. But now you've upgraded to a multi-level security institution and we have not put sufficient funding into the physical building to accommodate these changes. You need a separate area and that's going to mean a more isolated area with cells and segregation and maybe a common area for meals (For “MHAs”).



### 7.3.1.3 Space and “Criminogenic” Programming

Treatment Personnel believe that lack of space, as well as prison design, are hindering inmate participation in school programs as well as the quality of the lessons. The “school” is located adjacent to the multipurpose room and is separated by a wall that is partially glass. The instructor at the prison believes the location of the school creates a problem in that it causes students to be distracted. When asked if there were any problems with the delivery of programs at the NLCCW, she responded:

Space. It would be nice to have a little more privacy. Right now it's easy to look out and if someone (in the multi-purpose room) is having a smoke and a coke, oh, I (student) have to go. It would be a better environment if the school was set away from the dining room area or main area.

Inmates attending school expressed a need for study space. One inmate who eventually terminated her program of study expresses her frustration:

When you're studying, you can't study, there's nowhere here you can go. You can't come in here or the laundry room, you can't go to your own room (too noisy). There's nowhere you can study, you got no way of having quiet time here.

A volunteer who had, at times, helped out with the school program also felt that the current school set-up was inadequate for women trying to obtain an education. She discussed the school program at the NLCCW in Clarendonville, as compared to the former program at Stephenville:

We had a special room, a better set-up in Stephenville than here. I really miss it that way. There's not as many in here in school (as compared to Stephenville). I often wonder if it is the set up. It's so distracting here, you can't compare it to Stephenville really. It's very distracting, the school, you can see out through (to the

multi-purpose room) and see everything that is going on. They (government officials) know the situation of what it is here and people here have gone to the top and they did say they're going to build on but I've been hearing that for two years. ...You need a separate place for school because right now it's off the diner. ...There is no privacy, you go into the classroom, and it's too distracting, all glass.

Once again we see evidence to suggest that the Stephenville institution was a comparatively more favorable alternative. This prison appeared to be much better equipped to address some of the needs of female inmates, including that of education.

One of the COs also thought that structural changes needed to be made if the school program was to reach its full potential. He states:

With the school programming and the staff that's here, I think it (rehabilitation) can be done. But the department (justice) could go a long ways in exhilarating that process by making structural changes and to make a provision that allows the separation of prisoners under the MHA act and those others (not "MHAs") to give them space to learn.

The majority (6) of the treatment staff and volunteers were also concerned with the design of the prison and the space provided for programming. Coordinators are employed to serve a specific function at the prison - to educate and rehabilitate offenders. These professionals require sufficient space and an appropriate environment in which to successfully carry out their agendas. However, most of the treatment staff maintained that the space provided and the design of the prison were inadequate for the purposes for which it was to be used and, thus, hindered the quality of programming and services provided. These concerns are expressed in the following comments:

The building itself (pause) I have no problems traveling, but I would not travel if they had the privilege of a TA. The layout of the building is not conducive to anything therapeutic. I usually use the observation room or the lieutenant's office.

I never know where I'm gonna do it. No comfy chairs (looks around and asks me to compare). I haven't been asked to do a presentation yet, so I have not been inside, I have had no reason to. I have no problem with entry and having to sign in having the door locked behind me. I forget where I'm at (prison). The office itself is not conducive to therapy. I haven't had the need yet to use audiovisual equipment. I haven't asked Brenda (Classification Officer) yet but I'm wondering how that would work.

Didn't think we'd get into a wish list about space. We need a room conducive to group that's confidential. Nice carpet with flip charts and things that can stay in that one space for group. You go in there and people feel safer, but we don't have that. I think that the programming is limited because we're competing for space always. Everybody competes for space, there's no consistency. It's not appropriate to conduct interviews in the visiting room. You need a room for EM interviews, for clergy, you need a room with a special design to carry out interviews, with the (food) cart not swinging by or going out for recreation. You need a room specially geared for that.

COs also saw the design of the prison as being problematic for rehabilitation. Some of their thoughts are as follows:

Counseling in the visiting room is very disturbing and it's not private or confidential, it's not conducive to any counseling.

...only if there are some major changes to the present model that we have (can rehabilitation be achieved). The physical plan is not even indicative to programming. It's impossible for someone with an addictions issue or anger or abuse issues to go out and receive counseling and programming when they don't have an isolated area to let their emotions go and not worry about what people can see and hear.

#### **7.4 Conclusion**

Feminists have criticized correctional management strategies on the basis that they are developed within a white male context and then applied to both men and women (Creating Choices, 1990: 66; Berzins and Cooper, 1982: 404). Unfortunately, this practice

has also extended to the inheritance of male facilities by female prisoners. The housing of female offenders in Newfoundland and Labrador provides further evidence that women in this country are often given the leftovers of what has been designed for men. As of 1996, female inmates in this province have been housed in a structure that was designed for a male prison population from a specific area of the province. The data in this chapter show that neither the location of the prison nor its design is conducive to meeting female inmates' needs.

While administrators appear to agree that it is important for mothers to remain in close contact with their children, the location of the prison makes visits and phone calls by family and friends, including children, virtually impossible. On the one hand, correctional officials speak of the importance of keeping the family unit together, but on the other hand they fail to acknowledge and address the problems in the ideals that they are proposing.

Being housed in a rural area of the province has also meant that female inmates have had to relinquish programming until after their prison release. Women are denied access to programs and medical services while the male inmate population in this province enjoys a wide variety of services, including those provided by the John Howard Society in the larger centers. Given that these women are now located in a rural area of the province without much needed programming and services, correctional services in this province is falling short in its "strive to provide access to programs and services necessary for the offender's reintegration into the community."

The structural design of the prison is also problematic in meeting the needs of

female offenders. For example, the structural and social environment at the NLCCW is not conducive to quality familial interaction. In fact, the visitation policy and practices at the NLCCW can be better related to Gresham Sykes' "pains of imprisonment" than to the widely embraced principles of a women-centred approach to corrections. For instance, forcing women to have monitored visitation in a confined space contributes greatly to a loss of liberty as defined by Sykes. Visitation at the NLCCW, one of the activities that breaks the barrier of isolation, is, by its very nature, minimized in importance. Women are forced to carry out visitation in a confined, monitored, locked, room with uncomfortable furniture and with no control over room temperature.

These visitation practices are in stark contrast to suggestions put forth in the *Creating Choices* document. One of the principles outlined, for example, maintained that women must be able to take responsibility for their past and present actions and to learn how to make meaningful and responsible decisions. According to the document, in order to achieve this, life on the inside must mirror life on the outside in order to provide a more realistic environment in which to become self-sufficient and responsible. Forcing women to conduct visitation under such unsavory conditions does not resemble any kind of life on the outside, but instead further disempowers the inmates. Visiting practices at the NLCCW merely reinforces feelings of degradation and subordination that have been prevalent throughout these women's lives.

Although the CSC has provided some services to the institution in hopes of targeting "criminogenic" needs such as addictions and education, it refuses to consider the

environment in which coordinators and facilitators are forced to work and the conditions under which offenders are expected to learn. Not having adequate space to conduct one's work surely hinders the quality of delivering program content and, thus, the quality of the learning experience. It is obvious that the privacy needed for quality interactions between program facilitators and inmates is lacking at this prison. Volunteers and treatment personnel do not have the space, nor the tools required to conduct their work in a desirable fashion.

A lack of education is viewed as a "criminogenic" need in the female offender population. While a perusal of the programming offered at the NLCCW suggests that this need is one of the few needs addressed, it is also clear through deeper probing and analysis that the design of the prison does not allow for maximum benefit of the education program. Although administrators may be encouraging female offenders to further their education in hopes of reducing recidivism, they fail to take into consideration the conditions under which the women are expected to do that.

Moving female inmates to an institution designed for men and going as far as forcing women to wear "men's boxers" might be what Chesney-Lind and Pollock (1995) would call, "Equality with a Vengeance." The practice of trying to fit women into a system that has been developed on the basis of the needs of men is inappropriate. Because it has been *repeatedly* found that what works for men does not necessarily work for women, it is not surprising that the structure and location of a building built for men is inadequate in meeting the needs of a female population.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CORRECTIONAL OFFICER WORK ORIENTATIONS

#### 8.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the specific work orientations held by COs and the impacts of those orientations on the efforts to achieve the rehabilitative goal in corrections. The chapter begins by giving an overview of the CO staff. Following this, two different CO work orientations are introduced and described. The chapter concludes by applying to the data analysis key theoretical concepts.

Before proceeding, it is important to remind the reader to interpret these findings with caution because the study's methodology was clearly not focused tightly around an exploration of the attitudes and behaviours of COs. This important methodological limitation is returned to in the last chapter of the thesis where a suggested follow up research strategy aimed at grappling in more detail with the important subject of CO work orientations is presented.

Aside from COs, a number of additional individual criminal justice workers are thought to perform their jobs with different styles. The most notable examples include police, probation, and parole officers (Rosecrance, 1987; Crouch, 1991; Hochstedler, 1981; Broderick, 1977; Belknap, 1995). Explanations of attitudes and behaviours typically fall into two general categories. One model focuses on the sociological aspects of the occupation considered. Included here are the special characteristics of corrections work,

the nature of correctional institutions, and the situational factors associated with CO-inmate encounters. The second approach focuses on the background characteristics of individual officers. This includes social and economic status, race, ethnicity, gender, and education. For example, the bulk of the police literature tends to support the sociological interpretation of police work as an explanation of officer attitudes and behaviour (Walker, 2000).

### 8.2 Correctional Officers at the NLCCW

At the time of this study, the NLCCW was staffed by twelve permanent COs, eight women and four men. In addition, there was one male temporary officer on call. The COs were divided into four shifts with three officers on each squad. Each shift had a supervisor and, in all cases, the supervisor was male. The distribution of officers is interesting for two reasons. First, the Director of Adult Corrections in this province states in the *Creating Choices* document that, "we have always taken the position that only women should staff our women's facility in Stephenville." Obviously, this declaration has not manifested itself, at least not at the NLCCW in Clarendville. Second, this situation is indicative of gender stratification. There is a hierarchical distribution by gender that affects the social resources available to female offenders. Feminists frequently argue, for example, that women are not usually in high ranking positions where they can have more impact on policy development and practice. It is important to note that the squad leader sets the tone for each particular shift, which may include new recruits and casual officers - officers who are at the most impressionable stage in their careers.



The COs work four consecutive twelve hour shifts - two shifts from 8:00a.m. to 8:00p.m. and two shifts from 8:00p.m. to 8:00a.m. The officers are then relieved for four days. I had ample time to observe all shifts at different times and to interact with all COs in some capacity during the data collection period.

### **8.3 CO Work Orientations**

Ideally, if rehabilitation is a main goal of a correctional institution, the facility should strive to employ a cohesive group of COs who share a work orientation valuing that goal. Because COs are the largest category of front line correctional personnel, these workers are instrumental in “encouraging and assisting offenders to become law abiding citizens,” one of the aims of the corrections mandate. The attitudes and behaviours of COs are imperative in the rehabilitation of offenders because the relationships between COs and inmates allow the CO to influence the offender in pro-social ways (Larivière and Robinson, 1996). It is also important in that trusting relationships are paramount if an offender is to provide information that may, in turn, be used to channel her toward necessary programming. Such information is also useful for program development. If the relationship between officers and inmates is strained, however, this may have an adverse effect on the inmates, negatively influencing their self-concepts, their attitudes, and their behaviours.

COs at the NLCCW do not form a cohesive group but appear to be divided into two groups. These two groups of officers were identified primarily on the basis of the ways in which they appeared to be oriented towards the two main functions of their work

- control and punishment on the one hand, and support on the other. This is consistent with the literature which states that some officers are more oriented towards performing support functions that facilitate offender rehabilitation while others are more focused around the need to serve as enforcement agents.

The more control-oriented (MCO) group produced the most complaints among inmates. The women expressed their discontent with the lack of respect shown by these officers, as well as a lack of both basic and more specialized rehabilitative support. A frequently made claim was that this group was more interested in punishing the inmates as well as depriving them of goods and/or services tied to meeting their basic institutional needs. Such supports are needed by women to alleviate some of the pains of imprisonment.

Unlike the MCO group, the more rehabilitatively-oriented (MRO) group produced no complaints from inmates and were received more favorably by them. Interviews with these officers suggested that they were interested in seeing changes at the NLCCW - changes that would help better facilitate the rehabilitation of prisoners. These officers treated the inmates with greater respect and emphasized rehabilitation over control and punishment in their service delivery.

### 8.3.1 Respect vs. Disrespect

Literature suggests that, because they have suffered from high degrees of abuse and poverty, female inmates already have negative self-concepts. The data show that the control-oriented group treated inmates in ways that would help preserve this self-image.

Inmates believed, for example, that they were perceived as 'dirt', 'dogs' and 'shit' by these officers. They felt that officers were degrading them, as opposed to showing them courtesy or holding them in high esteem. The following comments from inmates highlight the negative attitudes of the MCO group as well as indicate a lack of respect for the women housed in this facility:

I don't know how three people like that could get on the same shift together. Many complaints have been filed and they (COs) are still here. The letters come back saying, "complaint unfounded." For example, if you ask one of the three of them what gives them the right to criticize or look at your stuff, they will say, "I wear the uniform I can do what I want to do. I can look at whatever I want to look at and read whatever I want to read." One has said, "We'll never show you respect in here. If you respect us, we will treat you like human beings but we'll never respect you." The man is a real pig, he is a pervert. He will tell you to, "go fuck yourself." He told me to fill the kettle with javex and to give it to another inmate. He was serious about it too. He is very intimidating.

Even the way they talk to you is disgusting...It's not what you ask...they have no respect the way they speak to ya', but we have to bow and kiss their fuckin' asses. There's a couple here you can talk to like they're normal humans. They're all on a power trip as if that uniform means something to me... They gets a grand ol' joke out of us. No respect. When we go to bed, they leave the phone on and we can hear everything. Makes me sick when they talk about people.... They needs to go back to school, go to AA. Yeah, Attitudes Anonymous. If they does training, they must be brainwashed, because they don't remember any of it. Yes, we are criminals and we're here (in prison), but we have rights. They got no rights to treat us like a piece of shit or dogs. More training, half here don't know what they're at, all they do is make fun and laugh...

According to the accounts of inmates, these officers felt that their positions of authority granted them the right to use derogatory language as well as to intimidate and criticize the inmates at the NLCCW. In this situation, authority is instrumental in maintaining social control and the administration of punishment within the institution.

The following statements made by a CO and an administrator respectively also reveal the use derogatory language at this facility:

The place is always crawlin' with other people, girlfriends and boyfriends (of COs) in there. It's crazy. I had one CO's spouse look at me and point to an inmate and say, "isn't that the one that murdered her boyfriend?" No respect in that building for these women... .

There are no work ethics at the NLCCW. The language they use is disgusting. These people work at the NLCCW solely for a job and they will tell you that. There is no job satisfaction or vested interest and they will tell you that right up front.

Not surprisingly, inmates were very emotional when discussing their relationships with the MCO group. Being told that you are not respected, being made fun of, and being talked down to in an environment that you have no control over and that you cannot exit, has created frustration and feelings of bitterness among the women. The treatment that they receive from these COs relays the message that they are inferior and do not deserve the attention that "normal" individuals receive. Being told to give an inmate a toxic substance, for example, suggests that these COs place extremely little value on the lives of the inmates.

These data also demonstrate that while MCO officers were disrespectful toward inmates, they did not want those same attitudes reciprocated. Although the inmates were forced to treat these COs with respect while under their supervision, their true feelings were expressed in the pejorative labels they placed on the officers during interviews. Inmates, for example, referred to these officers as 'pigs', 'perverts', 'bitches', 'assholes', and 'fuckers'.

Conversely, all of the inmates acknowledged that they felt respected by the MRO officers. Friendships were detected between these officers and inmates and the inmates indicated that they felt that this group treated them like their peers - not as inferior persons. The following passage reveals this sentiment:

There are some that are really nice. They treat you humanly with respect. They come out in the dining area and spend time with you, treating you like their peers...

Accounts from the MRO group, along with first hand observations of their duties, confirmed this situation as described by inmates. This group of officers appeared to derive considerable satisfaction from talking, listening, and laughing with inmates, and relationships were characterized by good rapport and communication. MRO officers were also very sensitive to inmates' past experiences, including histories of abuse, and did not appear judgmental in their treatment of the women. Such feelings and attitudes, as expressed by these COs, are as follows:

I think I have a good relationship. I haven't had any big problems with anyone since I started. I've always tried to treat everyone fair and do what I can for all of them. I try to do my best for them all. I guess it could be a friendship with boundaries because it (boundaries) would have to be to do your job duties.

I think I have an excellent rapport with inmates. It's the only part of my job that gives me any sort of satisfaction - getting to know them and feeling I helped in some little way. Sometimes it's talking, sometimes it's listening, and other times it's just sharing a laugh.

I try to present myself as a positive male role model because I believe that a lot of offenders kind of have a difficult time finding positive role models especially someone who's been traumatized by abuse. I try to be open-ended and non-judgmental. I try to let them express where they're coming from...from their particular perspective. My reality is not their reality and their reality is not my reality....but knowing that I can see where they are coming from.....I'm not saying

I agree with that (criminal conduct). When I find out where that particular person is coming from I experience an understanding. Offenders are in prison as a result of survival reactions to difficult lives and relationships.

One incident that I felt illustrated inmate respect by the MRO group occurred on movie night.<sup>18</sup> I watched an officer jokingly roll a piece of popcorn down an inmate's nose while asking the group if everyone had enough (popcorn). Not until everyone had responded yes did she have some. Because the officer was in a position of authority, she was not obligated to ask the inmates for their permission. The fact that she did indicated respect for the feelings of the inmates.

Another example that indicated respect for inmates by the MRO group was its belief that inmates themselves should have input into the programs offered at the NLCCW. When addressing this issue, one CO stated:

Yes, they should (have input). We should never force anything upon them. By forcing it, it's not gonna be effective. If they're doing it because it looks good. We might THINK [emphasis added] they need this or that, but they might KNOW [emphasis added] what they need.

By acknowledging that inmates are in the best position to evaluate their own situations and are capable of articulating their concerns and needs, these officers are displaying a degree of consideration and empathy. The COs are respecting the inmates by placing responsibility upon them - responsibility that, according to *Creating Choices* (1990), will make inmates feel worthy and enhance their self-concepts.

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<sup>18</sup> Thursday night was designated as movie night. The inmates chose the movies that they wished to see and COs served popcorn during the viewing.

Inmates were much more relaxed when the MRO officers were on duty because there was a reciprocity of respect between inmates and COs. These officers made the inmates feel that they were worthy of their respect and attention. This is in keeping with the respect and dignity principle, as outlined in the *Creating Choices* (1990) document. This type of environment is desired to help foster self-respect and respect for others, the conditions needed if women are to become responsible and to take responsibility for their futures.

### 8.3.2 Lack of Support vs. Support

The MCO group displayed little, if any, support towards inmates. Support can be separated into two types - basic and rehabilitative. Basic supports are closely tied to meeting inmate institutional needs and to making the daily prison experience more tolerable for inmates. Helping an offender to eat or to shower, for example, are basic support functions. These supports were applied mainly to "MHAs." The following criticisms from inmates indicate that the MCO group had very little interest in supporting inmates in this capacity and, in some cases, displaced these functions onto inmates to show their disdain:

Finally, and I've left the best for last. We have Chloe on her period right now. Some of the staff (MRO officers) are doing their best to try to keep her clean, other staff (MCO officers) don't do anything to assist her. She leaves pads on the floor of her room and goes around in blood stained clothes. The staff yesterday asked Carolyn to go down to her room, take all her dirty clothes, launder it, take all the dirty pads and put them in a garbage bag. Carolyn suggested to the staff that maybe they need to show her how to put on a pad. The staff said, "I'm not fuckin' doin' that, that's not my job." But it's our job to have to pick up her clothes and launder it. The staff was gagging in her room, but she expected us to do it for her.

I know it's not the staff's job, but it's not ours either.

...she's ("MHA") a slow eater and one night it took her a half an hour to eat a porkchop. When she was done the guard said, "Woo Hoo (loudly), she's finally finished." I don't think that's fair. If these inmates have problems they (MCO officers) should understand that they're not well. It's something that they can't help. Show them how to eat properly, lend a hand....

The MCO group not only causes extensive pains for those they refuse to help, but through their apathy they contribute to the anguish of other inmates who are forced to clean up after those who are mentally ill. This practice constitutes a status degradation ceremony that further reinforces the low position of prisoners.

Given that members of the MCO group were reluctant to help inmates in the most basic sense, it is also not surprising that they did not help offenders with programming needs tied to the rehabilitative goal. Inmates, for example, did not feel that they could turn to these officers with emotional distress or problems of a more generic nature (e.g., homework). The inmates were cynical towards the perceived training in the area of rehabilitation acquired by these officers and felt that the COs were apathetic towards the cause:

There's not enough drive, they (COs) don't care either way. I was doing science and I asked an officer for help on a problem because I had to do stuff in math and physics. She said, that's not part of her job, they didn't do that. I couldn't go any further because if you didn't do that problem you couldn't do the rest. That was on a Friday so, then, I had to wait til' after the weekend for the teacher to come in to get it done.

I think they need more training than what they have. I think that they, too, should be able to give us some emotional support. They have no training to know how to sit down and talk to us. They have no training...not a lot of them know....



They're not supportive of fuck all, only sit down and smoke their cigarettes. They don't care. If they see someone snottin' and bawlin', they MIGHT [emphasis added] ask if everything is OK. There's six good staff here including head people and all.

These findings disclose the importance of CO support in correctional facilities. Although counselors and educators may assist in an offender's rehabilitation, these individuals spend a relatively small amount of time with the offenders when compared to the COs. Ideally, then, the COs duties must complement those of the treatment personnel. The progress that the treatment personnel makes may be in vain when COs devalue the human service aspect of their job.

During my trips to the prison, I did, in fact, notice that there were officers who spent very little time interacting with inmates. Those officers obviously were offering very little with regards to support functions given that support cannot be provided without interaction. When the MCO officers were on duty, inmates found other ways of coping with any basic and rehabilitative problems they encountered. "MHAs," for example, looked to other inmates for help. When other inmates did not provide support, these women endured the pains associated with their respective needs.

The remaining inmates also found various ways of coping with the lack of support from the MCO group. One strategy was to wait for a more supportive staff member to help cope with problems. One woman, for example, stated: "If I got a problem, I will keep it inside til' one of those (MRO) staff is on... ." Other inmates looked to their peers for information. On one occasion, for instance, I witnessed an inmate question another inmate

on the differences between an indictable and a summary convictions offence. The inmate had just returned from court where these legal terms had been used and she wanted to know the implications of her charges. In another case, an inmate was distraught about how to regain custody of her son. She came to *me* and said, “ I needed to talk to someone.”

Unlike the MCO group, the MRO group appeared to be much more enthusiastic and willing to offer both basic and rehabilitative forms of support for inmates. In terms of satisfying key institutional needs, these officers assisted low-functioning inmates with bathing and other activities that helped maintain good hygiene. One of the most memorable accounts of this type of support involved an officer curling an inmate’s hair in preparation for a visit from a family member. On another occasion, I observed inmates asking officers if they would work on their cross stitch projects during the night shift. The officers complied with the requests.

The MRO group also helped by supporting inmates with rehabilitative issues. They, for example, helped with school related activities such as computer skill development. This is revealed in comments from an inmate and from a CO, respectively:

Windows ‘95 and Word Perfect I learned here. Mr. Shirrhan is amazing on the computer. Learned how to do brochures and pamphlets and never did anything like that before. Mr. Shirrhan taught me these things.

I assist girls in school because I have a background in computers. Play games of cards if it’s a Saturday or have a chat...act like a human being...that kind of thing...

These officers also tried to do their best to counsel inmates on issues such as abuse. The

following comment made by a CO demonstrates how this was an important component of her work and how she educated herself with respect to this issue. She states:

I always try to let them define the boundaries. With them, some want a superficial rapport, others pour out their heart and soul. I never try to push, whatever they're comfortable with. If someone chooses to confide in me, I find it an honor and a privilege, and a huge responsibility. It's like the motto, "first do no harm." The first time that someone discusses sexual abuse, the first result they get may affect whether they ever say anything else. I'm always so careful about what I say. I've done a lot of reading on it. I have books in my locker now...on sex abuse, physical abuse...because you deal with this on a daily basis.

Not only did the MRO group routinely engage in support duties, they described their support role as the most important and preferred function of their job. As illustrated by the following remarks, these officers wanted to provide *all* inmates with coping skills in attempts to aid the inmates in their quest to lead more productive lives:

...To make a difference (CO goal), and to be able to somehow give them (female prisoners) more tools to deal with life's problems when they leave here. I don't expect people to leave here and not have problems. People come in here with boyfriends who abuse them and go right back out to that again. It's very frustrating to see that happening.

If Marika ("MHA") could find a coping mechanism to help her deal with her disorder, I would consider that a success. If Jade (property offender) could find another avenue to deal with her problems I would consider that a success.

I try my best to be right down the middle, to be there for everybody who needs help. But I got to respect corrections, to make sure that nobody leaves this place and there is policy and procedures to follow. The most important thing is that I'm working and I'm safe. If someone could take some of my role of security away, I'd like to get into support because that's the way corrections is going to be more well rounded. That's your training, basically.

A further indication of the MRO officers' preference to act in a more supportive

role was an expressed interest in having additional education in areas such as suicide prevention and sensitivity. According to these officers, they need more training to help give them a better understanding of the population they are dealing with and to give them the guidance and skills necessary to address these issues. One CO makes this point:

...sensitivity training to gender issues. Crisis intervention...dealing with people who are biting their arms off or slashing. Training dealing with suicidal cases. Suicide prevention training should be continuous, on-going, as a refresher, if nothing else. Psychology course, always better to know why people do the things they do.

Although the MRO officers indicated that supporting inmates was their preferred function, they also felt that this function was not held in high regard by other officers. Furthermore it is their contention that Adult Corrections in this province is negligent in providing the training necessary to aid in that capacity. The officers' frustrations regarding these issues are articulately expressed in the following passages:

More training. More programs. Stuff that the staff can be involved with them with and more leeway to help them because we get our fingers rapped every time we go to do something for them.

Oh my God, more training. I'd like to be able to build on the skills I already have, to gain more knowledge on issues already identified. The department should encourage better relations between inmates and staff and other staff should not ostracize you if you do have good rapport with the inmates. Mandatory training with sensitivity issues because they (Adult Corrections) are expanding what they expect of us as correctional officers but they're doing it without offering more training or showing us how it was supposed to be done. If you don't take it upon yourself to gain knowledge, then you're not going to because government is not going to do it. It's frustrating when you want to do more and meet obstacles along the way.

...I have an advantage because of my personal life. I think that staff needs training, but the government is cheap on training us. I think that in a setting with females, training should be provided with sexual abuse and physical abuse. Many times the

women have been abused by the male... . Could be more training, but getting it is another story... .

There were many incidents in which I observed MRO officers hiding their support of inmates from the MCO group. On one occasion, an officer was rushing to make coffee for the inmates while stating that she would have to hurry before the next shift came on. Upon being asked to elaborate, she explained that the inmates could not have this particular type of coffee but were forced to drink a less desirable brand. She sarcastically stated that giving the inmates this coffee may make them think that, "they were important and raise their self-esteem, and God forbid that should happen." These COs also claimed that they get ostracized for appearing on the parole board with inmates. One CO spoke of an incident where another officer was so loud in voicing her discontent with the matter that the person conducting the hearing had to request that the noise be kept to a minimum.

### 8.3.3 Control and Punishment: Lenience vs. Severity

The MCO group seemed to value most their duties as security enforcement officers. They were concerned mainly with maintaining security of the building and controlling the inmates. Vigorous enforcement of institutional rules by this group was one of the most blatant observations made by me during my prison visits. During one of my initial calls to the prison, for example, I was met at the door by a CO who sternly requested an ID. While trying to explain who I was, another officer to whom I had already been introduced came out and verified my identity. These COs would not allow me to enter the multi-purpose room with the inmates, unsupervised. When I explained that this had not been a

problem during previous visits, one officer responded in this way: "Well, I guess some guards follow the rules and some guards don't." This officer also was firm when informing me that my keys must be left in a filing cabinet in the entrance area as opposed to with me. These COs would, on occasion, search through my things to ensure that there were no staples in my papers and there was nothing unusual in my pencil case. Finally, the officers would not allow me to enter the main hallway via, the control room, but insisted I go around to the main gate.

The MCO group was, then, suspicious toward outsiders. This characteristic is believed to be closely tied to the 'police working personality.' The adoption of this attitude gives workers a sense of increased self-protection. They try to avoid dangerous situations - situations that may arise when outsiders smuggle harmful materials into the prison. After a few visits to the prison, I quickly learned what inmates learn after only a few days of incarceration:

But I had to get used to what each one expected of me. I'll never say, "well this one lets me do this." I won't ever play one against the other. I did at first but it wasn't working. I've gotten to know what everyone expects of me. I will never use "but this one lets me."

Like the inmates, I too, had to become accustomed to the different shifts and what behaviours would be expected of me while each was on duty.

It also became clear throughout the data collection period that the MCO group was intent on increasing the pains of imprisonment either by threats to inflict punishment on inmates or through actually carrying out the punishment. Each squad enforces different

rules and, in this case, some of these rules are petty and at times appear to develop in any given situation. Furthermore, many of the actions were discretionary. Most notable here was the arbitrary use of lock-downs. Officers, for example, may decide through their own volition whether an inmate will be confined to her cell as punishment for some action that they perceive as undesirable.

There are two sets of rules governing the NLCCW. One set is standardized, as put forth by Corrections Canada, and the other set pertains only to the NLCCW. It was the institutional rules that were regarded as the most petty by my study group. For example, there was much made of the fact that inmates were to have ice only twice a day. Another rule disallowed inmates from entering into the classroom with food unless the classification officer approved it. These are the types of rules that were the most strictly enforced by the MCO officers, according to the inmates. Furthermore, the ambiguity regarding rules was such that the women did not know what exactly may be punished. The following remarks indicate the fear and frustration over the uncertainty of punishment and the arbitrary way in which it was inflicted:

People get locked down here for very petty reasons. If someone was constantly wiping down the table and someone else said they didn't think it was right, they shouldn't get locked down for it. They just want to eat a meal in peace.

...I guess I'm always anxious about gettin' locked down over somethin' stupid. Sometimes if you're just jokin' around with one of the inmates, the staff will come down right hard on ya'. I don't talk to them and they don't talk to me....

When rules are broken and threats are not heeded, punishment ensues. The

following account by an inmate is illustrative of what happens when an inmate disagrees with an officer's assessment of a situation:

They lock you up over nothing here. I was locked in my cell from 9:30 in the morning til' dinnertime the next day. No smoke. I disobeyed a direct order. One of the guards was frisking me and she found a piece of paper in my pocket. I showed it to her and did like this (rubbed fingers together as if paper was in between) to show her it was only paper. She still wanted me to give her the paper. It was a letter, it was private. They're nosy fuckers. I said, "I'll eat it before I gives it to you." She still wanted to see it, she's nosy. Then I went to disciplinary court. It's a kangaroo court they have in here. Whoever charges you, it was Mr., I can't remember his name. Seven days I have to be in bed at 7:00 p.m.

Not only did this inmate get locked in her cell for 14 ½ hours immediately following the incident, she also got charged for refusing to obey an order. The officer used her own discretion, a power granted by her position of authority, in her decision to demand the paper which started the process of the lock-down and the charge. This incident is a prime example of the very close supervision tactics used by the MCO officers and how this produces a lack of dignity for inmates as well as invades their privacy.

Negotiation of a problem was not a preferred course of action for the MCO group. Their demands were final and, when questioned, the inmate involved was punished. One woman expresses her frustration of conforming to officers' wishes without being able to express her own assessment of any given situation:

... if they say something, you should have a chance to say something back. I don't mean saucy or anything. Once they say something, you can't say anything back. They'll say, "you knows where your room is, so get in it." They can keep you there for a hour or a couple of hours or you could get charged.

On a similar note, another woman was upset that the MCO group could actually



abuse its authority by implying that inmates were lying when they were not. This inmate explained that the institution had at one point run out of toilet paper but that the staff would not acknowledge the problem. They, instead, insisted that she was not telling the truth:

...They can't admit when they're wrong like the toilet tissue, tellin me "I'm full of shit, to get my facts straight."

During the same period, another inmate had stated:

This is a government institution. We ran out of toilet paper today. I've been asking staff for toilet paper for at least three days. Today, we were down to the last roll and when the staff went to the supply room, lo and behold, no toilet paper here. We were out of toilet paper for about four or five hours. We had to ration.

No one is exempt from the rules as laid down by the MCO group. The feeling was that these officers tend to treat the inmate population as a whole; they do not treat prisoners on an individual basis. This method of treatment is actually used as an additional form of social control. For example, when one inmate breaks a rule, the rest of the population pays the consequences. The inmates' disgust for this tactic was evident in the following remarks:

We're the dirt on the soles of their shoes. If something happens we will all suffer til' they get off.

...when Tulk, Osborne and Matthews are working, the way they deal with a situation makes it ten times harder on us. If one person is acting up, they will go out of their way to make sure that everyone feels uncomfortable...

This type of control is not only unfair to the inmates conforming to the rules, but it can also create resentment between the incarcerated women. Thus, the pains of imprisonment

are increased further.

Also, if an inmate is mentally ill, she will not be treated any differently than the rest of the population and will also be punished and degraded for not conforming to the rules.

The following example is indicative of this type of punishment:

...they could be more pleasant with everyone. They could come out on the floor and not leave an inmate out because an inmate has a certain problem or they're an "MHA." They'll make fun of people. They can change their attitude overall. They can take their job down a level. Because they got a badge, they can do whatever they want. They have to understand that each individual has different problems and that everyone can't be treated the same. There's a girl out there now that's an "MHA," they're always locking her down because she makes the inmate population a bit tense. Sometimes they have her meal here for a half hour before they take it down to her. Then there's Sherry, they ORDERS [emphasis added] her to get a shower, if you don't do it you gets locked up....

This type of behaviour indicates that the MCO officers were not working under a differential needs model which recognizes that women have different types of problems that need to be addressed accordingly.

MCO officers also appear to use their authoritarian power to remind inmates that they are inferior and are no longer in control of their own lives and actions. During one episode, for example, one of the officers came into the staff room holding a stereo that she had repossessed from the inmates. She asked: "Anyone want a blaster?" Her reason for taking the stereo was simply that she did not want to hear it. By taking it, however, this woman was depriving the inmates of one of the coping mechanisms used to lessen some of the pains associated with being incarcerated. This officer also stated that a ten-year-old child had "more sense" than some of the inmates. The officer obviously did not grasp the

concept that if you treat people like children, they may begin to act out in childish ways. Mattress raids and denial of smoking privileges were other noteworthy incidents that resulted in increasing the pains of imprisonment for inmates. The following comments are illustrative:

The same guard that took my smoking privileges away said she was just doing it to see how I would react to that situation and to see how well I knew the system.

*R:* They took everyone's mattress. They had a mattress raid. *Who did?* Roberts, Caines and Perham.

*I:* Whose mattress did they take?

*R:* Everyone's. The doctor refuses to write notes for mattresses. Her (Nikki, another inmate) back was so bad, she couldn't push the cart. I have scoliosis, now I have extra pillows. They don't give a fuck here. One cell up here full of mattresses. I'll get busted with pillows and blankets now so when they finds them I'll be in shit then.

Although there are many mattresses in the prison, each inmate is allowed only one. Because some inmates experienced back pain, they were using extra mattresses. While some of the officers did not have a problem with this, the MCO group obviously did. These COs exercised their control by removing the extra mattresses and locking them in an extra cell.

The MRO group did not seem to emphasize the full enforcement aspects of the job in the same capacity as did the MCO group. They fulfilled their mandatory duties but were more selective and liberal in situations where discretion was warranted. For example, instead of not allowing me in the multipurpose room without an officer present, some of these officers actually encouraged it. They felt that if the inmate population was tense, my presence might actually relieve some of that tension. Also, these officers never searched

through my things or took my keys. Moreover, they allowed me to enter the inside section of the prison via the control room. The MRO group was much less suspicious of outsiders accessing the different areas of the prison.

These COs also did not attempt to control inmates through threats of punishment and lock-downs. There was a tendency for these officers to effectively talk a problem through, as opposed to immediately imposing punishment, when there was some type of disagreement. They also tried to treat each inmate on an individual basis as opposed to reprimanding all inmates for the actions of one person. This is apparent in the following statements from inmates:

Some (COs), if you does something, they ask you to explain yourself. They will pull you aside and give you a warning. Other staff just makes up stuff to get you locked in or whatever. There is some staff that do treat you fairly, then there's others that's way over their limit. It's not like we're dogs, they treat us like dogs.

Bennett and Snow will take a person aside and deal with it in a civil manner.

The following remarks from MRO officers show their displeasure for control and punishment duties:

...as for the desire to punish, I have none. They're in punishment enough listening to my jokes.

A good day is when I got time to sit down with someone and make a connection and no one ends up in segregation.

Furthermore, the MRO group did not seem to impose blanket rules on the offender population. They were aware, for example, that "MHAs" have severe mental problems

and are likely to act up more than other inmates. In these cases, officers will not punish them in the same ways that they might consider punishing other offenders. One officer describes his empathetic reactions to the use of derogatory language by "MHAs:"

More supportive definitely (orientation)....I try to do my job in the spirit of Adult Corrections and policy and procedures of Adult Corrections. There is nothing that is black and white. For example, you take Kiley and Ena ("MHAs"), ranting and raving going off their heads calling me an asshole and a jeesler. I will treat them according to their problems. I'm not going to go out and charge them. Firm but fair is the motto. But it is subjective because what is firm for one is not firm for the other. You treat everybody in a dynamic fashion and there is nothing written in stone, no black and white, only grey.

#### **8.4 Conclusion**

In order to increase the effectiveness of the rehabilitative goal in corrections, all COs, must have an orientation towards "encouragement" and "fair" and "humane" treatment as is outlined in the mission statement. The CO staff at the NLCCW, however, was not completely united around the goal of rehabilitation and the support which this entails. While one group did appear to be more interested in providing various forms of support, other officers seemed more preoccupied with asserting full control over inmates and making prison a painful experience.

MCO officers performed a number of status degradation ceremonies to remind the inmates that they were, by virtue of their criminality, inferior to the general population and did not deserve the same rights and privileges that others receive. Women at the NLCCW felt stigmatized as social outcasts and not worthy of forgiveness because of the negative labels imposed on them by this group of COs. The women communicated that they felt

they were being treated as “dogs,” “shit,” and “dirt.” Lock-downs, confiscation of stereos and mattresses, and relinquished smoking privileges were status degradation ceremonies that contributed to feelings of subordination and instability among inmates. According to labeling theory, the process of integrating negative labels such as these into an individual’s self-concept results in a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the inmate may begin to view herself in a similar negative light. Furthermore, following Schur’s interpretation, the inmate may be propelled towards repeated criminality in the future.

Verbal assaults and status degradation ceremonies, such as those practised by the MCO officers, are the means by which an inmate is reduced to the state of a reliant child. Sykes (1958) states: “Public humiliation, enforced respect and deference, the finality of authoritarian decisions, the demands for a specified course of conduct because, in the judgment of another, it is in the individual’s best interest - are all features of childhood’s helplessness in the face of a superior adult world” (1958: 76). When women are deprived of respect and dignity, they feel an “overwhelming sense of hopelessness and a total lack of motivation” (*Creating Choices*: 1990: 109).

The Task Force on Federally Sentenced women attempted to combat these problems by introducing a principle calling for respect and dignity between prisoners and staff. These changes were to help facilitate increases in self-esteem and empowerment among inmates (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 109). The principle insists that there must be mutual respect between prisoners and staff if inmates are to gain self-respect and to have respect for others. This doctrine is based on the finding that women who are treated with

respect and dignity are more likely to act responsibly. Further complementing this principle is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory. "Love and Belongingness Needs" indicate a need among individuals for companionship, affection and acceptance from others - a need that can only be satisfied through interaction with other people (Carver and Scheier, 1992: 412). Because inmates are in constant contact with COs, these needs should ideally be met by them.

An inmate who is not respected and who is reduced to the dependent status of a child by the actions of COs cannot completely involve herself in activities that may help increase self-esteem or promote self-actualization. It is illogical to think, for example, that inmates who are not respected by front-line workers will get inspired about programs that may provide information or skills that will be useful in helping them lead law-abiding lives following their release. An inmate who is told that she will never be respected and whose work is degraded on a continuous basis can gain little through a program that is geared toward strengthening one's self-concept. Inmates who are treated with disrespect and deprived of love and belongingness needs will not be motivated to attend school and other "higher needs" programming as promoted by administrators.

MRO officers clearly had more of a preference to act in a supportive capacity vis-a-vis inmates. Their forms of support ranged from attending to basic institutional needs such as simple recreation or leisure (movie watching, card playing) and basic hygiene assistance for those with more challenging needs ("MHAs") to the provision of some additional supports intended to assist with offender rehabilitation (e.g., helping with homework).

These basic supports seemed to help reduce certain pains of imprisonment and, thus, made prison a more tolerable place to live on a day-to-day basis. This group seemed to embrace with great interest the rehabilitative goal in corrections. These officers took great interest in trying to treat each inmate as a person in a bureaucratic institution, valued obtaining more job training in the areas of human relations to improve their rehabilitative mission, and were highly respected by the inmates for the more flexible and humane way in which they approached their work assignments.

The COs with more of an orientation towards rehabilitation maintained that they were ostracized by the MCO officers. Furthermore, they claimed to have received little support from government with regards to on-going in-service training. Programming in an environment such as this can be described as a remote item on the administrators' agenda of meeting the "criminogenic" needs of female offenders.



## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **9.1 Introduction**

The first objective of this chapter is to provide a summary of the major findings from this research project. Next, I present what I feel is a unique and radical way of dealing with the implications of imprisonment at the NLCCW. Following this is a brief review of the major theoretical contributions of this thesis. Also included in this section is the introduction of a new theory - the "conditional needs" theory - that was grounded in the data presented. The chapter concludes with relevant suggestions for future research and some policy suggestions for correctional services in this province.

#### **9.2 Summary: Recapping the Hindering Forces**

As previously stated, there are two contradictory correctional goals determined by government in contemporary democratic countries like Canada and the US - punishment and control on the one hand, and rehabilitation on the other. It is not clear from the official mission statement established by Adult Correctional Services in Newfoundland and Labrador, however, which objective it recognizes as most important. This thesis has addressed this issue with respect to at least one correctional facility in the province - the NLCCW. I have concluded that methods of control and punishment far outweigh rehabilitative efforts at the NLCCW and that, as the situation now stands, rehabilitation cannot be a serious alternative. There are far too many internal and external factors

inhibiting the development and delivery of effective rehabilitative programs and services at this facility.

First, there are a number of social, political, and economic considerations that have directly or indirectly acted as barriers to a rehabilitative model. Although rehabilitation has been supported by the public in the past, particularly during the 1960s, its popularity has recently weakened considerably and has been replaced by the philosophies of incapacitation and just deserts.

Sensational and biased media reporting about violent crime has helped to produce increased fear of crime and, in turn, increased concerns with achieving public safety. In the same vein, the media has greatly emphasized the failures of the correctional process and downplayed stories of the successful rehabilitation of some offenders. This has helped to reinforce the idea that prisons are largely about ensuring public safety, through keeping offenders under tight control and supervision.

Public perceptions, partially influenced by negative media coverage, send a specific message to correctional administrators whose budgets are constrained by the monies allotted to them by government. When societal pressures call for a punitive approach and money is scarce, governments become more reluctant in their efforts to provide services of a more rehabilitative nature. Furthermore, the majority of correctional expenditures that do become used in this capacity service the much larger male prison population as opposed to the small number of female prisoners. The Director of Corrections in this province, for example, has pointed to the low numbers of female inmates as a reason for a

lack of expenditure on programs at the NLCCW.

New sentencing legislation, in addition to de-institutionalization trends in mental health facilities, are also directly affecting inmate populations, including the population at the NLCCW. Changes in prison populations ultimately affect programming needs. Lower risk women are now being released to community corrections while prison is reserved for offenders deemed unfit for conditional release. Under the current expenditure strategy, rehabilitative policy development and practice calls for a relatively large group of inmates with a high degree of similarity in terms of major background traits, especially education and criminal history. This makes it easier to design and to administer standardized programs and to justify the dollars needed for such programs.

The analysis, however, revealed a very small offender population that was not homogeneous in terms of demographics and criminal profiles. Largely as a result of the new sentencing alternatives and de-institutionalization practices, there now appears to be somewhat higher risk offenders at the NLCCW. The chief sources of growing concerns have been fueled by the recent infusion into the prison of some "MHAs" with less than basic life and literacy skills, and some federal prisoners. This produces more challenging social control and supervision demands for prison administrators, COs, and other treatment staff. This importation makes it more difficult to design and administer treatment programs to meet a wide variety of individual needs.

Also problematic to the rehabilitative treatment of female inmates is the practice of focusing on the "criminogenic" rather than the "non-criminogenic" needs of all offenders.

The most important needs emphasized by the prisoners at the NLCCW were in the areas of health care and familial support - needs of a "non-criminogenic" nature. Furthermore, the practice of de-emphasizing "non-criminogenic" needs weakened inmates' enthusiasm for programming of a "criminogenic" nature.

In areas where "criminogenic" treatment was desired by inmates, there were three major barriers blocking the access and delivery of the programs requested. First, correctional officials relied heavily on volunteers as opposed to more recognized organizations such as the John Howard Society. The programs that were offered seemed to be by no means regular offerings with clearly defined time schedules. As well, they were mostly aimed at relieving boredom among prisoners and conveniently making good use of volunteers interested in providing some service rather than addressing substantive needs such as educational and vocational skill development.

A second barrier to the delivery of programming was the prison's location and architectural design. There is increased potential for effective offender rehabilitation when prisons are situated in or near urban areas where treatment resources like Alcoholics Anonymous and the John Howard Society can be accessed more readily during incarceration. Also, if the goal is to rehabilitate, the architectural design calls for a more open and comfortable campus like layout equipped with sufficient space for specialized functions, such as education and counseling. Because the prison was initially built almost three decades ago during a period when rehabilitation was not the most important goal shaping correctional policy, and with male prisoners in mind, it was not surprising to find

that the design of the prison was not conducive to the rehabilitation of a female prisoner population. There is insufficient space for delivering various kinds of basic and more specialized treatment services at the NLCCW. Administering programs on a regular basis was also hindered by feelings from facilitators that proper facilities and equipment at the NLCCW were either nonexistent or not up to preferred standards.

Finally, effective rehabilitative policy development and implementation calls for a particular type of CO work orientation - one positively predisposed to offering not only basic social supports but also, wherever possible, more specialized treatment in areas such as education and vocational skill development. The analysis, however, uncovered two different work orientations by COs. One group, the MRO group, stressed as the most important aspect of its work the need to tightly supervise and control prisoners. This group produced the most complaints from inmates because it vigorously enforced petty institutional rules and was intent on increasing the pains of imprisonment, through threats and the imposition of punishment. Frequent displays of peace officer status symbols such as superiority and uniforms suggested that officers from this segment wanted to be seen as authority figures by inmates. This clearly contributed to a "we vs. them" attitude between keepers (COs) and the kept (inmates) rather than the desired one of mutual respect. This type of work orientation is not desirable when the goal is to rehabilitate inmates.

Although a second group of officers, the MRO group, was firmly committed to assisting offenders with both basic and rehabilitative treatment assistance, they felt that they were met with apathy and contempt from correctional administrators and the MCO

group respectively. The MCO group seemed to exert control over their MRO counterparts by informally ridiculing them for their perceived efforts to help offenders. The MRO group also felt that correctional services was not providing them with the training needed to help with their desired role of rehabilitating inmates through both basic and specialized forms of support.

### 9.3 Unintended Consequences

As relayed in Chapter 1, there are a number of concepts used to describe the lifestyles of inmates as they adapt to prison and deal with the pains of imprisonment. “Gleaners” refer to those inmates who participated, or wished to participate in, programming that would help improve their plight. We also saw examples of “disorganization” in those inmates labeled as MHAs. There is, however, at least one other way, albeit a disturbing one, in which women have chosen to deal with a bleak existence at the NLCCW. This new survival strategy is the result of a combination of stressful living conditions, the importation of information from federal inmates, and the Exchange of Services Agreement between the province and Canada.

When inmates arrive at the NLCCW, they are entering an institution which one CO referred to as “the hell hole.” They are thrown into a cell with only the barest necessities and no access to personal items for one week. Prisoners complain that they have little access to the outdoors and are constantly breathing smoke-filled air. They also believe that they have insufficient access to health care and nutritional food. Living with inmates, whom they fear is especially daunting for most women. Inmates seek privacy but can find

none. They try to maintain contact with their family and friends but the telephone calls are expensive and visits are sometimes impossible. They want to take part in specific programs but the programs are not offered here. They partake in other programs to relieve boredom and tension. Concentration levels are low. In the midst of dealing with these deprivations and pains, inmates are stripped of all dignity and respect and are in constant fear of punishment and threats. The panic and desperation set in.

A number of offenders, especially those serving federal sentences, were particularly knowledgeable with respect to inmate rights and rehabilitative programming at federal institutions. This small cadre of prisoners shared stories of gymnasiums, rights to smoke in segregation, access to the outdoors, programming options, and many other privileges at federal penitentiaries such as Nova and the Maple Creek Healing Lodge in Saskatchewan. Not surprisingly, imported knowledge of more “liberated” institutions spreads like wild fire amongst a small female inmate population. Furthermore, when federal inmates get transferred to these institutions, they maintain contact with many offenders at the NLCCW through letters. The message remains the same: these inmates prefer to “live” in a federal institution. One devastating consequence of the importation of such erudition is illustrated in the following conversation:

*I: When do you expect to be released from prison?*

*R: Court, May 12<sup>th</sup>. I ain't gonna get out. The crown is asking for 18 months but I asked my lawyer to ask for two years so I can get transferred to Nova and then I'll be eligible for parole in six months.*

*I: Why do you want to go to Nova?*

*R: Because there's no activities here, there's nothing, no gym.*

*I: Who told you about NOVA?*

R: Couple of inmates here have been there and others have told me.

This inmate received the two-year sentence she had requested. Another inmate speaks of her sentence in a similar tone:

If I'd have known it, I would have begged my lawyer to ask for two years. Why did the judge sentence me to 18 months when they knew there is nothing here for me. There's not even an AA here for people who need it.

This avenue, billed as potentially more attractive for inmates, was surprisingly openly recommended by several groups such as COs and treatment personnel. The distribution of knowledge about federal institutions, substandard treatment and lack of programming at the NLCCW, and the exercising of the Exchange of Services Agreement, have led to a way of coping that I will refer to as, "carceral transferral." In order to escape the agonizing conditions at the NLCCW, prisoners are now requesting longer sentences so that they may get transferred to a federal institution. In these instances, the social organization of the NLCCW is actually contributing to increases in the amount of time offenders spend in prison as opposed to decreasing it through the use of rehabilitative methods. The women who are requesting and receiving longer sentences are increasing offender net-deepening. In criminal justice, the idea of a net or a series of nets refers to "the regulation and control of deviant and criminal behaviour" (Adler et al., 2000). Critics argue that in situations like this one, nets have become far too deep, burying offenders in the system for longer. Carceral transferral then constitutes an increase of formal social control of women in this province and is also potentially an added and unnecessary



expense.

#### 9.4 **Theoretical Contributions**

While it is neither feasible nor desirable to discuss every theoretical concept used in this thesis, I would like to very *briefly* review some of the major theoretical contributions. First, feminist theories and concepts have been used to interpret and inform some of the major findings of the study. One important contribution has been the incorporation of the five feminist principles put forth in the widely acknowledged *Creating Choices* (1990) report. This document is largely informed by socialist feminism and has provided the major stimulus for recent reforms made in the area of female corrections.

Socialist feminism was also relevant in the interpretation of crimes committed by the inmates interviewed. The analysis established that women's lives prior to their criminal behaviour had been negatively affected by the current economic organization of capitalism and the cultural system of patriarchy. These women had been marked by both poverty and various types of abuse, both of which they believed contributed to their criminality.

Also important to this thesis is the application of liberal feminist ideas. As we recall, liberal feminists maintain that women are viewed as inferior to men and have consequently been excluded from the academy, the forum, and the marketplace (Tong, 1989: 2). The practice of neglecting and excluding women in criminological research and penal policy is rooted in this frame of thought. Also, there was clear evidence of sex segregation in the workplace as most prisoners either were unemployed or underemployed prior to their prison stint. This supports the liberal feminist belief that a patriarchal society believes that

women are ideally suited for some occupations but are largely incapable of performing other tasks (Tong, 1989: 2).

Given the fact that programs were limited in number and type, it proved somewhat futile to assume that policy development and service delivery at the prison were rooted in an “equality” or “differential needs” model. Rather, the current project found more support for what may be seen as an alternative to the two major models discussed in the existing literature. This new model, the “conditional needs” model, is outlined later in this section.

The data analysis also uncovered support for some of the key ideas contained in the labeling theory of deviance. Inmates were aware, for example, that the formal criminal labeling process would have negative implications in their searches for employment and in their educational endeavors in the future. The “criminal” master status and stigmatization became integral components of the inmates’ identity and influenced their actions and reactions in the world. Another notable finding was the persistent use of informal negative labels by COs. Inmates, for example, believed that they were being treated as “shit” and “dogs.” Relatedly, the analysis found several examples of status degradation ceremonies imposed on women prisoners, each of which appeared to remind them that they were viewed as social outcasts and unworthy. Both types of labeling are stigmatizing and damaging to those so defined.

The findings also applied some of the basic concepts associated with the deprivation thesis. This theory attempts to address some of the factors that contribute to the painful

condition of being incarcerated. The women at the NLCCW experienced numerous material, physical, and emotional deprivations. Deprivations ranged from dislocation from significant others (including children) to safety concerns. This theory also predicts the development of an inmate subculture in which inmates choose to cope with confinement to prison. There were clear examples of “gleaners” and “disorganized criminals” throughout the data analysis.

The interdisciplinary character of this project has contributed greatly to the analysis of the findings. Most notable here is the use of concepts and ideas derived from Maslow’s Theory of Human Motivation. To my knowledge, the theoretical application of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to female prisoners has not been previously attempted. This particular theory was valuable on two fronts. First, the incorporation of Maslow’s ideas proved useful after I discovered that the NLCCW was clearly lacking in some very basic needs and services that closely mirrored the lower level needs in Maslow’s theoretical model. This was in keeping with my preference to have theory grounded in the data. Second, Maslow’s ideas were useful as a means of critiquing the two current major feminist-oriented theoretical models used to inform correctional policy development and in helping to construct a third alternative model.

Finally, based on the findings of this study, I am advancing a new conceptual framework, called the “conditional needs model.” This model maintains that there are basic needs that have to be met prior to any policy development and practice in the area of equality and/or in particular, differential needs. The major limitation associated with the

two existing theoretical models is they assume that the most basic and fundamental services and programs are either already in place or can be accessed readily. It was discovered in this study, however, that this may very well not be the case.

Feminist theory and ideology are imperative in program development for female offenders. There must be an assessment of women's inequality in society that includes an analysis of the low level of social support for women and the negative attitudes toward women, if effective programming is to be developed (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 68). The programs developed in these institutions must subsequently respond to the lives of women as they have been shaped and conditioned in a patriarchal society. Only through looking at the multi-faceted and interrelated experiences of women's lives can we treat their needs from a holistic perspective (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 68).

The findings suggest that, at least at this prison, there needs to be a fundamental shift *from* the currently in vogue abstract feminist ideas of "empowerment" and "esteem" *to* the most basic day-to-day living conditions in correctional institutions, if the previous feminist ideals are to be ever realized. It was clear from the data that prisoners at the NLCCW placed top priority on essentials that most of us take for granted.

The most talked about needs at the NLCCW were tightly connected to the pains associated with being in prison. Some of the greatest stressors for these inmates included access to a variety of goods and services. Inmates, for example, were extremely concerned about getting the medication they had been prescribed, having adequate diets, not being able to afford a "canteen," and at one point, having enough toilet paper to get them

through the day.

Other stressors included a lack of liberty as a result of confinement to and within the prison. The location of the prison, for instance, isolated inmates from their families which contributed to loneliness, boredom and inadequate emotional support. Inmates also resented being confined within the institution. They, for example, had very limited access to the prison yard and were at times confined to segregation. Some inmates feared for their safety and were nervous around inmates who practiced self-mutilation.

Inmates also felt greatly, their loss of autonomy. This was most felt through the rules implemented and carried out by the institution and COs. Inmates resented the fact that they could not keep personal items, such as hair-spray in their cells, but had to sign them out from the control room. One inmate informed me that she had to fight to get access to dental-floss at the prison. Also contributing to the offenders' loss of autonomy was the way in which they were treated by various COs. Labeling and degradation ceremonies, which have been extensively discussed, were particularly upsetting for the inmates at the NLCCW. One woman, for example, was upset that COs had taken her brassiere when she had arrived but had not indicated why.

When we look at Maslow's hierarchy of needs, we can see that most of these stressors lie within the first three tiers of the pyramid. What I am suggesting is that higher order needs, such as esteem and empowerment, are "conditional" on the satisfaction of these basic needs. Only when the most basic needs of female offenders are met can the inmates fully concentrate on increasing their self-esteem and achieving self-actualization

through counseling, education, and other programs that have been developed using feminist principles.

### 9.5 **Future Research**

The findings from this study suggest that a “conditional needs model” may be more fruitful in understanding the daily realities of other provincial prisoners confined to prisons with similar internal and external social conditions. This model may best apply to rural prisons with dated designs that are “criminogenic” needs-specific and are staffed largely by punishment and control oriented officers. Due to the obvious generalizability limitations associated with doing a case study, a follow-up and larger comparative study is warranted.

This follow-up study would involve a consideration of two new federal prisons (Maple Creek, Saskatchewan; and Truro, Nova Scotia), two provincial prisons (Vanier, Ontario; and Offender Program Resource Center, Prince Edward Island) and one with a mixture of both provincial and federal prisoners. A provincial prison at Burnaby, British Columbia is the choice for the mixed prison. While Burnaby has an agreement that is similar to the agreement in Newfoundland, it differs on the basis that it incorporates resource standards and provides for ongoing federal involvement and joint federal/provincial responsibility for women transferred under the agreement (*Creating Choices*, 1990: 84).

This investigation would involve, as its primary but not exclusive theoretical contribution, a test of the adequacy of the three different models believed to be useful for understanding policy development and practice at women’s prisons: 1) equality, 2)

differential needs; and 3) conditional needs. Building upon the present study, this follow-up study would aim to identify the various facilitating or hindering social forces that combine to determine which model(s) of correctional service delivery is (are) espoused by program administrators and practiced. Gaps between official policy and actual services delivered would be described and explained using feminist thought, in addition to interactionist criminological theories such as labeling theory and Sykes' deprivation theory.

It must be remembered that the methodology used in any research project has its limitations due to practical and time considerations. This study was no different. As mentioned in Chapter 8, this study's methodology was clearly not designed in order to present a more detailed exploration of CO role attitudes and behaviours and the impacts of this on the achievement of the rehabilitative goal in corrections. Given this obvious gap in the current project, a larger follow-up research project is needed to examine pertinent issues derived from the findings generated from my exploratory work. Pivotal to this would be the development of a more refined methodology that permits an assessment of the following fundamental issues: 1) the existence of distinctive CO types or subcultures; and 2) the degree of usefulness associated with the two models used to understand officer attitudes and behaviour. As stated earlier, one model emphasizes the sociological aspects of the job while the other places more emphasis on individual background traits. The methodology for this type of future research endeavour would obviously call for an exploration into the occupational choices of officers, their formal and informal

socialization into the occupation, the nature of the correctional organization under which they are employed, and their major background and employment characteristics (e.g., age, sex, education, length of service).

#### **9.6. Policy Suggestions**

Based on the findings of this study, I am recommending that a number of policy suggestions be considered for implementation. Prisons have endured over time and should be expected to exist even in a province traditionally characterized by low crime rates and, more recently, by its efforts to direct more offenders towards community-based options. The data clearly point to the need for government to seriously consider building a women's facility closer to an urban area in its bid to more effectively practice the rehabilitative treatment goals clearly outlined in official policy documents. This prison would need to be built for the purposes of rehabilitation and its architectural design should reflect this mandate. Building this facility should increase and improve the women's support network by bringing them closer to their families and friends. It will also increase job search and placement avenues before and after release, as well as access to health care professionals and other community supports such as the Elizabeth Fry Organization and the John Howard Society. Prison administrators, with the help of the Elizabeth Fry Society, will need to mount convincing rationales for such a move in the face of anticipated public opposition. Cost considerations need to be stressed, in addition to correcting common public mis-perceptions about diminishing property values with the construction of such a prison.



Even in the face of small inmate numbers, severe budgetary limitations and poor architectural design, prisons must ensure that basic needs, such as in the areas of food, clothing and health care, are met. Failure to do so may result in successful court litigation by prisoners and, thus, more serious problems such as public inquiries and expensive settlements. As this study has found, female prisoners are increasingly eager to learn about and to exercise their legal rights. The findings from this study also suggest a need to reconsider the traditional emphasis placed on “criminogenic” over “non-criminogenic” needs when it comes to policy development and service delivery. While the lives of women in prison continue to be assessed using a male measuring rod and observed as a mere pastiche of inert, prioritized, disconnected, and “sick” components, their condition will never be ameliorated.

To improve the potential for more effective offender rehabilitation, officer recruitment and screening standards must be revamped. The selection of more support-oriented personnel with an interest and experience in the rehabilitative (basic and treatment oriented) process would assist service delivery in this regard. Relatedly, policy makers and prison administrators should lobby for the incorporation at the colleges of more human relations courses that tackle issues such as gender sensitivity, abuse, and public speaking. This training should be backed further by some additional and ongoing in-service training in the same areas.

An alternative to this suggestion would be to reconsider extensive use of COs and to focus more on recruiting and training human service professionals, such as social

workers, psychologists, and nurses, to replace the majority of COs now employed. It has been shown that women relate more positively towards non-security staff than they do security personnel (*Creating Choices*, 1990). Furthermore, one study (Larivière and Robinson, 1996) showed that COs were less empathic, more punitive, and less supportive of rehabilitation than eight other occupational groups within the service. These groups included the following: Case management Officers; Health Care/Psychology; Miscellaneous Administrative Officers; Administrative Support; Labour/Technical/CORCAN; Correctional Programs; Correctional Supervisors and Managers; Cost/Activity Center Managers. With custodial concerns in the hands of COs and treatment concerns in the hands of trained professionals, this should help reduce CO role ambiguity and conflict, as well as provide offenders with the care and attention they require.

Finally, if correctional administrators and policy-makers refuse to implement these necessary changes, correctional services in this province should consider altering the terms of their mandate to better reflect the realities of the prison experience as it now exists at the NLCCW. The mission statement should be modified to stress punishment and control as opposed to rehabilitation.

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**Appendix I: Pre-Entry Letter Request to Conduct Research**  
(Put On University Letterhead)

February 26, 1999

\_\_\_\_\_, (Director)  
Adult Correctional and Community Services Division  
Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 8700  
St. John's, Newfoundland,  
A1B 4J6

Dear sir,

I am presently serving as the thesis supervisor for Miranda Monster, a Masters of Arts Candidate (Sociology). She has recently successfully completed all of her course work requirements and has now put together a very strong thesis research proposal. The proposal, recently approved by her thesis committee, is focussed around an exploration of the rehabilitative needs of female prisoners using the Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Center for Women (NLCCW) as a practical research site to carry out this project. Please see attached for your consideration a copy of Miranda's research proposal, including a draft copy of her proposed interview schedule. Miranda is a very hard working, conscientious, and mature graduate student with exceptionally strong research and writing skills. I have been working closely with Miranda for more than a year and I think you would find her proposed study interesting, useful, and not threatening.

Miranda's proposed work, among other things, will produce a very comprehensive report with policy relevant implications. I expect such a report to be of practical use in the search to improve female correctional service delivery in the future. Furthermore, I firmly believe Miranda's proposed pilot project can serve as a launching pad for a future and larger comparative study involving male and female prisoners in Newfoundland. A study of this kind, indeed, would be attractive for me to undertake as I'm now exploring potential future avenues of research in Newfoundland following my recent tenure track appointment in sociology at MUN.

I was wondering if the two of us could meet with you during the week of March 1 in

order to discuss a potential research project focussed around female offenders at the NLCCW. For your information, Miranda has recently submitted for consideration by the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at MUN a very sound research proposal with a proposed budget in order to assist with the collection of detailed and accurate information. I firmly expect her ISER proposal will be strongly supported by the external reviewers and that Miranda will receive a rather attractive research grant to facilitate her proposed research. Her work will also be subject to a required Faculty of Arts Ethics Review. Thus, you need not worry about Miranda conducting an unethical research project. For your information, we have attached to this letter a copy of our curriculum vitae (Cvs).

If you have any questions about Miranda's thesis proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me at MUN (737-2665 or 737-7443). I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Anthony Micucci  
Assistant Professor of Sociology, Ph.D.

## **Appendix II: Inmate Interview Schedule**

### **1) Demographic and background information of Prisoner Respondents**

Respondent's Name

What is your age?

How much schooling have you completed?

What is your ethnic group status?

Where were you living before being sent to this prison?

Are you presently married or living in a common law relationship?

Do you have any children?

Why were you recently sentenced to a prison term?

What were your reasons for committing this crime?

Do you have any previous convictions?

How long is your current sentence?

How much time have you already served here?

When do you expect to be released from prison?

Do you feel you will be ready to go at that time?

Were you working in a paid position at the time of your arrest?

Was this a part-time or full-time position?

How long were you employed in this position?

What was your rate of pay in this position?

How many paid jobs have you had over the last five years?



How long were you employed with each employer?

Did you enjoy any of these jobs?

What were your reasons for leaving these jobs?

How would you describe your relationship with your husband/partner?

Does this person continue to support you during your prison stay? (Probes for financial and emotional support).

**2) Women's Programming Needs and Service delivery** (family, paid and unpaid work, education, substance abuse, health care, special needs offenders)

a) ***family visitation***

How often have you been visited by your spouse/partner during your current prison stay?

Where do you meet?

Do you like this set up? (Probes for guards being present and time restrictions).

Would you like to see him/her more often at the prison if you could? (Probes for distance of prison from family home as a visitation constraint).

Have you talked to him/her on the phone during your prison stay? (Probes for financial constraints in long distance calling, time of day/night constraints placed on calls).

Do you think being incarcerated has affected your relationship with him/her?

Would you like to see any changes made to the current prison visitation policy in order to improve prison visits with him/her in the future?

Have you had any other visitors? (Probes for children, brother, sister, mother, father).

Did your children live with you before you were incarcerated here?

Where have they been living during your prison stay?

Do you like this arrangement?

Do your kids know that you're in prison?

How often have you seen your kids during your period of incarceration?

Would you like to see your kids more often during your prison stay?

Where have you and your kids met during prison visits?

Do you like this arrangement?

Have you talked to your kids on the phone during your prison stay? (Probes for financial constraints in long distance calling, time of day/night constraints placed on calls).

Would you like to see any changes made to the current prison visitation in order to improve future visits with your children?

b) **education**

Would you like to further your education in some way while serving time here?

Has anyone here given you any information about furthering your education during your prison stay (Probe for information after their release).

Would you like to continue your education when you leave here? (Probes for family and financial constraints including child care and daycare services).

Do you think you would receive support from those closest to you were you to continue your schooling after your release from prison? (Probes for supports from spouse/partner, children, mother, father).

c) **paid and unpaid work**

Would you like to work outside the home after you are released here? (Probes for what type of paid work and any financial incentives to pursue paid work).

Would you like to be a full or part-time housekeeper after you are released here? (Probes for lack of other meaningful options, expectations from family members).

How do those closest to you feel about you working outside of the home? (Probes for spouse, partner, children).

Have you received any sort of training during your prison stay here to prepare you for pursuing a paid job following your release? (Probes for resume writing, computer skills,

typing, cleaning, cooking).

Are you satisfied with the sort of training that has been offered?

Is there any sort of job-related training you would like to receive during your prison stay in order to help prepare you for pursuing a paid job after release?

Have you been given any training during your prison stay that you think is designed to help prepare you to become a good housekeeper after you are released? (Probes for cooking, cleaning, parenting, shopping classes).

Are you satisfied with this sort of training?

Is there any sort of housekeeping related training you would like to receive in the future while in prison in order to help prepare you for your job as a homemaker after release?

d) substance abuse

Do you think you have a substance abuse problem?

Were you under the influence of any type of legal or illegal substance at the time you committed the crime that resulted in your incarceration?

Have you received any sort of support services during your prison stay for your substance abuse problem?

Do you think this (these) service(s) has (have) been helpful?

Would you like to see any improvements made in the future to the prison's current substance abuse program?

Would you like to acquire additional assistance for your substance abuse problem after you are released?

Are there any problems you anticipate now with getting this sort of assistance after release? (Probes for child care and financial constraints).

e) health care

Do you have any major health concerns?

What types of health care services have you received since being incarcerated here? (Probes for diet and nutrition educative information, prescription drugs, cervical cancer examination, HIV, tuberculosis).

Are you satisfied with the health care services that have been offered to you during your prison stay? (Probes for availability of medical doctors, comfort level with doctors).

Would you like to see any sorts of improvements made in the future to the prison's current policy of health care service?

f) *other*

What does a typical day at the prison for you look like? (Probes for the amount and type of mandatory and institutional housekeeping maintenance duties, attitudes toward such work).

How would you describe your current relationship with prison guards? (Probe for degree of control as opposed to more support-oriented service style of guards).

Do you think they are supportive about the idea of you having access to various rehabilitative programs during your prison stay?

(Native Offenders) Do you feel that you have any special needs that are different from those associated with other female prisoners?

To what extent would you say those needs have been taken into account in prison programs you may have received during your stay here?

What sorts of training are you looking for during your stay here?

Would you like to see any additional type of special needs training while you are serving time here?

Is there anything that could be done in the future to improve the prison's current policy towards special needs offenders like yourself?

### **Appendix III: Correctional Officers and their Service delivery**

#### **a) background and experience**

What sort of work did you do before taking your current job? (Probes for previous corrections experience (prison or community-based context) and with male or female offenders, police or security work experience).

How much schooling have you completed?

Do you feel your past education and work experience have adequately prepared you to deliver support services to women prisoners?

#### **b) programming needs and service delivery**

What do you think is the most important goal(s) of female corrections? (Probes for the importance of rehabilitation, punishment, and deterrence objectives).

Do you think this goal(s) is (are) now being achieved at the NLCCW?

Do you believe that female offenders can be effectively rehabilitated while serving time here?

Do you think female prisoners are generally eager to learn the skills and values needed to lead law abiding lives after their release?

Of those programs currently being offered here, which one(s) do you think is(are) the most effective?

Of those programs currently being offered here, which one(s) do you think is(are) the least effective?

How much programming do you think should be given to female prisoners while they are incarcerated here?

Do you think that female offenders should have input into what programs they may eventually receive during their prison stay?

How would you describe your relationship with the offenders? (Probe for support vs. control orientation).

How are the rehabilitative needs of female prisoners here now being identified? (Probes for classification gatekeepers, differentiate between criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs).

Which types of needs do you think are now being given the most attention in programs designed for female prisoners?

Can you think of any problems with the current strategy used to identify the rehabilitative needs of female prisoners?

Are you aware of any sorts of requirements needed to be satisfied by female prisoners before they could receive various types of rehabilitative programs? (Probes for security risk, program waitlists, educational background, federal vs. provincial offender, and institutional needs like housekeeping).

Is there anything you could think of that would help to improve your working relationship with female prisoners in the future?

Is there any sort of programming that you think could be designed and implemented in the future to improve the potential for offender rehabilitation?

What does a typical work day in prison for you look like?

(Native Offenders) Do you think that native offenders have any special needs that are different from those associated with other female prisoners?

To what extent would you say those needs have been taken into account in prison programs now being offered to native offenders during their stay here?

Are you aware of any special needs training now being given to native offenders during their stay here?

Is there anything that could be done in the future to improve the prison's current policy towards native prisoners with special needs?

#### **Appendix IV: Treatment Staff Interview Schedule**

Could you describe your current position at the NLCCW?

How long have you been working here with female offenders?

What sort of work did you do before taking your current job? (Probes for previous corrections experience (prison or community-based context) and with male or female offenders).

How much schooling have you completed?

Do you feel your past education and work experience have adequately prepared you to deliver support services to women prisoners?

Have you received any type of specialized training to help prepare you for your work at the NLCCW? (Probes for source of training such as addictions workshop).

Do you think the support services you have provided have been useful to the women?

What are some of the main problems you have experienced with the respect to the design or delivery of various types of programming at the NLCCW?

Are there any programs that you think could be designed and implemented in the future to help female prisoners improve their chances of leading law abiding lives after their prison stay?

**Appendix V: Correctional Policy Development Interview Schedule  
(selected correctional administrators)**

How long have you been in your current position?

What sort of work did you do before taking your current position?

What do you think is the most important goal(s) of female corrections?

Do you think this goal(s) is (are) now being achieved at the NLCCW?

Who decides what programs get designed at the NLCCW?

What factors explain what sorts of programs actually get implemented at the NLCCW?

What are some of the factors that affect what programs get offered at the NLCCW?

How much of the current correctional budget is directed towards program development for female offenders at the NLCCW? (Probes for total correctional budget 1997-98 and total cost of female corrections including rehabilitative services).

Do you now rely on other sources of funding for female prison programs? (Probes for privatization of corrections like Salvation Army).

Has there been any recent female prison program evaluation done at the NLCCW? (Probes for findings and if internal or external evaluation done).

Do you think that native offenders here have any special needs that are different from those associated with other female prisoners?

To what extent would you say those needs have been taken into account in prison programs now being offered to native offenders during their stay here?

Are you aware of any special needs training now being given to native offenders during their stay here?

Is there anything that could be done in the future to improve the prison's current policy towards native prisoners with special needs?

Overall, do you think there are any policies that could be designed in the future to improve female prison programs?



**Appendix VI**  
**The Field Research Respondent Release Form**

I am conducting a study on female prisoner needs and programming at the Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Center for Women (NLCCW). This study is part of my requirement for the degree of Masters of Arts. It is independent of the Department of Justice and is being supervised by the Department of Sociology at Memorial University. My study hopes to produce valuable information on the kinds of rehabilitative programs needed by female prisoners and on the best means of delivering those programs in the future.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may end the interview at any time. You may refuse to answer any question if you please. All information you provide will be held in strict confidence and your name will never be released to any organization or appear in any report. I am not requesting access to any files possessed by the Department of Justice that may contain potentially sensitive information about your background. The information you provide will be recorded by means of handwritten notes and a tape recorder will not be used. The findings from my study will be used for academic talks, reports, and publications. All notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Sociology Department. These assurances of privacy are intended to allow you to provide honest answers that are as complete as possible. Please feel free to ask me any questions about my study and about the provision of privacy. If you have any concerns that cannot be answered by me, you may contact either Dr. Anthony Micucci (project supervisor), Assistant Professor of Sociology or Dr. Barbara Neis, Head of Sociology

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Sincerely,

Miranda Monster

Having read the above, I agree to take part in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix VII: Faculty of Arts Ethics Approval Letter

DATE:

TO: Professors, Arts Research Committee

FROM: Chairperson, Arts Research Committee

SUBJECT: Enclosed Research Project

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Please examine the enclosed application for ethical acceptability.

If you approve the application:

1. Sign the certificate in the appropriate column.
2. Send all the documentation to the next person on the list.

If you do not approve, state the reasons for your objection on a separate sheet of paper, then send on the documents as above to the next person on the list.

Please complete this task at your earliest convenience. For any clarification, please contact me at S - 4039,

Date Forwarded:

1.

5 Mar 99

2.

96.03.04 (see note)

3.

99.03.05



