



'Understanding Life in Prison'

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This module aims to familiarise students with the main theories, concepts, and debates used to understand life in prison. Students will be encouraged to think critically about the aims of imprisonment and how prison culture shapes both the behaviour of those detained and prison staff. Special attention will be paid to examining issues such as who is imprisoned, the impact of imprisonment, prison violence, how order and control is maintained, as well as the occurrence of self-harm and deaths in prison. These issues are explored to provide students with an understanding of some of the key challenges facing modern penal systems internationally.

Topics of the course:

- Why we punish and how that affects the use of imprisonment.
- Who we imprison and what needs they have.
- How do you maintain order and control in prison.
- How common is violence in prison and what causes it?
- How do you reduce the occurrence of deaths in prison and self-harm?
- How the conflict in Northern Ireland affected the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

Dr. Butler research interest and statement:

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Identity, violence, imprisonment, shame, masculinity, penal reform, reintegration, desistance, criminological psychology and restorative justice.

RESEARCH STATEMENT

My interests include criminological psychology and imprisonment. Criminological psychology involves understanding why people engage in crime, how society reacts to and manages criminal behaviour and how individuals began to leave behind a criminal career. In particular, I am interested in issues such as violence, identity, shame, masculinity, imprisonment, conflict, restorative justice and penal reform. My PhD thesis was entitled "Prisoner Confrontations: The Role of Shame, Masculinity and Respect" and investigated why some prisoners were more likely to engage in prisoner-on-prisoner violence than others. Since then, I have been involved in a number of research projects examining the service and support needs of young people on remand, fear of crime, equality and disciplinary processes in prison, parental imprisonment, the experiences of vulnerable individuals in the criminal justice system and the penal reform programme in Northern Ireland.

[[https://pure.qub.ac.uk/portal/en/persons/michelle-butler\(5ce0eac6-9b3f-4182-b839-6fec31829b64\).html](https://pure.qub.ac.uk/portal/en/persons/michelle-butler(5ce0eac6-9b3f-4182-b839-6fec31829b64).html)]