University of Cincinnati

Date: 3/11/2022

<u>I, Alexander L Burton, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice.</u>

It is entitled:

Hacks or Heroes? Public Perceptions of Correctional Officers

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UNIVERSITY OF
Cincinnati

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Hacks or Heroes?

Public Perceptions of Correctional Officers

A dissertation submitted to the
Graduate School at the University of Cincinnati

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

in the School of Criminal Justice
of the College of education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services

2022

by

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ABSTRACT

Each day, approximately 420,000 correctional officers go to work in our nation's carceral institutions. The reliance on mass incarceration as the foremost public policy to combat crime has led to this large workforce, which within the criminal justice system is second in size only to the police. In contrast to policing that largely takes place in public, much of a correctional officer's work is in private, within the confines of prisons where it is invisible to the citizenry. As a result, the media largely dictates how correctional officers are portrayed to the public, in the form of movies, television shows, and newspaper stories. These accounts often portray correctional officers negatively, as "hacks."

Notably, little is known about how the public perceives the correctional officer occupation. This omission is salient given the size of the correctional officer workforce and the important function they serve in guarding society's most dangerous members. By contrast, a voluminous literature exists that examines public perceptions toward the police on a variety of issues, such as confidence in them, use of force, importance to society, and occupational prestige. The current study seeks to fill this void in the research.

Thus, this dissertation presents primary data from a 2022 national survey of 1,000 U.S. adults conducted by YouGov, an opt-in internet panel survey company. The survey instrument measured public perceptions toward 16 outcomes, including the respondents': views of officers ("hacks" or "heroes"); ratings of occupational status; preferred role for officers (custody or treatment); perceived value (salary, importance of, confidence in); and acceptance of officers' use of force and support for reducing misconduct in the occupation. This dissertation also attempts to explain the variation in perceptions toward correctional officers. Based on prior

research, five theoretical models are examined: the racial model, correctional attitudes model, political model, crime/danger model, and prison contact model.

The analysis revealed several broad findings. First, the public does not view correctional officers as hacks. In fact, many see their work as heroic and their occupation as having prestige higher than other occupations with similar educational requirements. The public tends to endorse officers assuming a treatment-oriented role and being important assets in the rehabilitation of inmates. Much of the sample viewed force as something that should be used only in select circumstances. Variations in perceptions were largely based on correctional attitudes (e.g., punitiveness), political psychology (e.g., the care/harm domain), and views toward the dangerousness of prison work.

This dissertation presents data showing that the American public clearly favors correctional officers embodying a treatment provider role. The future of corrections needs to exemplify this purpose, seeking not only to ensure order but also to create a humane environment in which officers are trained and encouraged to improve those they supervise. As the public understands, officers choose to enter the confined and dangerous space of the prison where most strive to be heroes and not hacks.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The tallest oak in the forest is the tallest not just because it grew from the hardiest acorn; it is the tallest also because no other trees blocked its sunlight, the soil around it was deep and rich, no rabbit chewed through its bark as a sapling, and no lumberjack cut it down before it matured. We all know that successful people come from hardy seeds. But do we know enough about the sunlight that warmed them, the soil in which they put down the roots, and the rabbits and lumberjacks they were lucky enough to avoid?

-Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers*, pp. 19-20.

As Gladwell notes, tall trees are not tall by chance. It is the forest around them that contributes to their success. The hardiest seed in the wrong forest will not grow into a towering oak. Thus, I would like to take this space to acknowledge and give thanks those that comprise my "forest." These individuals served, metaphorically as my sunlight and soil, and assisted me in evading the rabbits and lumberjacks.

There are many people deserving of acknowledgement. The first person, whose generosity in funding the survey made this dissertation possible, is my father—Velmer S. Burton, Jr. Thank you for all the love, support, and mentorship you have given me from early on in life until now. I promise to repay you with publications! An equal amount of praise and thanks goes to Dr. Francis Cullen. Dr. Cullen and I have a unique Dissertation Advisor/Advisee relationship: He has known me since I was a little kid. While we had a bond prior to me beginning my graduate career, we have grown to be very close friends and colleagues. He is the only professor I know that would take a call on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve and Day, because I was working on this dissertation. For these reasons, and innumerable others, I am extremely grateful to work with Dr. Cullen.

I would also like to thank the other members of my committee: Dr. Cheryl Lero Jonson, Dr. J.C. Barnes, and Dr. Paula Smith. Dr. Jonson has become a close friend and colleague, and I

am excited for all of the future collaborations we have planned. She also was instrumental in the development of the survey used for this dissertation. Dr. Barnes, thank you for all the assistance and support you have given me since I started the M.S. program at the University of Cincinnati. I have enjoyed learning from you and appreciate all the support you provided me in developing as a scholar and on the job market. Dr. Smith, I appreciate you serving on my committee. Your feedback on my proposal led me to including a variable that ended up being extremely meaningful in the analyses! Finally, Dr. Justin Pickett deserves praise for his assistance and feedback on the development of the survey used in this dissertation. It became a much stronger instrument with your methodological expertise.

I would also like to thank the late Dr. Ed Latessa. Dr. Latessa always believed in me since I first started in the M.S. program. I began working under him in January of 2016 at the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute. I would go on to do all my graduate assistantship work under him at the Corrections Institute. His work in corrections has inspired me to do research aimed at facilitating real change in the corrections system. He used to always ask me "do you want to make real change?" Or, "do you want to sit on your ass and talk about it?" I am choosing the former, Dr. Latessa! I also must acknowledge the many faculty and staff members at the University of Cincinnati. This includes (but is certainly not limited to) the School of Criminal Justice administrative staff—the late Jean Gary, Erin Cochran, Janice Miller, and Betsy Yeakle—as well as Drs. Joseph Nedelec, Michael Benson, Hexuan Liu, Cory Haberman, Sandra Browning, and John Wright.

On a more personal level, there are many family members and friends that have been there for me throughout this process. My mom, Angela John, surely has earned an honorary bachelor's degree (if not M.S.) in criminal justice. She has listened to all my research ideas,

listened to me read outload paragraphs to see if they "sound good," and vicariously experienced all the emotions that come with pursuing a Ph.D. She has shown me nothing but love and support in this process, and for that I am appreciative. Also, I would like to dedicate this work to my late "Mamaw," Doris Burton, whom I lived with while pursuing my master's degree. She selflessly did all she could to help me so I could focus on my school and work. I am forever grateful for all the love and support you gave to me, Mamaw. Thank you to all my other family members who continually asked about my progress in graduate school. I will be happy to tell you all "I'M DONE!" next time you ask.

Undoubtedly, I have likely failed to mention by name several people who have shared with me their wisdom, academic or otherwise. This includes all of those in my academic cohort, close friends in other cohorts, and any other persons I have shared experiences with during my time in graduate school. This includes both persons still in my life and those who have moved on. Please know that I greatly appreciate all who have helped to shape my scholarly journey thus far. Still, as I continue to grow, know that I will never forget all of those who made up my forest—those that assisted me in "growing tall" and completing the requirements of the Ph.D.

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CHAPTER 1

CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS IN AMERICA

The United States incarcerates more individuals in its prisons and jails than any other nation in the world (Enns, 2016). This dubious achievement has led America to be labeled the "Incarceration Nation" and "The World's Warden" (Enns, 2016; Gottschalk, 2011). This status was achieved because the nation's incarcerated population expanded intractably and rapidly over several decades to an unprecedented size. Garland (2001) first coined the term "mass incarceration" to capture this inordinate growth, from approximately 200,000 prison inmates in 1960, to over 1 million inmates by 1996 (Kaeble & Cowhig, 2018; Langan et al., 1988), and finally to 2,310,300 incarcerated individuals in 2008 (Kaeble & Cowhig, 2018). At present, the current number of individuals housed in U.S. prisons and jails is approximately 2.1 million (Minton et al., 2021). Although the total count behind bars has recently decreased, the relative stability of the incarcerated population is what is most concerning about America's incarceration practices (Kang-Brown et al., 2021).

Beyond the fact that the total incarcerated population still hovers above two million, state-level incarceration rates reveal an even bleaker story (Pfaff, 2017). In a compelling report by the Prison Policy Initiative, it was revealed that if taken as separate entities, 24 states would have the highest incarceration rate in the world—higher than the U.S.'s national rate (Widra & Herring, 2021). And even the state with the lowest incarceration rate in America, Massachusetts, would have a higher incarceration rate than Iran and all the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries (Widra & Heerring, 2021).

Furthermore, considerable variation also characterizes the timing of peak incarceration rates at the state level. For example, since 2012 (four years after the peak of the U.S. total

incarceration rate), more than 20% of states experienced increases in prison populations, ranging from a 2% increase in Tennessee to a 23% increase in Arkansas (Ghandnoosh, 2019). In addition to these two states, other states with rising prison populations include, Kansas (3%), Missouri (4%), Nevada (7%), South Dakota (9%), New Mexico (9%), Kentucky (10%), Wisconsin (11%), Wyoming (12%), and Washington (13%) (Ghandnoosh, 2019). Thus, declaring that the incarceration rate in America has declined over the past decade is misleading to the text that this view masks contrary trends at the state level.

This remarkable growth in the number of incarcerated individuals and in the number of penal institutions that house them has had a key collateral consequence, less visible perhaps to commentators and the public: the need to employ a large workforce of correctional officers. As of 2020, there were approximately 418,500 correctional officers and jailers working in the United States (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a). The states employing the most correctional officers are, Texas (47,040), California (37,810), Florida (25,080), Pennsylvania (17,770), and North Carolina (15,050) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a).

Given the vast number of correctional officers employed in America, and the important duty vested in them to keep the public safe from the most dangerous individuals of society, there is relatively little research examining public perceptions of their job performance and nature of their occupational role. By contrast, voluminous research has been conducted on the police— state employees also serving as protectors of the social order. This paucity of research may be because police officers perform their duties largely in public, whereas correctional officers perform most of their work in the confines of jails and prisons (Lombardo, 1981). For comparison, there were approximately 655,000 police and sheriff's patrol officers employed in in 2020 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020b), approximately 250,000 more than correctional

officers and jailers. Although both occupations employ hundreds of thousands of Americans and are tasked with protecting public safety, it is instructive that researchers have tended to give the lion's share of empirical attention to police officers rather than correctional officers.

Notably, a central focus of the extant police research in this domain is public perceptions toward officers and their work (e.g., police brutality and use of force, fear, confidence in them, occupational prestige)—a line of inquiry largely ignored with correctional officers. Several studies, however, have begun to explore these issues with correctional officers. Much of this work examines how correctional officers are portrayed in the media, asking the public what images come to mind when thinking of correctional officers and how the public rates the quality of prison work (Crawley, 2013; Freeman, 1998; Sundt, 2009; Bryant & Morris, 1998; Vickovic et al., 2013). Despite this development, the prior research on this topic remains sparse, limited in scope, and devoid of theoretical analysis.

To fill this void in the literature, this project attempts to provide a systematic analysis of how the American public views correctional officers and their work. The project will explore five primary areas: (1) the image of correctional officers as "hacks" or as "heroes" and the occupational prestige of correctional officers; (2) whether the public thinks the role of a correctional should be custodial and/or treatment oriented; (3) public views toward correctional officers' salary versus the police, confidence in correctional officers, and importance of correctional officers to achieving the goals of imprisonment, (4) correctional officers' use of force, and (5) public views toward policies intended to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation.

Beyond exploring the public's attitudes toward correctional officers and their work, this project examines the sources of these perceptions. Five theoretically informed models are used to better understand what shapes public attitudes toward correctional officers:

1. The racial model, focusing on respondents' race and racial attitudes (e.g., racial resentment, White nationalism).

2. The correctional attitudes model, focusing on the respondents' punitiveness, support for rehabilitation, and belief in redeemability.

3. The political model, focusing on political party, political ideology, and political psychology (Moral Foundations Theory).

4. The crime/danger model, including fear of crime, prior victimization, and perceptions toward the dangerousness of working in prison and the prison population.

5. The prison contact model, including experience working as a correctional officer, personal relationships with correctional officers, and prior experiences with prison and punishment.

As a prelude to the study, the first chapter reviews a variety of topics pertaining to the correctional officer occupation. First, a profile of the American correctional officer is described, including occupational information (e.g., salary) and demographic characteristics of the officer workforce. Next, popular images of correctional officers are reviewed. Prior research points to two main characterizations of correctional officers, which are officers as "hacks" or, conversely, as "heroes" (see, e.g., Toch, 1978; Vickovic et al., 2013). The chapter also outlines prior research undertaken on correctional officers, with attention paid to the primary areas of: correctional ideology of officers (i.e., whether officers endorse a rehabilitative or punitive orientation toward their work), work reactions (e.g., job stress, PTSD), fear and victimization, and use of force.

The chapter concludes with an explanation of the research strategy used for this project. A national-level YouGov sample (N = 1,000 respondents) is used to answer the primary research questions. A battery of items was created to examine public views toward correctional officers

and their work, perceptions of correctional officer occupational prestige, views toward the preferred role of correctional officers in prisons, support for more training and improved working conditions, confidence in correctional officers to do their work, and the perceived importance of their work, among other related topics. Beyond traditional attitudinal Likert-scale questions, the study also uses several experimental designs embedded within the survey to examine views about use of force and whether the public supports reform efforts regarding the correctional officer occupation. Major public opinion theories will be used to examine the sources of attitudes and perceptions the public holds toward these issues.

American Correctional Officers: A Profile

As noted, 418,500 individuals were employed as American correctional officers in 2020 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a). Correctional officers work in a variety of different industries. Most officers (209,390) work for state governments, primarily in prison settings. The next largest group of officers (156,120) work for local governments, generally in county jails and detention facilities. Furthermore, 23,540 officers were employed by facilities' support services, 15,380 were employed by the federal executive branch, and 1,150 were employed by psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a). At the state level, Texas, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina employ the most correctional officers. The fewest number of officers are employed in Montana, North and South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a).

In terms of salary, the average annual wage for correctional officers in America is $52,340[1], and the median is $47,410 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a). The Bureau of

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[1] By comparison, the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics (2020b) reports that the average annual wage for police officers is $70,000.

Labor Statistic's National Compensation Survey (2021) compiles the average salary for each state. Their data reveal that correctional officers' state remuneration varies significantly across jurisdictions and when compared to the national average. California has the highest average salary for correctional officers at approximately $80,000 per year, whereas Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Jersey officers all make an average salary in the mid $70,000 range. Oregon, New York, Alaska, Washington, Hawaii, and Nevada pay correctional officers in the $60,000 range, while compensation in Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Connecticut, Maryland, and Iowa is in the range of $50,000. As of 2020, over 60% of states paid correctional officers less than $50,000 annually (National Compensation Survey, 2021). These include New Hampshire, Ohio, Vermont, Colorado, Utah, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Arizona, Wyoming, Maine, Texas, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Virginia, and Kansas in the $40,000 range. At the lowest end of the pay scale in the $30,000 range are South Dakota, New Mexico, Alabama, North Carolina, West Virginia, Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Indiana, Arkansas, Louisiana, Georgia, Delaware, Kentucky, Missouri, and Mississippi (National Compensation Survey, 2021).

Demographically, there are approximately 2.5 male correctional officers for every one female officer in America, with an estimated 273,000 male officers and 110,000 female officers in 2019 (DATA USA, 2021). Racially, White officers outnumber Black officers by approximately two to one, with 56.9% of all correctional officers being White and 24.9% being Black (DATA USA, 2021). Regarding age, correctional officers on average are 39.7 years old. Education information on correctional officers is not tracked by any formal data source. However, recently collected data of three states' department of corrections training academies found that in terms of highest education level completed among 673 pre-service correctional

officers (i.e., individuals hired by state departments to work as correctional officers awaiting basic training), approximately 30% had a High School Diploma/GED, 55% had some college or an associate degree, and around 13% of the pre-service officers had a bachelor's degree. Slightly less than 2% had a graduate degree (Burton & Miller, 2019a, 2019b; Burton et al., 2019).

Regarding career outlook, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021a) projects a 7% decline in the number of correctional officers employed in the United States by 2030. However, there is an anticipated 35,700 job openings each year projected until 2030. These rates are subject to change, however, depending on sentencing practices and on how state budgets are affected by factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic and political factors.

Two Images of Correctional Officers

A review of the literature depicts two broad images of correctional officers: "hacks" and "heroes." In slang terms, a "hack" is someone that is not great at what they do. In this depiction, the correctional officer is portrayed as being generally incompetent and with low intelligence, performing a low-skill job that is mostly custodial in nature, with little care for the suffering of inmates; in other words, the correctional officer is someone that simply performs "dirty work" (Klofas & Toch, 1982; Sundt, 2009; Toch, 1978; Tracy & Scott, 2006).

Conversely, in the view that correctional officers are heroes, they are seen as performing an extremely important job of protecting the public from the most dangerous members of society (Bryant & Morris, 1998; Doyle & Ericson, 1996; Page, 2011). Their actions are regarded as heroic because prison guards face high risks of physical injuries both from violence and disease, yet in the face of these grave challenges still manage to keep order in prisons and ensure safety and security (Konda et al., 2013; Paar et al., 2008).

Correctional Officers as Hacks

There are at least four factors that perpetuate the "hack" image of correctional officers. The first is the way the occupation is portrayed in the media. In prominent movies such as *Brubaker* (1980), *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994), *Murder in the First* (1995), and *The Longest* Yard (2005), correctional officers were generally depicted as being sadistic toward the inmates (Welsh et al., 2011). Newspaper media paint the same negative picture. Analyzing nearly 1,500 newspaper articles, Freeman (1998) concluded that nearly 60% of articles perpetuate the stereotype that correctional officers are "hacks." Using a similar methodological approach of content analyzing newspaper articles, Vickovic and colleagues (2013) corroborate Freeman's findings and report that "not surprisingly . . . 246 (79.6%) negatively depicted correctional officers, in contrast to 42 (13.6%) neutral articles and only 21 (6.8%) articles that depicted correctional officers positively" (p. 460). Thus, in the 15 years that passed between Freeman's work and Vickovic et al.'s, the negative reporting on correctional officers has grown worse, with approximately 20% more newspaper articles casting correctional officers in a negative light.

Moreover, newspapers tend to only cover stories of officers being corrupt, and thus further perpetuate the "hack" label. A handful of articles have covered incidents of corruption committed by correctional officers (e.g., Pieschke, 2021; Rose, 2021; Seitz, 2014). Some of the most common forms of corruption that officers take part in consist of bringing contraband into prisons (e.g., drugs, cell phones) and having inappropriate relationships with inmates (Center for the Advancement of Public Integrity, 2016).

The second reason why officers may be considered hacks is that they do what is referred to as "dirty work" (Sundt, 2009). In other words, the job is low skilled, low paying, and

dissatisfying (Lambert et al., 2009; National Compensation Survey, 2021). As a result, turnover rates are disconcertingly high among those who perform this work, with national estimates reporting that one in four guards quits every three years (Minor et al., 2009, 2011; Russo et al., 2018). Furthermore, guards may be viewed as lacking the skills to do their jobs effectively. For example, if correctional officers are in part responsible for "correcting" the behaviors of the inmates they manage, they may not be viewed as doing a good job given that 66% of prisoners return to prison within three years of release (with nearly half being arrested in the first year after release) (Antenangeli & Durose, 2021).

The third reason why officers may be labeled as hacks involves widely publicized stories of corruption. Perhaps one of the most famous examples highlighting correctional officer corruption is the 1971 Stanford Prison Experiment (Haney et al., 1973). In the study, male college students were randomly assigned to be either guards or prisoners in a simulated prison setting. Early in the experiment, the researchers noticed that the guards began to abuse their powers and mistreat the prisoners. The authors theorized that when people are put in situations where they have power over others, they will abuse that power (Haney et al., 1973).

For nearly 50 years, this study has enjoyed wide acclaim, with virtually no criticism by criminologists (Kulig et al., 2017). The experiment was so popular a movie was created, *The Stanford Prison Experiment* (2015), that aired in theaters and on Netflix, a leading global video streaming service. Although the experiment has received praise and success, concerns have been raised that question the study's scientific merit. Some of the earliest concerns centered around issues regarding the internal validity, such as the fact that the personality tests administered to the participants did not include items that measure sadistic or masochistic behaviors (Fromm, 1973), which were on display by many of the guards during the experiment. Other scholars argue

there were selection effects that biased the results. These scholars cite Zimbardo's leadership role and the way he advertised the study to potential participants may have contributed to unrealistic behaviors portrayed by participants who had self-selected into the experiment based on the portrayal of the study (Carnahan & McFarland, 2007; Haslam & Reicher, 2003). Further, other serious issues with the experiment include the fact that Zimbardo provided detailed information to the participants about the intended goal of the experiment, instructions were given to the guards around how to treat the inmates, the fact that the guards were not told they were subjects being evaluated, and the issue of participants never completely being immersed in the situation (Le Texier, 2019). Despite these criticisms, the Stanford Prison Experiment has long contributed to the image of prison guards as hacks.

Sykes (1958) offers a fourth perspective as to why correctional officers may be viewed as hacks. In his *Society of Captives*, Sykes (1958) explains the plight of correctional officers in trying to gain authority in prisons, noting that "the custodians are engaged in a continuous struggle to maintain order—and it is a struggle in which the custodians frequently fail" (p. 42). Whereas in occupations such as the police and the military, where authority is in all intents and purposes granted by the badge and uniform, correctional officers are not accorded their authority in this way. Instead, as depicted by Sykes (1958), officers face barriers to securing compliance from prisoners that are relatively apathetic to the authoritative position of correctional officers in the prison.

Officers struggle to acquire compliance because "the punishments which the officials can inflict . . . do not represent a profound difference from the prisoners' usual status" (Sykes, 1958, p. 50). By this, Sykes posits that the existing potential punishments at the guard's disposal (e.g., the ability to reduce an inmate's recreation time, placing an inmate in solitary confinement for

bad behavior) do not represent sanctions much worse than their current one—of being removed from society and stripped of their rights while serving time in prison. In addition to being hamstrung regarding available punishments, officers struggle even more to gain compliance due to a lack of possible rewards they can offer inmates to promote good behavior. As Sykes (1958) notes, the inmates are given all the available rewards in one large sum upon entering the prison, which include things such as access to recreation, visitation rights, and credited good time to their sentence (Sykes, 1958).

Officers thus find themselves in a predicament. They must maintain order, but the inmate population does not simply comply with their commands because the inmates generally do not respect their status (Sykes, 1958). The officers cannot punish or reward their way to compliance either. Thus, Sykes (1958) argues that the guards become corrupted. In this way, the officer "finds that one of the most meaningful rewards he can offer is to ignore certain offenses or make sure that he never places himself in a position that he will discover them" (p. 56). Aside from turning a blind eye to infractions, the officer may even begin to distribute out some of his routine duties such as locking cell doors and making out reports to the inmates (Sykes, 1958). These compromises, notes Sykes (1958), represent the paradoxical way that officers can maintain power and order in the prison, through a corruption of their authority.

Correctional Officers as Heroes

Other evidence suggests that correctional officers may also be viewed in a more favorable light. For example, a 1997 survey administered by the Florida Department of Corrections asked the public: "What two words would you use to describe the typical correctional officer?" The two modal responses were "tough" and "brave" (Bryant & Morris,

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1998). This finding conveys that the public may be aware of the challenges correctional officers face and find their willingness to work in the prison admirable.

Another reason why officers may be regarded as heroic involves the dangerousness of their job. In *The Toughest Beat: Politics, Punishment, and the Prison Officers Union*, Page (2011) explains how members of the California Prison Officer Association claim that they (correctional officers) walk "the toughest beat" in the state of California, highlighting staffing issues, a violent population of offenders in the prison to manage, and inmates set on committing violent acts against officers and other staff. There is validity to this sentiment. Correctional officers face one of the highest risks of death at work, and about half of all correctional officers killed in the line of duty are done so in a felonious manner at the hands of inmates (Liu & Taylor, 2019). Given this reality, the individuals that persevere and continue doing this line of work are heroic.

Furthermore, in contrast to those cases (documented above) where the media perpetuate the image of correctional officers as "hacks," there are other instances in which correctional officers are depicted as heroes in the media. Several news headlines buttress this point: "'Hero' Correctional Officers Save Inmate Trying to Jump Over Railing at Lake County Jail"; "Corrections Officers Are America's Forgotten Heroes"; "Corrections Officers Are Unsung Heroes" (Frank, 2019; McDonagh, 2021; Whitehead, 2021). Thus, the media might be key in influencing positive sentiments toward the correctional officer occupation.

Finally, improving and expanding the role of correctional officers may be beneficial in reducing perceptions that they are hacks and place them in positions to become heroes. Toch and Klofas (1982) posit that the role of correctional officers can be "enriched" and become more of a human service role and less of a custodial role. Johnson and colleagues (2017) recommend

officers embracing an orientation toward their work whereby they become "agents of care." Thus, officers would provide inmates essential goods and services in a timely manner, serve as referral agents and advocates for inmates requesting special services, and help inmates adjust to prison life and solve interpersonal issues (Johnson et al., 2017). In this perspective, correctional officers are well-situated to make a positive impression on both the inmate population and the prison context more generally. If so—and given the stark realities of working within a prison (e.g., risk of violence, disease)—they can potentially function as heroes in the process.

Research on Correctional Officers

Some of the earliest research focusing on correctional officers dates back to the 1950s (Beck, 1958; Conrad, 1956). Since that time, a voluminous literature has evolved. The prior work falls into four broad themes: correctional ideologies and professional orientations of correctional officers, reactions to doing correctional officer work, correctional officer's fear and victimization, and use-of-force studies focused on correctional officers. The literature from each of these areas is summarized below.

Correctional Ideologies and Orientations

Correctional officers perform a unique function in prisons. They not only maintain security and order, but officers also assist in efforts to rehabilitate inmates through pro-social interactions and by modeling good behavior (Dowden & Andrews, 2004; Sundt, 2009). They are, in all respects, responsible for both the safety and security of the institution and a human service worker. Because of this dual role, scholars have assessed the types of orientations officers exhibit toward their work (i.e., viewing their role as one of assisting in rehabilitation or as responsible for the punishment of inmates). These cognitive orientations are important, because they impact

decision making and guide individuals' desire to apply oneself in specific tasks that arise on the job (Algadheeb, 2015). Extant research has referred to these as correctional orientations or professional orientations, with broad categories defined such as: "rehabilitative orientations," "custodial orientations," "counseling orientations," "concern for corruption of authority orientations," "punitive orientations," "and social distance orientations" (Cullen et al., 1989; Ferdik & Hills, 2018; Klofas & Toch, 1982).

Much scholarship has focused on the various aspects that comprise these orientations. For the human services orientation, items such as "rehabilitating a criminal is just as important as making a criminal pay for his or her crime," "I would support expanding the rehabilitation programs with criminals that are now being undertaken in our prisons," and "it is important for officers to have compassion" have been used to measure endorsement (Cullen et al., 1989; Ferdik & Hills, 2018; Toch & Klofas, 1982). These items generally tend to be endorsed by correctional officers.

Scholars have measured support for the custodial/punishment orientation with items such as "keeping inmates from causing trouble is my major concern while I'm on the job," "many people don't realize it, but prisons are too soft on inmates," "a military regime is the best way of running a prison," and "there would be much less crime if prisons were less comfortable" (Cullen et al., 1989; Ferdik & Hills, 2018; Toch & Klofas, 1982). Although officers tend to also endorse these items, they do so at lower rates than the items used to measure human service orientations. Nonetheless, officers tend to support both orientations.

To date, nearly all the research undertaken on correctional officers' attitudes and orientations has relied on samples of officers already in their positions. As a result, the outcomes observed are not independent of the possibility that their time working as an officer in prison

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may have impacted the attitudes and orientations toward their work. To get around this issue, a recent project examined professional orientations of correctional officers prior to their basic academy training. Undertaken in this way, the project provides a benchmark of how officers' orientations may change over the course of employment (Burton & Miller, 2019a, 2019b; Burton et al., 2019).

A total of 673 individuals were surveyed from three states department of corrections' training academies prior to correctional officer basic training. Officers were asked to rate their support for a battery of items that tap both rehabilitative and custodial orientations used in prior research (Cullen et al., 1989). Results show that officers are generally supportive of the rehabilitative orientation, with over half of the sample agreeing with the statement "I would support expanding the rehabilitation programs with criminals that are now being undertaken in our prisons," and over 60% of the sample agreeing with the statement "the only effective and humane cure to the crime problem in America is to make a strong effort to rehabilitate offenders" (Burton & Miller, 2019a, 2019b; Burton et al., 2019).

The sample of pre-service officers was less supportive of the punitive orientation, but several of the items received a notable amount of endorsement. For example, 84.4% of the officers in agreed with the statement "keeping the inmates from causing trouble is my major concern while I'm on the job." About one in five officers agreed that "many people don't realize it, but prisons are too soft on inmates" and "we would be successful even if all we taught inmates was a little respect for authority" (Burton & Miller, 2019a, 2019b; Burton et al., 2019).

In summary, pre-service officers appear to endorse both rehabilitative and custodial professional orientations. However, officers in the sample tended to hold more rehabilitative than custodial orientations, as the mean scale scores (possible values from 1 to 5) were 3.62 and 2.66,

respectively (Burton & Miller, 2019a, 2019b; Burton et al., 2019). It is important to note, though, that a handful of individuals (between 10% and 50% on various items) responded with the "neither agree nor disagree" category, which may imply their attitudes toward these issues are not formed prior to basic training or starting the job.

As noted above, an important yet unanswered empirical question is whether guards' orientations will change once they have spent time on the job. In other words, is there stability in attitudes and orientations or do they change over the course of one's career? Several ethnographic works have qualitatively explored this issue, with the most notable being Conover's (2000) *Newjack* and Bauer's (2018) *American Prison: A Reporter's Undercover Journey into the Business of Punishment.* These works reveal that because of issues such as poor basic training, high rates of violence in prisons, guard subcultures, and lack of rehabilitation programming options, guards tend to begin their careers supportive of human service orientations, but quickly learn prisons are more so used for administering punishments, and less for treating and correcting criminal behavior. Thus, it may be that officers endorse custodial and punishment orientations because they believe they cannot make a difference in the lives of the inmates, aside from making their time in prison unpleasant (Conover, 2000).

Work Reactions

Working as a correctional officer is challenging for a variety of reasons (Toch & Klofas, 1982). Because of the nature of the job, correctional officers face unprecedented levels of job stress, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), burnout, and career turnover, among other things. This section briefly reviews the relevant literature on the reactions customary to correctional officer work.

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Stress. Research on correctional officer stress has become increasingly popular over the past decade (Finney et al., 2013); however, scholars began studying the issue in the 1980s. The seminal work of Cullen and colleagues (1985) outlined three major stressors faced by officers on the job, which include role problems, perceived dangerousness of the job, and the security level of the prison where they work. Controlling for a variety of potential confounders, the authors found that role problems, dangerousness, and working in a maximum-security prison were all associated with increased levels of work stress (Cullen et al., 1985).

Stemming from this work, a handful of studies have enriched the literature by examining other correlates of correctional officer stress. For example, Lambert et al. (2006) assessed the potential role of the prison's organizational structure on job stress and found that instrumental communication (i.e., information that is conveyed to staff regarding their jobs and the organization) and procedural justice (i.e., perceptions of fairness held by correctional officers toward the organization) were significantly associated with the stress levels of officers. May et al. (2019) recently reported that officers who believed their organization treated them fairly and justly were more likely to report lower levels of strain-based work-family conflict.

Perhaps the most comprehensive synthesis of the correctional officer occupational stress literature was conducted by Finney et al. (2013). Their systematic review identified five major categories of stress faced by officers: stressors intrinsic to the job (e.g., training deficiencies, understaffing), role issues (e.g., role conflict/role ambiguity), issues with rewards and benefits of the occupation (e.g., salary, advancement opportunities), supervisory relationships at work (e.g., quality of supervision, support from supervisors), and organizational structure and climate (e.g., support from the organization, administrative strengths) (Finney et al., 2013).

Although much of the correctional officer stress research focuses on individual and organizational factors, only a few studies have examined the role of inmates in creating and exacerbating stress among correctional officers (e.g., Misis et al., 2013; Trounson et al., 2019). A recent study by Walters (2020) examined the role that inmates and lack of staff support have on officer stress. Surprisingly, the authors found that "weak staff support was a significantly stronger correlate of correctional officer stress than inmate-related stressors" (Walters, 2020, p.1). Walters did, however, find that inmates are a significant source of officer stress, a finding also reported by Armstrong and Griffin (2004). These results reveal that although inmates do contribute to the stress officers experience, poor relationships with other staff may exacerbate stress even more.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). According to the American Psychiatric Association, PTSD is a disorder characterized by an inability to recover after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event, such as the death of a loved one or a violent crime (Boudoukha et al., 2013). Symptoms of the disorder include nightmares, vivid memories of the traumatic event, and triggers that make a person feel like they are reexperiencing the event in real time. Given the nature of the correctional officer profession, including high rates of physical assault (and the fear of it), to witnessing the plight and suffering of inmates, it is clear why this occupation is at a heightened risk for developing PTSD and other trauma-related maladies (Boudoukha et al., 2013; Regehr et al., 2021).

Because of this stark reality, researchers have explored the relative prevalence of PTSD among correctional officers. Using a nationally representative sample of approximately 3,600 correctional officers, one study found that 34% screened positive for PTSD (Spinaris et al., 2012). Using samples from Canada and Netherlands, Carleton et al. (2018) and Kunst et al.

(2009) found rates of PTSD among correctional officers to be 29.1% and 15%, respectively. Lerman et al. (2021) recently found that 34.3% of officers were experiencing repeated, disturbing memories over the past month and nearly 30% of the officers reported that they felt down, depressed, and hopeless (Lerman et al., 2021).

That correctional officers as a group have a remarkably high prevalence of PTSD is even more alarming when juxtaposed against the rates of other groups. For example, compared to the general population, where the average prevalence rate of PTSD is 3.5%, correctional officers exhibit rates of PTSD 5 to 10 times higher (Kessler, et al., 2005). Furthermore, firefighters and police officers working in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks presented rates of PTSD at 14.3% and 7.2%, respectively (Perrin et al., 2007), PTSD prevalence rates much lower than those found in multiple samples of correctional officers.

Although PTSD can wreak havoc on those who experience it, it is an even more troubling finding that PTSD tends to be comorbid with other mental and physical health issues. For example, those with PTSD are at a statistically significantly greater risk of experiencing anxiety, sleep loss and insomnia, depression, increased suicide risk, anger, fear, memory impairment, obesity, heart disease, digestive problems, increased rates of absenteeism at work, more doctor visits per year, and increased consumption of alcohol and tobacco (Lerman et al., 2021; Spinaris et al., 2012).

Burnout. Burnout is a condition brought on by prolonged levels of elevated stress, with the afflicted commonly experiencing symptoms of exhaustion, alienation, and reduced performance (Freudenberger, 1989). In an early study on the issue, Whitehead and Lindquist (1986) found that stress, role conflict, lack of organizational and administrative support, low job satisfaction, and age were positively associated with burnout. The implications of burnout are

potentially severe. As Garland (2002) notes, burned out correctional staff are less likely to engage in rehabilitative tasks and in general may become less engaged in the organization. Furthermore, Lambert and colleagues (2015) found that as symptoms of burnout increase among correctional officers, life satisfaction and support for inmate treatment programs decreased, while support for punishment, and absenteeism and turnover intent increased.

Turnover. Correctional officers resign from their positions at alarming rates. Although percentages vary substantially by state, research finds that an average of 16% to 56% of officers leave their jobs each year (Blakinger et al., 2021; McShane et al., 1991; Minor et al., 2011; Wright, 1993). Beyond the safety risks posed by short staffing and strain on other officers required to pick up additional shifts, there is a great financial toll of the high rate of turnover (Lambert, 2001). Research estimates that state departments lose, because of training fees, recruitment, and onboarding, between $20,000 and $31,000 for each correctional officer that resigns from their position (McShane et al, 1991; Minor et al., 2011).

Due to the financial and organizational costs of turnover, scholars have focused on the factors that predict whether officers will stay or leave (Lambert, 2001). Mitchell and colleagues (2000) examined both individual and organizational factors associated with turnover and found that older, more educated, female, and officers who had more tenure on the job were all at a greater risk of turning over. The strongest organizational predictors of turnover were job stress and job satisfaction, whereby more stressed and dissatisfied officers were more likely to turnover (Mitchell et al., 2000).

Lambert's (2001) review of the turnover literature identifies three broad sets of factors associated with turnover, which include personal characteristics, work environment factors, and job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Regarding personal characteristics, Black

officers and those that have spent more time on the job are at a greater risk of turning over (Mitchell et al., 2000; Robinson et al., 1997). Work environment variables associated with turnover include supervision practices, support and communication with administrative staff, and autonomy in decision making (Mitchell et al., 2000; Slate & Vogel, 1997). Finally, regarding job satisfaction and organizational factors, more satisfied and officers committed to their organizations are significantly less likely to turnover (Camp, 1994; Mitchell et al., 2000; Wright, 1993).

    Job Satisfaction. While much research has focused on the negative work reactions of the correctional officer occupation, several studies have examined a positive reaction: satisfaction about working as a correctional officer. Although the evidence is mixed, some studies find that educated officers are more satisfied with their jobs (Grossi et al., 1996; Lindquist & Whitehead, 1996), and other studies report the opposite relationship (Cullen et al., 1990). Several studies also find that female and White officers tend to be more satisfied with their work compared to male and minority officers (Blau et al., 1986; Britton, 1997; Camp & Steiger, 1995; Cullen et al., 1985, 1989; Van Voorhis et al., 1991). Further, research finds that older officers and those that felt supported by their supervisors were more likely to be satisfied with their jobs (Cheeseman et al., 2011).

Fear and Victimization

    Research suggests that correctional officers have one of the highest rates of injury and illness of all occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Consequently, officers also regularly experience high levels of fear for their safety at work. Beyond issues such as inmate-on-staff assaults and exposure to health risks such as HIV/AIDS or Tuberculosis, officers now face new threats from the Covid-19 virus. This section reviews the literature on correctional

officer victimization experiences and workplace injury, fear of victimization, and the exposure to health risks and infections.

Victimization. The daily propinquity of correctional officers to a criminal population risk exposing them to violent victimization. More than half of all state prisoners are serving time for a violent offense (Sawyer & Wagner, 2020). Despite the salience of this issue, accurate and reliable data sources on officers' victimization risk are in short supply (Lahm, 2021). One comprehensive source of data, however, is available, although it comes from the year 2000. In that year, U.S. prison staff were physically and sexually assaulted at a rate of 14.8/1,000 officers (Stephan & Karberg, 2003). Regarding other injuries sustained at work, officers experienced non-fatal injuries at a rate of 7.3/100 full time employees in 2019 (Lahm, 2021). These statistics indicate that correctional officers have the fourth highest incidence rate of non-fatal injuries among all U.S. workers (Lahm, 2021).

Two other assessments of correctional officer victimization statistics are available. Konda and colleagues (2013) reported that 133 officers died at work between 1998-2008, whereas Liu and Taylor (2019) reported that 80 officers died on the job between 2005-2015. Most correctional officer job-related deaths are due to violence, generally at the hands of an inmate using a firearm, knife, or other sharp instrument (Liu & Taylor, 2019). Furthermore, Konda et al.'s (2013) work examined the broader category of work-related injuries. They found that correctional officers experienced 254 work-related injuries per 10,000 full-time employees due to violence and assaultive acts by inmates. These data reveal that about one-third of all correctional officer injuries at work are the result of aversive interactions with inmates (Denhof & Spinaris, 2016; Konda et al., 2013).

In addition to the threat of physical violence and non-fatal injuries, correctional officers face elevated risks of contracting communicable diseases because of their close contact with inmates. In a report for the U.S. Department of Justice, Maruschak et al. (2016) stated that inmates have a higher prevalence of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B and C, and sexually transmitted diseases than those found in the general population. Officers are at an increased risk of contracting these diseases due to job duties such as pat downs (where sharp objects may be encountered) and circumstances where they encounter blood and other bodily fluids (Ferdik & Smith, 2017).

In addition to these "standard" diseases endemic to American penal institutions, new threats such as the Covid-19 virus must now be contended with (Barnert et al., 2021). Because of their status as what Goffman (1961) called "total institutions" (i.e., places where many individuals sleep, work, and play), prisons are at heightened risk for transmission and contraction of the Covid-19 virus. Specifically, prisons, by design, bring together large numbers of inmates and guards in routine activities such as sleep, meals, treatment programs, and recreation. This creates an ideal environment for Covid-19, a virus with a higher transmission rate than the flu, to spread (Vose et al., 2020). Although the numbers are still coming in, approximately 241 officers and staff passed away because of contracting the Covid-19 virus between March 2000 and May 2021, with thousands more becoming sick and forced to miss work (Barr, 2021; Lahm, 2021).

Fear of Victimization. Due to the elevated rates of violence and assaults that occur in prisons, a sizable literature has examined correctional officers' fear toward these issues (Gordon & Baker, 2017). While much of the literature focuses on the sources of fear, several studies show the importance of assessing fear of violence and victimization among correctional staff. These investigations reveal the implications of correctional officers' fear, which are increased job stress

and likelihood of using excessive force while on the job, decreased job satisfaction, and experiencing physical and mental health-related issues linked to frequent adrenaline rushes and fight/flight responses (Commission on Safety and Abused in America's Prisons, 2006; Cullen et al., 1985; Griffin, 2006; Hartley et al., 2013).

Beyond fear of violence and victimization, other work has examined fear toward contracting communicable diseases. Although this research is limited scope, several studies have focused on the issue. Hartley et al. (2013), for example, found that officers who regularly worry about contracting diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis) reported higher levels of job stress and lower levels of job satisfaction. Alarid and Marquart (2009) examined the perceptions and attitudes toward HIV/AIDS and risk receptions of contracting the virus. Their study revealed that officers lower in education and who feared interacting with HIV positive inmates were more likely to perceive greater threats of contracting HIV/AIDS (Alarid & Marquart, 2009).

Research has also assessed which factors differentiate officers regarding their fear of victimization. Much of this literature focuses on the role of gender, finding that female correctional officers exhibit the greatest fear of workplace victimization (Garcia, 2008; Gordon et al., 2003; Gordon et al., 2013). Consistent with these findings, Burton et al.'s (2019a, 2019b, 2019) analysis of 673 pre-service officers found that females were more fearful of beginning their work as correctional officers compared to males. Burton and colleagues' (2019a, 2019b, 2019) results point to the fact that female officers come to the occupation with elevated fear compared to males, and it persists across the course of their careers.

Beyond demographic factors, recent research has explored other factors (e.g., interpersonal, organizational) associated with correctional officers' fear of victimization. Gordon and Baker (2017), for example, found that officers with higher levels of frustration, working in

higher security level facilities, and who felt their institutions were disorganized were more fearful of victimization. Further, Lambert et al. (2017) found that officers with greater trust for their organization had significantly lower levels of fear than those with less trust.

Use of Force

There is a voluminous literature examining use of force among police officers (e.g., Hollis & Jennings, 2018; Klahm & Tillyer, 2010). Moreover, incidents of police use of force regularly appear in the news media (Mullinix et al., 2021). It is such a common and salient issue that a standard protocol was created in 1985 by the U.S. Supreme Court defining and regulating the use of force of by police officers (Walker, 1996). By contrast, the literature and legislation on correctional officer use-of-force is limited. The paucity of work on this topic is surprising, given that "correctional officers are still afforded more latitude in using deadly force than are the police" (Walker, 1996, p. 146).

Several studies have empirically investigated the topic of correctional officer use-of-force. Hogan and colleagues (2004) assessed whether 96 male and 96 female officers working in a Southwestern jail differed in their response to conflict to uncover what factors may lead to an incident where force is used. They found that although males and females define and assess threats similarly, males were more likely to respond with force against both male and female inmates. In contrast, female officers were more likely to call for backup when dealing with male inmates, rather than using force (Hogan et al., 2004).

Other work in this space has focused on the implications of use of force in prisons, racial issues, and officer perceptions of use-of-force incidents. For example, Frankie and colleagues (2010) found that excessive use of force among correctional staff increased negative perceptions toward the American criminal justice system among prisoners. McNeeley (2020) examined

whether use-of-force incidents are more likely to occur against White or non-White inmates in maximum security prisons. The results indicate that physical force was used more against non-Whites. Regarding other measures of force, such as the use of chemical irritants and physically removing inmates from their cells, there was no difference by race (McNeeley, 2021). In a recent study from Ukraine, Symkovych (2019) interviewed officers about their experiences using various types of force (e.g., lethal, non-lethal). His findings reveal that officers rarely use force against inmates beyond what is legally called for (e.g., restraining inmates' hands for cell extractions). In other words, officers tend to use appropriate, statutorily prescribed levels of force when necessary. Further, officers reported an awareness of what inmates and supervisors would tolerate regarding force and thus approached use of force accordingly (Symkovych, 2019). It is unclear whether these findings would also be found in the United States given the differences in prison culture between the two countries.

Public Perceptions of Correctional Officers

Studying public opinion toward criminal justice issues has been applied to a variety of topics. One area that has seen very little empirical investigation is public opinion on correctional officers. Although understudied, several projects have explored issues related to the correctional officer profession (Berger, 1978; Bryant & Morris, 1998; Sundt, 2009). This section details each study and the findings presented in them.

The first examination of public views toward correctional officers was conducted more than four decades ago in 1972 by the University of California, Berkeley's Field Research Corporation, housed in the Institute of Government Studies (Field Research Corporation, 1974). The goal of the project was to broadly examine the publics' image of the corrections system in

California, and those that work within it. The survey was administered to approximately 811 adults and 126 teenagers (ages 14 to 17) residing in California.

One section of the survey asked the respondents to rate how well they thought a variety of criminal justice occupations were doing at their jobs. To do so, the respondents were provided with a list of the following occupations: police, public defenders, judges, district attorneys, probation officers, parole officers, and correctional officers. They were also provided a job description for each occupation[2]. Using the response options of 1 = extremely poor job, 2 = very poor job, 3 = somewhat poor job, 4 = neutral, don't know, 5 = somewhat good job, 6 = very good job, and 7 = extremely good job, the respondents were prompted to provide their evaluation of each occupation. The mean scores (ranging from 1 to 7) for each occupation, from highest ranked to lowest ranked, were police (5.26), public defenders (4.45), judges (4.44), district attorneys (4.43), probation officers (4.37), parole officers (4.28), and correctional officers (3.98) (Berger, 1978).

The authors also examined the percentage of the sample rating each occupation as doing a "poor job"; that is, the percentage of respondents that rated the occupations with the following categories from the 7-point Likert scale: "somewhat poor job," "very poor job," and "very poor job." The police received the fewest ratings of doing a "poor job," with only 10% of adults and 9% of teenagers reporting this (Berger, 1978). By contrast, correctional officers received the most negative reviews of all the occupations, with 27% of adults and 33% of teenagers reporting that correctional officers were doing a "poor job." Demographically, males, younger adults, socio-economically upper class, more educated, and Black respondents felt that correctional

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[2] For correctional officers, the respondents were provided with the following job description: "Correctional officers whose job it is to supervise prisoners while they are in jails, prisons or other correctional facilities" (Field Research Corporation, 1974).

officers were more likely to rate correctional officers' job performance as somewhat/extremely/very poor (Field Research Corporation, 1974). Summarizing the results of the survey, Berger (1978, p. 7) concluded that "the public image of correctional officers is not entirely favorable. . . . The factors which appear to be at least partially responsible for this include treating prisoners too severely, using force on prisoners who refuse to obey, and permitting racial origin to impair objectivity."

One caveat must be added, however. Although correctional officers' ratings were lower than other members of other justice occupations, the ratings were not uniformly negative. Again, the overall assessment of their job performance (3.98) hovered near the mid-point of the 7-point scale, around the response of "neutral, don't know." Furthermore, the 31% of the public sample judged them as doing a "good job" (with the responses being "somewhat good job" = 21% of adults, 24% of teenagers, "very good job" = 8% of adults, 9% of teenagers, or "extremely good job" = 2% of adults, 3 of teenagers) (Berger, 1978). Furthermore, 42% of adults and 31% of teenagers answered "neutral/don't know" when asked "how good of a job are correctional officers are doing" (Berger, 1978)? The higher percentage of responses in this middle category on the scale likely reflects the fact that correctional officers work outside of the public's sight (Lombardo, 1981). Thus, the respondents may truly not be knowledgeable enough to evaluate the quality of the officers' job performance.

In 1997, the Florida Department of Corrections commissioned the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research to survey 936 Floridians on their views toward the corrections system and its staff. The survey measured perceptions regarding how well the state corrections system is doing, opinions about prison conditions, and views toward correctional officers. For example, one question asked the respondents the following: "What two words

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would you use to describe the typical correctional officer?" Although the responses varied given the open-ended nature of the question, the five modal words were, in order from most reported to least: tough, brave, underpaid, dedicated, and strong (Bryant & Morris, 1998).

The survey also included items examining public knowledge of correctional officers' work-related issues and salary. For example, one question asked whether the respondents thought correctional officers were armed with firearms while on duty in prisons. In total, 68% of the sample believed that correctional officers carried weapons in the institution. At the time of the survey, no correctional officers in Florida were armed at work, indicating the publics' lack of knowledge toward the occupation. Further, another question probed the public's beliefs about correctional officers' salaries and pay equity with police salaries. Approximately 60% of the sample felt that entry-level correctional officers should be paid the same salary as police officers (Bryant & Morris, 1998). Respondents favored higher wages for correctional officers because they believed that working in prison was more dangerous than working in policing (Bryant & Morris, 1998).

The final empirical investigation examining public perceptions toward correctional officers was conducted by Sundt (2009). Sundt's (2009) survey was administered in Carbondale, IL, a rural community facing economic hardship due to the shutdown of coal mines and the loss of other rural labor markets. To combat these hardships, local and state governments in the Southern Illinois region looked to the prison industry to stimulate the rural economies (Greene, 2003). Speaking to this point, the warden of Marion penitentiary, which sits approximately 15 miles from Carbondale, stated "I think our economic impact to the community is huge" (Green, 2003). All of this is to say that the context in which this survey was fielded likely had an impact on the results.

Thus, drawing on survey data from 101 Carbondale residents collected in 2002, Sundt's (2009) project examined public views toward a variety of topics pertaining to correctional officers. For example, the respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of jobs found in prisons, their own likelihood of taking a job as a correctional officer, and what they felt were the most (and least) appealing qualities of working as a correctional officer (Sundt, 2009). The survey also included a battery of items tapping a variety of additional perceptions toward correctional officers, such as job security, income, opportunity for advancement, recognition and respect, helping others, and job meaningfulness.

The results of this study reveal that the correctional officer occupation is viewed as "average" quality relative to other jobs (Sundt, 2009). Regarding whether the respondents themselves would entertain the idea of becoming a correctional officer, approximately two-thirds of the sample indicated that they would be very unlikely to apply for a position (Sundt, 2009). When the respondents were asked about the most appealing qualities of a correctional officer's job, they frequently reported "the salary," "money," "good benefits," "helping inmates and participating in the rehabilitation process," and "job security." The positive assessment of the economic benefits of prison work might reflect, as noted, the economic stresses of the local economy. Other qualities mentioned at a lesser frequency were "social status" and "respect." By contrast, commonly reported negative qualities of the job consisted of "danger," "working with inmates," "the co-workers," and "moral and ethical ambiguity associated with prison work" (Sundt, 2009).

The results of the other questions tapping public perceptions toward correctional officers and their work reveal that generally, the correctional officer occupation is respected, with nearly 60% of the sample endorsing this sentiment (Sundt, 2009). Fully, over 80% of the sample agreed

that "correctional officers can help others," and over 65% agreed that correctional officers have a high level of job security (Sundt, 2009). Furthermore, nearly every respondent in the sample disagreed with the statement that "correctional officer work is meaningless."

In addition to examining public attitudes toward correctional officers, Sundt (2009) examined the sources of these attitudes. It is important to note, however, that the analyses reported in Sundt (2009) likely violated the assumptions of ordinary least squares regression (the analytical sample size was n = 101 and there were 10 independent variables included in the model); as such, the results should be interpreted with caution. Notwithstanding this caveat, Sundt (2009) found that conservatives were more likely to view prison jobs as higher quality compared to liberal respondents. Conversely, those higher in educational attainment and who felt they had job security in their present jobs were less likely to view prison jobs as high quality (Sundt, 2009). Regarding the question of who would be interested in taking a position as a correctional officer, the only significant relationship found was that those higher in education would be significantly less likely to take a job as a correctional officer compared to those lower in educational attainment (Sundt, 2009).

Beyond the three empirical studies reviewed above, the only other information that exists regarding public views toward correctional officers comes from two waves of the General Social Survey [GSS] (the 1989 and 2012 waves). Results from the 1989 survey indicate that correctional officers' occupational prestige is a 40 out of 100, a rating that is lower than the "average" prestige score for all occupations asked about in the survey (Hauser & Warren, 1996; Nakao & Treas, 1994). Note as well that correctional officers have a prestige score of 40 which places them below police officers (prestige score of 60), firefighters (53), and the mean score for all protective service occupations (49). Correctional officers, however, do receive higher prestige

ratings than carpenters (39), truck drivers (30), and cashiers (29) (Hauser & Warren, 1996; Nakao & Treas, 1994; Sundt, 2009).

The 2012 wave of the GSS used a rating scale from 1 to 10 to measure occupational prestige, versus the 1 to 100 scale in the 1989 wave. Correctional officers' prestige score was a 4.2 (Smith & Son, 2014). For reference, the prestige scores were 5.9 and 5.7 for policemen and firefighters, respectively. Further, probation and parole officers attained a mean occupational prestige score of 4.8 (Smith & Son, 2014). Other occupations with the same prestige score as correctional officers included professional babysitters, bank tellers, bricklayers, and local delivery truck drivers (Smith & Son, 2014).

Research Strategy

This dissertation provides the first comprehensive study of how the American public views the men and women who serve as correctional officers. Data for this dissertation come from a national survey of 1,000 respondents collected in 2022. The survey focuses in detail on five major elements of correctional officers and contemporary issues surrounding their profession. Thus, measures are included in the survey to assess (1) the image of correctional officers as "hacks" or as "heroes" and their occupational prestige; (2) whether the public sees the purpose of correctional officers' job as custodial and/or treatment; (3) public views toward correctional officers' salary versus the police, confidence in correctional officers, and importance of correctional officers to society, (4) use of force, and (5) support for policies to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation.

In addition to examining these issues cross-sectionally, several experimental designs are embedded within the survey to explore views toward use of force and support for policies to reduce misconduct in the correctional officer occupation. Beyond the methodological

advancements to the correctional officer literature, the dissertation also explores the sources underlying public perceptions toward correctional officers and their occupational function. Namely, five core models implicated in the literature are used to explore variation in attitudes: (1) racial model, (2) correctional attitudes model, (3) political model, (4) crime/danger model, and (5) prison contact model. In addition to the variables comprising these models, a variety of control variables will be included in the analyses to mitigate omitted variable bias.

The next chapter discusses the survey methods and measurement of these issues in detail. The survey instrument for the data used in this dissertation is contained in Appendix A.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS

The purpose of this dissertation is to comprehensively examine public perceptions toward the correctional officer occupation. To date, only three empirical evaluations have addressed this topic. Those studies are limited in a handful of ways, such as small sample sizes and, consequently, low statistical power, lack of generalizability, and weak measurement of concepts. Moreover, data for the studies were collected between 20 to 50 years ago. To this end, theoretically rich and timely data from the opt-in survey company YouGov, will be analyzed.

Contemporary Survey Research: Challenges and Innovations

Scholars have commented on the challenges of collecting quality survey data in the 21st century (Krosnick et al., 2015). Specifically, phone and mail-in surveys, the two primary modes of survey data collection, have become increasingly difficult to execute for a variety of reasons (Ansolabehere & Rivers, 2013; Ansolabehere & Schaffner, 2014; Krosnick et al., 2015; see also Thielo, 2017). These traditional approaches often are expensive and labor intensive. Mail surveys following state-of-the-art methods, which involve multiple follow ups, require months to complete (see Dillman et al., 2014). Motivating responses has become challenging. Increases in telemarketing scam schemes make potential respondents reluctant to answer unidentifiable phone numbers, and mail surveys are indistinguishable amidst the sea of unsolicited advertisements and requests for donations now sent to home residences (Ansolabehere & Rivers, 2013; Ansolabehere & Schaffner, 2014; Farrell & Petersen, 2010; Fowler, 2009; Galea & Tracy, 2007; Krosnick et al., 2015). These realities result in low response rates and, consequently, in nonresponse error. Nonresponse error occurs when the respondents that do and do not choose to

participate in the survey differ meaningfully in the characteristics being measured in the study (Dillman et al., 2014).

Considering the issues endemic to telephone and mail data collection methods, attention has shifted to another modality for collecting survey data—the internet (Galea & Tracy, 2007). As Fowler (2009, p. 6) notes, "the current frontier for data collection is the internet." Most data collected on the internet involves using vendor companies that house large panels of individuals that have agreed to complete data collection requests for incentives (Fowler, 2009; Thielo, 2017). When individual researchers, academics, or corporations wish to field an internet survey, they contact one of these vendors to administer their survey to the vendor's panel (Fowler, 2009). The respondents in these panels have "opted-in" to take the surveys, which is where the term "opt-in internet survey design" originates. This design is an innovative approach that has become widely used for survey researchers to collect quality data in the 21st century (Graham, Cullen, Pickett, et al., 2021; Thielo et al., 2021).

Opt-In Internet Survey Design

A core feature of opt-in data collection is that it relies on a panel of individuals that have signed up to be eligible to take surveys. Upon signing up to be panelists, the vendor company has each individual complete questionnaires that ask about demographic characteristics, political leanings, and behaviors (Callegaro et al., 2014). Because it is statistically and methodologically advantageous for these panels to be large and demographically diverse, survey vendors use a range of tactics to recruit prospective survey takers (Graham, Cullen, Pickett, et al., 2021). An important characteristic to consider regarding internet survey data are the types of inferences that can be drawn from it.

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Inferences from survey data can either be design-based or model-based (Baker et al., 2013; Mercer et al., 2017). Design-based inference is based on probability theory and requires random sampling, whereas model-based inference is based on modeling adjustments and requires assumptions. To understand the difference, it helps to think of the difference between randomized experiments and regression discontinuity designs. In randomized experiments, selection is ignorable on expectation because of random assignment. By contrast, selection is nonrandom in regression discontinuity designs; it is based entirely on scores on an assignment variable (Shadish et al., 2002). However, it is ignorable, conditional on the assignment variable, assuming that only that specific variable influences selection into the treatment or control group (Miller, 2021). If that assumption is correct, adjusting for the assignment variable yields unbiased inferences (Chaplin et al., 2018).

The same is true of survey data from opt-in samples: If researchers can adjust for the variable(s) influencing respondents' probability of selection into the sample, it would render the nonrandom sampling design ignorable (Mercer et al., 2017). Studies have shown that with the correct model, it is possible to obtain accurate model-based inferences using very unrepresentative samples, like Xbox gamers (Wang et al., 2015). The challenge is determining what variables influence selection, so as to use the correct adjustment model.

Advantages of Opt-In Designs

There are several advantages of opt-in designs compared to other types of traditional methods (e.g., mail surveys, telephone surveys). These include lower costs, timely receipt of the survey results, the survey's "self-administered" nature, which decreases the potential for interviewer effects, the survey is "computed-administered," which decreases the odds of social desirability and satisficing when responding, and because the surveys are completed at the

leisure of the respondents, they can take more time and thus give more thoughtful answers (e.g., check records, consult with others) (Ansolabehere & Schaffner, 2014; Fowler, 2009). Because this dissertation relies on data from the opt-in survey vendor YouGov, specific attention will be given to their methods and the research supporting them.

YouGov

Overview

YouGov is a global research data and analytics group that is at the forefront of opt-in web-based survey designs (Kennedy et al., 2016). Because of their credibility, scholars have commissioned YouGov's services to collect data used to publish articles appearing in the top social science journals, including *American Sociological Review* (Schachter, 2016), *American Journal of Political Science* (Boudreau & MacKenzie, 2014), *Criminology* (Schutten et al., 2021a), and *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Rentfrow et al., 2013). Most notably, YouGov data have been used to publish articles in the flagship public opinion journal, *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Johnston et al., 2014). Beyond the social sciences, YouGov data have been published in well-respected health and medical journals, such as *Genetics in Medicine* (Almeling & Gadarian, 2013) *Health Affairs* (Gerber et al., 2010), *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* (Grant et al., 2014), and *American Journal of Public Health* (Factor et al., 2013).

Particularly, YouGov is also a trusted source for political polling. For example, YouGov is responsible for fielding Harvard University's Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) and the Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project (CCAP) (Ansolabehere & Rivers, 2013). YouGov also partnered with both CBS News and The Economist to track the presidential race for the 2020 election (CBS News, 2019; The Economist/YouGov Poll, 2019).

Another feature that distinguishes YouGov apart from other opt-in internet survey vendors is the size of their online panel. Whereas Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and SurveyMonkey (competitors of YouGov) have approximately 500,000 and 400,000 panelists, respectively; YouGov boasts an online panel of more than two million individuals (Brandon et al., 2013; Pew Research Center, 2016). The advantage of a larger panel is a greater likelihood that individuals can be matched to unique and representative sampling frames (such as matching to cases in the American Community Survey [ACS]). How did YouGov accrue such a large frame? YouGov employs a strategic recruitment campaign whereby they advertise working in their panel through online, email, telephone, and other types of media advertisements (Ansolabehere & Rivers, 2013; YouGov, 2016). Further, to incentivize participating in survey requests, YouGov offers to its panelists charitable donations on their behalf, small prizes (e.g., Amazon gift cards), and cash payments (YouGov, n.d.; YouGov, 2016).

Finally, all the individuals in YouGov's panel are required to fill out a screening questionnaire which include YouGov's "Core Profile Items" (YouGov, n.d.). This profile typically asks about 20 questions. The items measured include: demographic characteristics, such as age, race, sex, and education level; family characteristics such as marital status, family income, and child in the household; and orientations such as political leanings and religious views. These variables are included in all YouGov's surveys and are provided to the researchers free of charge. These items often are used by researchers as key independent and control variables. The list of these items is shown in Appendix B.

Sampling Strategy

YouGov uses a sophisticated three-stage sampling method that upon completion, produces a sample representative of the U.S. population. Stage one of the process involves

building a synthetic sampling frame constructed from the 2019 American Community Survey[3], which is a true probability sample representative of the U.S. population. The constructed sampling frame serves as the reference from which YouGov draws out a matched sample from their online panel. They use the ACS because it is likely to yield a matched sample that generalizes to the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a).

Stage two of the process involves recruiting a sample from YouGov's panel of two million opt-in respondents. The goal is to match (on age, race, gender, and education) the individuals from the synthetic sampling frame to approximately 1,000 respondents from YouGov's panel (YouGov, 2019). This process is carefully executed using nearest neighbor matching (NNM). NNM is a technique that, in the case of how YouGov uses it, starts with an individual in the synthetic sampling frame and searches (statistically) for the individual(s) in YouGov's panel with the fewest deviations on the matching variables (age, gender, race, education) (Stuart, 2010). In other words, an effort is made to statistically match a synthetic sample member to a YouGov panelist.

Finally, in addition to the matching procedures in stage two, YouGov uses a weighting procedure that attempts to adjust for any additional biases between the matched and target sample members (Rivers, 2007). Thus, in this third stage, the matched cases (i.e., those from the YouGov panel that were nearest neighbors to those in the synthetic sampling frame) are weighted to the synthetic sampling frame using propensity scores (YouGov, 2019). More specifically, a logistic regression model including the original sample-matching variables and

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[3] The ACS is an annual, national probability survey of approximately 3.5 million U.S. households with a response rate of 96.7% (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.a). It collects data on a wide range of demographic characteristics, such as age, race, gender, education, employment and citizenship status, and an effort to assist state and federal governments in their budgeting and spending decisions each year (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021).

"region of residence" as predictors, predicting the "1" category of a dummy variable where "0" = not included in the frame, and "1" = included in the frame) is estimated. The results of this model provide the propensity score weights for those included in the final sampling frame of individuals in YouGov's panel (YouGov, 2019). After this final frame is created, the sample weights are post-stratified by 2016 and 2020 presidential vote choice, age, race, gender, and education to remove any last bias that was missed during the original sample matching process (Ansolabehere & Rivers, 2013; Rivers & Bailey, 2009).

Evidence in Support of Opt-in Surveys: How Does YouGov Fare?

Research finds that some opt-in survey data can produce population estimates the mirror those found in mail-in and telephone surveys (Ansolabehere & Rivers, 2013; Ansolabehere & Schaffner, 2014). Generally, opt-in surveys tend to yield data with low item nonresponse (Messer et al., 2012). This quality is important given the relationship between item nonresponse and measurement error (Fricker et al., 2005). Another important empirical question is whether online nonprobability samples yield results akin to those from nationally representative, "true probability" samples.

To test this thesis, Thompson and Pickett (2019) examined multivariate regression results from four MTurk samples and one SurveyMonkey sample (all nonprobability internet samples). They then compared the results from the analyses of these samples to results produced from the GSS (a probability sample). The authors report that "Regression coefficients in the online samples are normally in the same direction as the GSS coefficients, especially when they are statistically significant, but they differ considerably in magnitude; more than half (54%) fall outside the GSS's 95% confidence interval" (p. 907). Thus, it may be the case that relationships can be reliably uncovered between nonprobability and probability samples; however, inferences

from nonprobability estimates may be far from actual population parameters. An important feature regarding the nonprobability samples used by Thompson and Pickett (2019) is that the survey vendors whose data were used in the study do not employ the sophisticated matching and weighting procedures that YouGov does. In layperson's terms, not all nonprobability samples are cut from the same cloth.

Results from Graham, Cullen, Pickett, et al. (2021) support this notion. Like Thompson and Pickett (2019), the authors examined how nonprobability samples' multiple regression estimates compared to those found using GSS data. In Graham, Cullen, Pickett et al.'s study, however, the results from the GSS were compared to analyses conducted on both an Amazon MTurk sample and a YouGov sample. Recall that Thompson and Pickett (2019) did not include a YouGov sample. This design was chosen to determine if the comparability of results with the GSS would be affected by whether the nonprobability sample used matching and weighting (YouGov) or did not do so (MTurk). They were. Thus, Graham, Cullen, Pickett, et al. (2021, p. 1) reported that the YouGov "coefficients are almost always in the same direction as GSS coefficients, especially when statistically significant, and are mostly of a similar magnitude; less than 10% of the YouGov and GSS coefficients differ significantly." By contrast and similar to Thompson and Pickett's (2019) findings regarding nonprobability samples, Graham, Cullen, Pickett, et al. (2021) found that the coefficients computed on the MTurk sample "are more likely to be in the wrong direction, more likely to be much larger or smaller, and are about three times as likely to differ significantly from GSS coefficients" (p. 1).

In summary, YouGov data enjoy all the advantages of opt-in designs mentioned above, and because of the matching and weighting procedures, produce results generalizable to those found in probability samples (Graham, Cullen, Pickett, et al., 2021; Kennedy et al., 2016). As a

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result, several studies provide strong evidence that results from YouGov surveys generalize to the U.S. population and may even produce more accurate estimates than surveys that use probability-based sampling methods (Ansolabehere and Schaffner, 2014; Kennedy et al., 2016; Sanders et al., 2007; Simmons & Bobo 2015; Vavrack & Rivers, 2008).

Recently, FiveThirtyEight (2021), a subsidiary of ABC news that focuses on public opinion, politics, and economics, graded hundreds of opinion pollsters. Notably, they graded YouGov and the esteemed polling firm, Gallup, the same—both were given a B+ rating (FiveThirtyEight, 2021). Even though both pollsters received the same grade, it is instructive to note that YouGov's polls had called 89% of the 2020 political races correctly; Gallup's figure was 69% (FiveThirtyEight, 2021)[4]. Moreover, Gallup claims on their website that "The Gallup Panel is one of the nation's few research panels that is representative of the entire U.S. adult population" (Gallup, n.d.). Again, these results speak to the quality of YouGov's panel, the efficacy of their sophisticated matching and weighting procedures, and ultimately the representativeness of their data to the U.S. population. These findings provide added confidence that the use of YouGov's services in the current dissertation will produce high-quality survey data.

The next section discusses how the data were collected for the current project. Then, the characteristics of the sample are explained, as well as the measures included in the survey and their operationalization.

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[4] FiveThirtyEight did not provide information on how well Gallup's polls did in predicting 2020 election outcomes when ranking the pollsters. Instead, they included information on Gallup's performance forecasting the 2018 election outcomes.

Data Collection

Administering the Survey

The principal investigator commissioned YouGov to administer the survey to its online

panel. The University of Cincinnati Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study

protocol. YouGov fielded the survey from January 12 to January 26, 2022. All participants were

presented with an information sheet and consent form prior to the start of the survey. In return

for completing the survey, YouGov rewarded the responding participants with a variety of gifts

and prizes (YouGov, 2017). Once the survey received enough valid responses, YouGov sent a

Stata datafile including the sample weights and the responses from the participants. Note, that the

data were deidentified.

Sample Characteristics

To examine how well YouGov's matching and weighting procedures did in procuring a

dataset representative of the U.S. population, it is instructive to examine the similarities in

demographic characteristics between the weighted YouGov sample and the U.S. Census/ACS.

Note, again, that the U.S. Census and ACS are true probability samples that are nationally

representative. Thus, when compared to estimates from the U.S. Census and American

Community Survey (in parentheses), the weighted sample looks much like the U.S. population:

non-Hispanic White, 64.2% (60.1%); male, 47.9% (49.2%); college degree, 32.6% (32.1%);

Northeast, 17.3% (17.1%); Midwest, 21.2% (20.8%); South 37.8% (38.3%); West, 23.6%

(23.9%) ("QuickFacts," 2019; U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.b).

When compared to the Pew Research Center's estimates of party identification among

registered voters (in parentheses), the weighted sample also looks similar to the U.S. population:

Republican or lean Republican, 35.1% (42%), Democrat or lean Democrat, 48.2% (50%). The

similarity of our sample to the U.S. population, both demographically and politically, increases

our confidence that the findings will generalize to American adults.

<p align="center">**Measurement of Study Variables**</p>

Dependent Variables

    "Hacks" or "Heroes" and Occupational Prestige. To assess whether the public believes

that correctional officers are "hacks," or "heroes," 11 items are used. Six items measure belief in

the "hack" image, and five items measure belief in the "hero" image. These items were

developed from reviewing prior work on public views toward correctional officers (Bryant &

Morris, 1998), and drawing from definitions within the literature of "hacks" and "heroes" (Toch,

1978; Vickovic et al., 2013). Thus, *CO as Hacks* (factor loadings: .592 – .806[5], α = .872) is a six-

item mean index measured with the following items:

1. Most correctional officers work in the prison because nobody else would hire them.

2. Most correctional officers are not very good at their job.

3. Most correctional officers are brutes, who like prisons because they can yell at and beat up inmates.

4. Most correctional officers are corrupt—they would sell drugs, cigarettes, or cell phones to inmates if offered enough money.

5. Most correctional officers try to do as little work as possible.

6. Most correctional officers plan on working in the prison for only a couple of years and have no interest in learning the skills needed to be a professional officer.

---

[5] Note that in all instances of multiple item measures, factor analyses were conducted to assess item-fit in the index. In instances where factor scores were not at least |.40|, the items were not included in the index (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988).

The items are evaluated with five-point Likert scales, where 1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly

disagree. All the items were coded such that higher values correspond with a greater belief that

correctional officers are "hacks."

Further, *CO as Heroes* (factor loadings: .646 – .816, α = .844) is a five-item mean index

measured with the following items:

1. Correctional officers work on the "toughest beat" in the country because their job requires them to cope with many stressors.

2. It takes courage to work in a prison where the risk of being attacked by an inmate is ever-present.

3. Correctional officers are heroes—they play the essential role in our society of making sure that the worst among us do not escape from prison.

4. Correctional officers are professionals who use their skills not only to keep inmates locked up but also to help inmates better themselves while behind bars.

5. Those who work as correctional officers are some of the bravest individuals in society.

Like those for *CO as Hacks*, the respondents rated their level of agreement for these items using

five-point Likert scales where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree, and items were

coded such that higher values on the index represent stronger beliefs that correctional officers are

heroes. Note that when items were shown in the survey instrument—for this and other

measures—YouGov randomized their placement to the respondents.

Another method of examining how the public views correctional officers is by asking

about occupational prestige. Scholars have been studying occupational prestige for the past 100

years (e.g., Counts, 1925). The GSS has also included items measuring how Americans rate the

prestige of hundreds of occupations. While scholars and pollsters have studied occupational

prestige at length, there is no agreed upon way of measuring this construct (see Song & Xie,

2020). Most do agree, however, that "occupational prestige" conceptually refers to the social

standing of an occupation within society (Smith & Son, 2014). For the current project, *CO*

Prestige is measured by first providing the following statement to the respondents:

> In terms of your OWN VIEWS, how would you rate the PRESTIGE (or social standing)
> of each occupation listed below? That is, how much prestige do these occupations
> deserve?

Upon reading this, the following occupation titles were randomly presented to the respondents:

1. Correctional Officer
2. Jailer
3. Police Officer
4. Probation Officer
5. Parole Officer
6. Security Guard at a Bank
7. Park Ranger
8. Public Defender
9. College Professor
10. Medical Doctor
11. Computer Scientist
12. Local Delivery Truck Driver
13. Cashier in a Supermarket
14. Salesperson in a Furniture Store
15. Factory Worker
16. Bank Teller
17. House Carpenter
18. School Teacher
19. Firefighter
20. Professional Childcare Worker
21. Plumber
22. Electrician
23. Social Worker
24. Mental Health Counselor
25. Substance Abuse Counselor

As noted above, the respondents are asked to assign a prestige ranking to each occupation,

whereby 1 = the lowest prestige and 7 = the highest prestige. Thus, *CO Prestige* is a single item

ranging from one to seven, that consists of prestige ratings specifically for correctional officers.

These occupations were chosen because they cover a diverse set of industries, such as the

criminal justice system (e.g., correctional officer, parole officer), high-education careers (e.g.,

medical doctor, college professor), low-skill labor (e.g., local delivery truck driver, cashier in a supermarket), skilled and trade work (e.g., firefighter, plumber), and human services (e.g., social worker, substance abuse counselor). Additionally, prior work finds that about a third of these occupations are rated above the average prestige score for correctional officers, a third about the same, and a third below (Smith & Son, 2014).

The Role of Correctional Officers in Prisons. To measure what the public thinks correctional officers' role should be in prisons, eight items are included that tap support for a "custodial role" and a "treatment role." Accordingly, *CO as Custodian* (factor loadings: .537 – .657, α = .728) is a four-item mean index comprised of the following items:

1. Correctional officers' primary role in prisons should be making sure inmates follow the rules and punishing them when they do not.

2. Correctional officers should not try to get to know inmates but keep at a distance.

3. Correctional officers should focus on supervising inmates and not care about them personally.

4. The main job of a correctional officer is to make sure inmates are watched, fed, and locked in their cells at night.

CO as Treatment Provider (factor loadings: .630 – .765, α = .809) is also a mean index, comprised of the following four items:

1. Correctional officers should play an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates in prisons.

2. Rehabilitation programs in prisons would be better off if correctional officers were more involved with them.

3. A positive relationship between correctional officers and inmates in prison lessens the likelihood that an inmate will reoffend when released.

4. Correctional officers should be trained in how to help inmates become better people.

Both indices ask the respondents to rate each item on five-point Likert scales, where 1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree. All items in these indices were coded such that higher values correspond with stronger views that correctional officers should assume a custodial, and a treatment provider role, respectively.

Correctional Officers' Salary Versus the Police. Prior work has examined whether the public thinks correctional officers should be paid a similar wage to police officers (Bryant & Morris, 1998). However, the results are from one state and over two decades old. Thus, the current project includes a new measure, *CO Salary vs. Police* to assess views toward this issue. The respondents were presented with the following text: "Correctional officers and police officers both work within the criminal justice system. Which officers do you think should be paid more?" The respondents were prompted to choose one of the following response options:

1. Police officers should be paid a lot more.

2. Police officers should be paid a little more.

3. Both officers should be paid the same.

4. Correctional officers should be paid a little more.

5. Correctional officers should be paid a lot more.

The outcome measure was coded such that 0 = police officers should be paid a lot more/police officers should be paid a little more, and 1 = both officers should be paid the same/correctional officers should be paid a little more/correctional officers should be paid a lot more.

Confidence in Correctional Officers. Similar to measuring public confidence in police officers doing their jobs effectively (Haas et al., 2014), the current study measures public confidence in correctional officers. *Confidence in COs* (factor loadings: .674 – .892, α = .894) is a five-item mean index adapted from the work of Haas and colleagues (2014), which asks the

respondents to rate (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree) their agreement of the following items:

1. Correctional officers do their job well.

2. You can count on correctional officers to make decisions that are in society's best interests.

3. I have respect for the work correctional officers do.

4. Most correctional officers are honest and trustworthy.

5. Most correctional officers know how to perform their jobs effectively.

All the items in the scale were coded so that higher index scores represent greater confidence in correctional officers.

Importance of Correctional Officers. Five items are included to assess the level of importance the respondents ascribe to correctional officers in contributing to the classic goals of imprisonment: rehabilitation (item 1), incapacitation (item 2), just deserts/retribution (item 3), and deterrence (item 4). The fifth item asks about the goal of improving institutional quality of life. The respondents were first presented with the following question: "How important of a role do you think correctional officers have in the following." The response options included:

1. Rehabilitating inmates in prison to reduce crime

2. Protecting public safety by ensuring that inmates are confined securely and safely

3. Making sure inmates in prison suffer for their crimes

4. Punishing inmates so they learn that crime does not pay

5. Making prisons more humane

Following each statement, the respondents were prompted to rate the level of importance each function is to a correctional officer's role (1 = not important, 5 = very important). From each item, a five-point outcome variable was created. These variables consist of: *Importance of COs—*

Rehabilitate, Importance of COs—Protect, Importance of COs—Suffer, Importance of COs—Punish, and

Importance of COs—Humane.

Correctional Officer Use of Force. Two methods were used to assess the respondents'

views toward correctional officer use of force. The first examines the respondents' global

acceptance of correctional officers' use of force using Likert-type items. Thus, *Acceptance of CO*

force (factor loadings: .401 – .730, α = .802) is an eight-item mean index that asks the

respondents to rate their level of agreement (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree) with the

following statements:

1. When inmates are disrespectful, a correctional officer has to rough them up a bit to show them who is boss.

2. Prisons are violent places, and sometimes the only thing an inmate will listen to is a good whipping.

3. If correctional officers aren't willing to get physical, the inmates will think they run the prison.

4. Officers need to stick together and never report a fellow guard who uses a bit of violence to get control of an inmate.

5. If you are not willing to get physical with an inmate, you have no business being a correctional officer.

6. A skilled correctional officer can get inmates to calm down so they don't have to get physical with them.

7. Any correctional officer that uses unnecessary force against inmates should be fired.

8. Just because an inmate "mouths off" in front of other prisoners does not give the officer the right to hit them for being disrespectful.

The index was coded such that higher values imply greater acceptance of correctional officers

using force.

The other method used an experimental vignette to examine the respondents' perceptions toward force used in a hypothetical scenario. Prior to presenting the vignette to the respondents, the following introductory text was displayed:

> *Presented below is a hypothetical encounter between a correctional officer and an inmate. We would like to know what you think about the correctional officer's behavior in this encounter. Please read the text below and then answer the questions that follow.*
>
> A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER is asked by his supervisor to REMOVE AN INMATE from his cell. The inmate is [**Manipulation A**] currently serving time for [**Manipulation B**]. When the officer arrives at the cell, [**Manipulation C**] [**Manipulation D**] the officer. In response, the officer [**Manipulation E**].

The manipulations were all randomized such that an even number of the respondents would see each set of manipulations. "Manipulation A" included:

1. [empty, control group]

2. a known member of the Aryan Brotherhood prison gang and

3. a known member of the Black Guerrilla Family prison gang and

For "Manipulation B," the following four options could be displayed:

1. credit card fraud

2. heroin possession

3. armed robbery

4. child molestation

"Manipulation C" consists of the following three options:

1. the inmate [control group]

2. he asks the inmate: "Please back up to the cell door and put your hands through the slot, so I can handcuff you." The inmate

3. he tells the inmate: "Back your ass up to the fucking door and put your hands through the slot so I can handcuff you. Don't give me any shit or I'll make your world a living hell." The inmate

For "Manipulation D," the following four options could be displayed:

1. sits down and refuses to obey

2. cusses and flips his middle finger at

3. spits on

4. physically charges and throws poop at

Finally, for "Manipulation E," the following two options could be displayed:

1. Pepper sprays the inmate in the eyes

2. Tases the inmate with a stun gun

After reading the vignette, the respondents were asked to answer two follow-up questions. The first measured *Acceptable Force*, which asked the respondents "In your view, how acceptable or unacceptable was the correctional officer's behavior in this situation?" The response options included 1 = very unacceptable, 2 = unacceptable, 3 = neutral, 4 = acceptable, and 5 = very acceptable. The second follow-up question measured *Punishing Force*, which asked the respondents "What action, if any, should legal authorities take against this correctional officer for his behavior?" The response options consisted of:

1. None

2. Issue a warning to the officer

3. Temporarily move the officer to a position that has no contact with inmates

4. Suspend the officer with pay

5. Suspend the officer without pay

6. Fire the officer, without criminal charges

7. Fire the officer, and press criminal charges against him

Reducing Misconduct in the Correctional Officer Occupation. The final outcome

measure in the study involves a priming experiment that assesses the respondents' views toward

a variety of policies aimed at reducing misconduct and corruption in the correctional officer

occupation. The "prime" (randomly assigned to approximately 50% of the sample) consisted of

text drawn directly from Balsamo and Sisak (2021):

Inside federal prisons, employees are committing the crimes

(Balsamo & Sisak, 2021)

More than 100 federal prison workers have been arrested, convicted or sentenced for crimes since the start of 2019, including a warden indicted for sexual abuse, an associate warden charged with murder, guards taking cash to smuggle drugs and weapons, and supervisors stealing property such as tires and tractors. An Associated Press investigation has found that the federal Bureau of Prisons, with an annual budget of nearly $8 billion, is a hotbed of abuse, graft and corruption, and has turned a blind eye to employees accused of misconduct. In some cases, the agency has failed to suspend officers who themselves had been arrested for crimes.

A correctional officer and drug treatment specialist at a Kentucky prison medical center were charged in July with threatening to kill inmates or their families if they didn't go along with sexual abuse. A California inmate said she "felt frozen and powerless with fear" when a guard threatened to send her to the "hole" unless she performed a sex act on him. He pleaded guilty in 2019. The Bureau of Prisons has lurched from crisis to crisis in the past few years, from the rampant spread of coronavirus inside prisons and a failed response to the pandemic to dozens of escapes, deaths and critically low staffing levels that have hampered responses to emergencies.

As stated above, approximately 50% of the sample received the prime, whereas 50% did

not. Nevertheless, all respondents were prompted to respond to a battery of items assessing

policies intended to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation.

Prior to the items, the respondents were shown the following text:

> Below is a list of REFORMS that have been proposed to try to reduce MISCONDUCT by CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS in jails and prisons. How much do you support or oppose each of these reforms?

After reading this text, the respondents were asked to rate their support (1 = strongly agree, 5 =

strongly disagree) for the following six policy proposals:

1. Requiring correctional officers to wear body-worn cameras

2. Requiring correctional officers to take more ethical training (e.g., on sexual harassment)

3. Requiring jails and prisons to have civilian inspection teams that regularly interview inmates about how they are treated by correctional officers

4. Getting rid of qualified immunity, so that correctional officers are personally liable (can be sued for money) if they mistreat inmates

5. Increasing education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices for correctional officers

6. Creating a national, publicly accessible registry of correctional officers who have engaged in misconduct

The above items were combined to create the outcome variable *Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation*, which is a six-item mean index (factor loadings: .401 – .730, α = .802). Higher values on the index correspond with greater support for reforming aspects of the correctional officer occupation.

Independent Variables

Racial Model. Two racial attitudes and the race of the respondents comprise the racial model. First, *Racial Resentment* (factor loadings: .775 – .887, α = .922), a five-item mean index adapted from Kinder and Sander's (1996) original scale is included. It consists of the following items:

1. Irish, Italians, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.

2. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

3. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve.

4. It is really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder, they could be just as well off as Whites.

5. There is a lot of discrimination against Blacks in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead.

Respondents answer the items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree). Second, the study includes a measure of *White Nationalism* (factor loadings: .805 – .862, α = .933). This is a seven-item mean index that asks the respondents to rate their support (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree) to the following statements:

1. If Blacks and Hispanics outnumber White Americans in the United States, they will turn it into a weak, second-rate country.

2. Although people won't admit it, White Americans and their culture are what made America great in the first place.

3. America must remain mostly a White nation to remain #1 in the world.

4. We need to keep the U.S. a mostly White nation—which is what God meant it to be.

5. The immigrants now invading our country—and their liberal supporters—want to turn America into a third-world country where White people are a tiny minority.

6. Although everyone is welcome in this county, the number of immigrants allowed in each year must be kept low, so America remains a mostly White nation.

7. America is experiencing the Great Replacement: there is a conspiracy to replace White people and White culture with people of color.

This measure is based off Kaufmann's work (2019) and similar versions of it have been used in prior research (Butler, 2020; Graham, Cullen, Butler, et al., 2021). Both on the racial resentment and White nationalism indices, higher values correspond to stronger resentment and greater endorsement of White nationalism, respectively. Finally, a measure of *White* is included such that those respondents that report being White were coded as "1," and all other respondents are coded as "0."

Correctional Attitudes Model. To measure public attitudes toward correctional policies and views toward offenders, three constructs are included. First, *Punitiveness* (factor loadings:

.697 – .829, α = .862) is a four-item mean index originally developed by Pickett and Baker (2014), that asks the respondents "How much do you support or oppose each of these proposed crime policies?" The items included in the index are:

1. Making sentences more severe for all crimes

2. Increasing the use of the death penalty for murders

3. Increasing the use of mandatory minimum sentence laws, like "Three Strikes," for repeat offenders

4. Trying more juvenile offenders as adults in adult courts

The response options were 1 = strongly support, 2 = support, 3 = neither support nor oppose, 4 = oppose, and 5 = strongly oppose. Higher values on the index represent a stronger punitive sentiment.

The second correctional attitude included in the study is *Support for Rehabilitation* (factor loadings: .634 – .739, α = .796). This is a five-item mean index that assesses global views toward rehabilitation programming for offenders. The respondents rated their level of support (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree) for the following items:

1. It is important to try to rehabilitate adults who have committed crimes and are now in the correctional system.

2. It is a good idea to provide treatment for offenders who are supervised by the courts and live in the community.

3. Rehabilitation programs should be available even for offenders who have been involved in a lot of crime in their lives.

4. All rehabilitation programs have done is to allow criminals who deserve to be punished to get off easily.

5. I would not support expanding the rehabilitation programs that are now being undertaken in our prisons.

These items were adapted from the prior work of Applegate et al. (1997) and Cullen et al. (1983). Further, this index has appeared in multiple published studies (Burton, Cullen, et al., 2020; Burton, Cullen, et al., 2021; Thielo, 2017). The final measure of correctional attitudes is *Belief in Redeemability* (factor loadings: .502 – .713, α = .700. This is a three-item mean index adapted from Maruna and King (2009) that asks the respondents to rate (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree) their support for the following items:

1. Most offenders can go on to lead productive lives with help and hard work.

2. Given the right conditions, a great many offenders can turn their lives around and become law-abiding citizens.

3. Most criminal offenders are unlikely to change for the better.

These items have been used in prior work measuring public views toward offenders (Burton, Cullen, et al., 2020; Burton, Cullen, et al., 2021). For both the rehabilitation and redeemability indices, all the items were coded such that higher values represent greater support for rehabilitation and a stronger belief in redeemability, respectively.

Political Model. Four variables are used to measure political leanings and political psychology. Two standard measures of political partisanship and political ideology are included. First, *Republicanism* is a seven-point Likert scale where 1 = strong Democrat, 2 = not very strong Democrat, 3 = lean Democrat, 4 = Independent, 5 = lean Republican, 6 = not very strong Republican, and 7 = strong Republican. Next, *Conservatism* is a single item measure of political ideology, where 1 = very liberal, 2 = liberal, 3 = moderate, 4 = conservative, and 5 = very conservative. These measures have been used in prior work examining political views related to issues in criminal justice (Burton, Logan, et al., 2021).

To measure political psychology, measures of two domains of Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) (Haidt, 2007, 2012) are included. MFT is a broad theory that examines the role of

evolution, psychological processes, and intuitions in creating morality (Haidt, 2007, 2012). MFT is comprised of five domains: care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, and sanctity/deprivation (Haidt, 2012). Two of the domains, care/harm and authority/subversion are theoretically relevant for the current study and are thus included in the political model. *Moral Care/Harm* (factor loadings: .443 – .522, α = .573) is a four-item mean index that asks the respondents to rate their support (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree) with the following items:

1. If I saw a mother slapping her child, I would be outraged.

2. It can never be right to kill a human being.

3. Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue.

4. The government must first and foremost protect all people from harm.

The items in the index are coded such that those who share the values of care, kindness, and nurturance have higher values. This measure has been used in prior work examining public attitudes toward criminal justice policy (Burton, Pickett, et al., 2021; Schutten et al., 2021a).

Moral Authority/Subversion (factor loadings: .637 – .764, α = .812) is also measured as a mean index with the following four items:

1. Respect for authority is something all children need to learn.

2. When the government makes laws, those laws should always respect the traditions and heritage of the country.

3. People should never curse the founders or early heroes of their country.

4. People should never disrespect their bosses, teachers, or professors.

This foundation taps into view toward hierarchical interactions. The index was coded such those who score higher express the virtues of leadership and respect for traditions and legitimate authority (Haidt, 2007, 2012).

Crime/Danger Model. The crime/danger model includes five measures tapping the respondents' fear of crime, prior victimization experiences, and perceptions of prisons. *Fear of Crime* was measured by asking the respondents "How afraid or unafraid are you that someone will try to commit a SERIOUS CRIME (e.g., burglary, assault) against you or a member of your family in the next five years? The responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very afraid, 2 = afraid, 3 = neither afraid nor unafraid, 4 = unafraid, 5 = very unafraid). The item was reverse coded such that 1 = very unafraid and 5 = very afraid.

Prior victimization experiences are measured with the binary variable *Prior Victimization*, which asked the respondent to report whether "Over the past five years, has anyone in your household been the victim of a crime." The response options consisted of "no," "yes," and "don't know." The variable was coded where 0 = no/don't know, and 1 = yes. To measure how dangerous the respondents view prisons for those who work in them, *Prison Danger* asked the respondents "How dangerous is it to work in a prison?" The response options consist of 1 = not dangerous, 2 = a little dangerous, 3 = moderately dangerous, 4 = dangerous, and 5 = extremely dangerous.

% Violent Prisoners is a single item measure that asked the respondents "Out of every 100 people who are IN PRISON OR JAIL in this country, what number do you think are serving time for a VIOLENT offense?" The respondents are asked to write in the number they believe is accurate. Finally, a measure, *% Black Prisoners*, was included that asked the respondents "Out of every 100 people who are IN PRISON OR JAIL in this country, what number do you think are BLACK?" Again, the respondents were asked to write in what they think is the correct number.

Prison Contact Model. Because the respondents are asked about their views toward the correctional officer occupation, we include several items that gauge the respondents' potential

contact (both current and prior) with the corrections system. The first variable asks the

respondents if they have ever worked as a correctional officer. The response options include:

1. I have never worked as a correctional officer.

2. I am currently working as a correctional officer.

3. I am not currently working as a correctional officer, but I have been one in the past.

Thus, *Personal Employment* is a binary variable where 0 = I have never worked as a correctional

officer, and 1 = I am not currently working as a correctional officer, but I have been one in the

past/I am currently working as a correctional officer. The respondents were also asked to report

("Yes," "No") whether they know any people currently employed as correctional officers that:

1. Are in your family

2. Are good friends

3. Are your neighbors

4. Went to school with you

These items are adapted from McManus et al.'s (2019) work on public views toward police

officers. A four-item mean index was created, *Personal Relationships with COs* (factor loadings:

.400 – .586, α = .610), that measures the number of relations the respondents have with

correctional officers. Higher values on the index correspond with greater numbers of

relationships the respondent has with officers.

Three additional measures are included to examine contact with prisons. The first, *Visited*

Prison, is a binary variable that asked the respondents to report (0 = no, 1 = yes) whether they

have ever visited anyone in prison. *Past Punishment* asked the respondents "Have you ever been

SENTENCED to any of the following punishments for committing a crime?" The respondents

answered "Yes" or "No" to the following punishments:

1. Community supervision (e.g., probation, electronic monitoring)

2. Incarceration in a local jail (county or community)

3. Incarceration in state or federal prison

The scores were combined such that 0 = the respondent has not had any of the above

punishments, and 1 = the respondents have had one or more of the past punishments.

Finally, a measure adapted from Enns et al. (2019) assessed whether the respondents had

personal relationships with individuals that previously served time in prisons. The respondents

were first provided with the following text:

> Many people have been held in jail or prison for a night or more at some point in their
> lives. Have any members of the following groups, NOT including yourself, ever been
> held in jail or prison for one night or longer.

The respondents were then presented with the following response options, to which they reported

"Yes" or "No":

1. Your immediate family (e.g., current significant other/romantic partner, parent,
   brother, sister, children including step, foster, adoptive)

2. Your extended family (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, grandparent)

3. Close friend

These items were used to create *Vicarious Imprisonment* (factor loadings: .606 – .618, α = .696),

a three-item mean index. Higher values on the index convey more vicarious imprisonment.

Control Variables

A single item measure is included to assess how the respondents believe correctional

officers are portrayed by the media. Recall that correctional officers are often portrayed

unfavorably by the media (Vickovic et al., 2013). The idea for this measure came from the work

of Vickovic (2015). Thus, *Media Portrayal* presented the respondents with the following text:

"When correctional officers are in the MEDIA (e.g., a news story, TV show, movie), how are they usually portrayed?" The response options consist of 1 = very positively, 2 = positively, 3 = neither positively or negatively, 4 = negatively, and 5 = very negatively.

Demographics. The analyses statistically control for a variety of demographic factors that prior theory and research suggest may confound the relationships between the five theoretical models and public views toward the correctional officer occupation. These include the respondents' gender (1 = *Male*), *Age* (in years), region of residence (1 = *Southerner*), *Education* (1 = no high school, 6 = graduate degree), and *Income* (1 = <$10K, 16 = $500K+). The descriptive statistics for each variable included in the study are shown in Table 2.1. Each measure is also included in Appendix C.

Analytic Strategy

To assess the public's opinion toward the correctional officer occupation, the weighted frequencies are calculated for the opinion items and presented in Chapter 3. To ascertain whether cleavages in opinion exist, a series of regression models were conducted. When the outcome variables were treated as continuous, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression frameworks were used. This was the case in all but one model. When predicting *CO Salary vs. Police*, a binary logistic regression framework was used because the outcome measure was coded dichotomously. For the use-of-force experiments, stepwise regression procedures are used. This allows for an evaluation of the manipulations' effects, net of the control variables.

It is also important to note that because the multivariate analyses assessed the effects of White nationalism on the outcome variables, additional supplementary analyses were computed using just the White respondents. This is because non-Whites are unlikely to have White nationalist views. The results of these analyses were compared to the full models and the results

Table 2.1. Descriptive Statistics for All Study Variables

Variable	Mean or %	SD	Min-Max
DVs			
CO as Hacks	2.71	.76	1-5
CO as Heroes	3.57	.75	1-5
CO Prestige	4.50	1.49	1-7
CO as Custodian	3.13	.70	1-5
CO as Treatment Provider	3.60	.70	1-5
CO Salary vs. Police (%)	0.53	.50	0-1
Confidence in COs	3.45	.76	1-5
Importance of COs—Rehabilitate	2.53	1.22	1-5
Importance of COs—Protect	2.57	1.24	1-5
Importance of COs—Suffer	4.01	1.16	1-5
Importance of COs—Punish	3.43	1.28	1-5
Importance of COs—Humane	2.65	1.26	1-5
Acceptance of CO Force	2.46	.66	1-5
Acceptability of Force Used	3.05	1.29	1-5
Punishing Force Used	2.52	1.69	1-7
Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation	3.95	.74	1-5
IVs			
Racial Resentment	2.96	1.16	1-5
White Nationalism	2.28	1.02	1-5
White (%)	64.19	–	0-1
Punitiveness	3.00	1.06	1-5
Support for Rehabilitation	3.70	.69	1-5
Belief in Redeemability	3.54	.71	1-5
Republicanism	3.83	2.09	1-7
Conservatism	3.71	2.16	1-5
Moral Care/Harm	3.66	.71	1-5
Moral Authority/Subversion	3.62	.87	1-5
Fear of Crime	3.03	1.03	1-5
Prior Victimization (%)	17.15	–	0-1
Prison Danger	3.72	.99	1-5
% Violent Prisoners (%)	45.82	–	0-100
% Black Prisoners (%)	58.62	19.36	0-100
Personal Employment (%)	6.16	–	0-1
Personal Relationship with CO	0.08	.18	0-4
Visited Prison (%)	23.50	–	0-1
Past Punishment (%)	18.05	–	0-1
Vicarious Imprisonment	0.33	.37	0-1
Controls			
Negative Media Portrayal	3.42	.93	1-5
Male (%)	47.93	–	0-1
Age	48.69	17.97	0-3
Southerner (%)	37.83	–	0-1
Education	3.37	1.52	1-6
Income	5.77	3.40	1-16

remained substantively the same. The direction of the signs held for the coefficients, and in the rare instances of coefficients losing statistical significance, p generally remained $< .10$. This is likely a result of (1) the sample reducing to n = 615 (and thus less power to find significant effects) and (2) larger standard errors.

The variance inflation factors (VIF) were assessed for each of the independent and control variables to test for multicollinearity. The largest VIF found in any of the models was 4.40, indicating that multicollinearity is not a problem (O'Brien, 2007; Weisburd & Britt, 2014). Other regression assumptions were assessed when applicable (e.g., linearity, homoscedasticity) and were found to not be violated. Finally, in several of the models, an ordinal logistic regression framework could have been used due to the number of response options in the outcome variable (e.g., a five-point Likert scale). In these instances, the ordinal logistic regression results were compared to OLS regression results, and the findings were substantively the same.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

A key contribution of this study is that it attempts to provide a comprehensive assessment of public opinion about the correctional officer occupation—its nature and potential sources. In this regard, this chapter is organized into two sections: (1) the public's views toward the correctional officer occupation, and (2) the multivariate results testing the five theoretical models on 16 outcome variables. Each of these major sections focus on five topics presented in subsections, assessing Americans' views of the following: (1) whether correctional officers are perceived as "hacks" or heroes" and, in turn, the prestige accorded prison guards versus other occupations; (2) whether the correctional officer role should be custodial or rehabilitative; (3) the value that the public believes that correctional officers have for society; (4) perceptions of the appropriateness of officers using force; and (5) views on how best to reduce corruption and misconduct in the occupation.

Public Perceptions of Correctional Officers:

What Do Americans Think?

"Hacks" or "Heroes" and Occupational Prestige

A key question this dissertation seeks to answer is whether the public views correctional officers as hacks, that is, someone who is generally incompetent and with low intelligence, performing a low-skill job that is mostly custodial in nature, with little care for the suffering of inmates (Klofas & Toch, 1982; Sundt, 2009; Toch, 1978; Tracy & Scott, 2006). Or, does the public believe that correctional officers are heroes, brave individuals that facing risks of assault, disease, and mental illness, perform their jobs effectively each day? (Bryant & Morris, 1998; Doyle & Ericson, 1996; Page, 2011).

Table 3.1 includes the six items used to assess whether the sample thinks that correctional

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Table 3.1. Public Belief in "CO as Hacks"

Items	% Total Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neither Agree nor Disagree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
1. Most correctional officers work in the prison because nobody else would hire them.	10.5	2.0	8.5	29.7	42.5	17.2
2. Most correctional officers are not very good at their job.	18.4	4.2	14.2	41.6	31.2	8.7
3. Most correctional officers are brutes, who like prisons because they can yell at and beat up inmates.	21.9	6.6	15.3	29.7	35.2	13.2
4. Most correctional officers are corrupt—they would sell drugs, cigarettes, or cell phones to inmates if offered enough money	23.4	5.8	17.6	33.9	32.2	10.6
5. Most correctional officers try to do as little work as possible.	22.9	4.4	18.5	37.8	30.1	9.2
6. Most correctional officers plan on working in the prison for only a couple of years and have no interest in learning the skills needed to be a professional officer.	21.6	3.9	17.7	51.9	21.1	5.4

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officers are "hacks." As shown in the table, only 10.5% of the sample believe that most correctional officers work in prisons because nobody else would hire them. For the other five items, between 20% to 25% of the sample agrees that most correctional officers are not very good at their jobs, are brutes and corrupt, try to do as little work as possible, and plan on leaving their job after a couple of years. Collectively, these results reveal that there is little public belief in the idea that correctional officers are "hacks." It is important to note that depending on the item, a noticeable number of the respondents—between 3 to 5 in 10—selected the answer of "neither agree nor disagree." This finding suggests that many Americans do not believe that they know enough about correctional officers and their occupation to form a clear opinion—for or against—on the issues being assessed.

Table 3.2 presents the responses on whether the respondents perceive correctional officers as heroes—that is, as skilled professionals who manifest courage in working in a risky environment. In general, officers are perceived to be more heroic than to be hacks. Thus, more than 60% of the sample agrees that correctional officers work in the "toughest beat" in the country. Further, a large majority of the sample (over 80%) agrees that working in a prison takes a lot of courage, given that "the risk of being attacked by an inmate is ever-present." The remaining three items in Table 3.2 reveal that between 40% and 50% of the sample agrees that correctional officers are heroes, professionals, and some of the bravest individuals in society for the work that they do. Again, a meaningful minority of respondents (approximately 28% to 38%) answered the "neither agree nor disagree option" for these items.

In addition to assessing the public's image of correctional officers, this project also examines perceptions toward correctional officers' occupational prestige. In this regard, the

Table 3.2. Public Belief in "CO as Heroes"

Items	% Total Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neither Agree nor Disagree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
1. Correctional officers work on the "toughest beat" in the country because their job requires them to cope with many stressors.	61.2	18.1	43.1	28.2	8.1	2.4
2. It takes courage to work in a prison where the risk of being attacked by an inmate is ever-present.	83.3	36.3	47.0	12.8	2.6	1.3
3. Correctional officers are heroes—they play the essential role in our society of making sure that the worst among us do not escape from prison.	47.0	13.2	33.8	35.3	13.6	4.1
4. Correctional officers are criminal justice professionals who use their skills not only to keep inmates locked up but also to help inmates better themselves while behind bars.	43.5	8.8	34.7	37.1	15.0	4.4
5. Those who work as correctional officers are some of the bravest individuals in society.	47.1	12.2	34.9	33.6	14.5	4.7

respondents were provided with a list of 25 occupations (randomly ordered). Then, on a scale of 1 (lowest prestige) to 7 (highest prestige), the respondents were asked to rate each occupation. Table 3.3 presents the results of the ratings. As shown, the occupations receiving the highest average prestige ratings were medical doctors (mean = 5.94), firefighters (5.89), and schoolteachers (5.17).

Regarding criminal justice occupations specifically, police officers received the highest rating of prestige, at number 5 on the list with a mean of 5.15. Public defenders, social workers, and park rangers were all rated between 4.78 and 4.67, respectively. This placed them in the middle of the rankings (number 11 to 13). Members of correctional occupations ranked from 16 to 18. Correctional officers had the highest rated occupational prestige within this group (mean = 4.50), followed by parole officers (mean = 4.49), and probation officers at 4.45. The lowest rated occupations from the full list were jailers (4.21), cashier in a supermarket (4.04), and salesperson in a furniture store (3.88). The mean for the scale across all occupations was 4.72. These results suggest that correctional officers do not rank high on prestige but are at the upper end in their status compared to other occupations that do not require a college education.

The Role of Correctional Officers in Prisons: Custody and Treatment

Correctional officers perform a variety of roles in their occupation. They are responsible for ensuring order and safety and could assist in improving those they supervise. As such, a key debate is whether the core of the correctional officer role should be "custodial" or a "treatment provider." Tables 3.4 and 3.5 display the sample's views toward correctional officers assuming these two roles.

Table 3.3. Rankings of Occupational Prestige (Ordered Highest to Lowest)

Occupation	Mean (SD)
1. Medical Doctor	5.94 (1.16)
2. Firefighter	5.89 (1.19)
3. School Teacher	5.17 (1.49)
4. Computer Scientist	5.15 (1.28)
5. Police Officer	5.15 (1.53)
6. Mental Health Counselor	5.09 (1.33)
7. College Professor	4.99 (1.54)
8. Electrician	4.92 (1.25)
9. Professional Childcare Worker	4.84 (1.35)
10. Substance Abuse Counselor	4.82 (1.31)
11. Public Defender	4.78 (1.42)
12. Social Worker	4.71 (1.41)
13. Park Ranger	4.67 (1.20)
14. House Carpenter	4.65 (1.24)
15. Plumber	4.62 (1.35)
16. Correctional Officer	4.50 (1.49)
17. Parole Officer	4.49 (1.38)
18. Probation Officer	4.45 (1.35)
19. Local Delivery Truck Driver	4.42 (1.34)
20. Security Guard at a Bank	4.35 (1.36)
21. Bank Teller	4.34 (1.21)
22. Factory Worker	4.31 (1.41)
23. Jailer	4.21 (1.43)
24. Cashier in a supermarket	4.04 (1.40)
25. Salesperson in a Furniture Store	3.88 (1.33)
Average Occupation Score	4.72 (.890)

Table 3.4. The Role of Correctional Officers in Prisons—COs as Custodians

Items	% Total Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neither Agree nor Disagree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
1. Correctional officers' primary role in prisons should be making sure inmates follow the rules and punishing them when they do not.	43.6	9.4	34.2	35.6	17.4	3.4
2. Correctional officers should not try to get to know inmates but keep at a distance.	25.0	6.2	18.8	39.8	30.6	4.5
3. Correctional officers should focus on supervising inmates and not care about them personally.	22.7	5.3	17.4	31.1	39.3	7.0
4. The main job of a correctional officer is to make sure inmates are watched, fed, and locked in their cells at night.	57.5	12.4	45.1	31.0	9.8	1.6

Table 3.5. The Role of Correctional Officers in Prisons—CO as Treatment Providers

Items	% Total Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neither Agree nor Disagree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
1. Correctional officers should play an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates in prisons.	61.7	14.2	47.5	29.4	7.3	1.5
2. Rehabilitation programs in prisons would be better off if correctional officers were more involved with them.	48.8	12.0	36.8	40.9	8.0	2.3
3. A positive relationship between correctional officers and inmates in prison lessens the likelihood that an inmate will reoffend when released.	46.3	10.5	35.8	41.2	10.0	2.5
4. Correctional officers should be trained in how to help inmates become better people.	71.4	21.9	49.5	20.3	6.6	1.5

Beginning with the custodial role, Table 3.4 shows that approximately 44% of the sample agreed that correctional officers' primary role in prisons should be to make sure inmates follow rules, and that when they do not, should be punished by the officers. The most supported item in Table 3.4 (approximately 6 in 10 of the sample agreed) states that the main job of a correctional officer is to make sure inmates are watched, fed, and locked in their cells at night. Furthermore, between 20% and 25% of the sample agreed that correctional officers should keep a distance from inmates (i.e., not get to know them personally) and simply place their focus on supervising them. Similar to what was found when assessing the samples' views toward the image of correctional officers, between 30% to 40% of the sample appears to have unformed views toward the role they believe correctional officers should assume in prisons, as evidenced by their selection of the "neither agree nor disagree" option.

Moving to Table 3.5, item 4 received 70% of the sample's support, which states that correctional officers should be trained in how to help inmates become better people. The next most supported item (approximately 6 in 10 agreed) captures whether the sample believes that correctional officers should play an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates in prisons. The remaining two statements (items 2 and 3), which both garnered more than 45% of the sample's support, emphasized that rehabilitation programs in prisons would be better if correctional officers were involved in them and that the relationships between correctional officers and inmates could affect the chances that inmates will recidivate upon release.

Taken together, the results in Tables 3.4 and 3.5 show that the public generally recognizes that correctional officers have custodial responsibilities. However, they reject the idea that prison guards should keep inmates at a distance and focus exclusively on enforcing order.

Instead, the public favors officers being engaged in inmates' reformation. As such, they endorse correctional officers assisting in the goal of "correcting" those they supervise.

The Value of Correctional Officers

Beyond assessing the images of correctional officers held by the public, and beliefs in the role that officers should assume while working in prisons, this project also focuses on the value that the public holds of correctional officers. Three aspects make up this section: correctional officers' salary versus the police, confidence in them, and importance of correctional officers in assisting in the goals of imprisonment.

Beginning with Table 3.6, the results indicate that nearly half of the sample (46%) think that correctional and police officers should earn the same salary. However, for those not choosing this option, the results clearly indicate that the respondents think police officers should be paid either a little more (24.5% of the sample chose this) or a lot more (22.5% of the sample chose this) than correctional officers. Only 7% of the sample believe that correctional officers should be paid more than police officers. This finding is consistent with the ratings of occupational prestige in Table 3.2. Recall that out of 25 occupations, police officers were ranked number 5 whereas correctional officers were ranked 11 spots lower at number 16.

Table 3.7 shows the sample's opinion toward the five items used to measure confidence in correctional officers. Two of the statements (items 2 and 4) received "neither agree nor disagree" answers from approximately 4 in 10 and 5 and 10 respondents. This is likely due, at least in part, to lacking personal experience with what prison staff do on the job. However, of the respondents not choosing this option, more agreed that correctional officers can be counted on to

Table 3.6. Views Toward Correctional Officers' Salary Versus the Police

Items	% Total Agree
1. Police officers should be paid a lot more.	22.5
2. Police officers should be paid a little more.	24.5
3. Both officers should be paid the same.	46.0
4. Correctional officers should be paid a little more.	4.8
5. Correctional officers should be paid a lot more.	2.2

Table 3.7. Public Confidence in Correctional Officers

Items	% Total Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neither Agree nor Disagree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
1. Correctional officers do their job well.	55.4	8.8	46.6	1.6	6.3	3.2
2. You can count on correctional officers to make decisions that are in society's best interests.	27.1	5.5	21.6	49.9	15.9	7.2
3. I have respect for the work correctional officers do.	69.5	19.4	50.1	21.6	5.2	3.6
4. Most correctional officers are honest and trustworthy.	48.7	9.1	39.6	39.1	9.3	2.9
5. Most correctional officers know how to perform their jobs effectively	55.7	9.4	46.3	32.4	9.2	2.7

make decisions that are in society's best interests and that correctional officers are honest and trustworthy. The respondents were also asked about whether they believe correctional officers know how to perform their jobs well or effectively and whether they respected the work correctional officers do. In all cases, a majority of the sample agreed. First, as seen in items 1 and 5, about 55% of the respondents agreed that officers "do their job well" and "know how to perform their jobs effectively." Importantly, only about 1 in 10 respondents disagreed with these items (the remainder of the sample fell into the "neither agree nor disagree" category). Consistent with these results, about 7 in 10 respondents expressed respect for officers. Taken together, these findings suggest that the public has confidence in correctional officers. Few citizens lack confidence. At most, they are reluctant to offer an evaluation due to their lack of knowledge about correctional officers.

Finally, Table 3.8 presents the opinions of the sample regarding how important correctional officers are across five domains: rehabilitating inmates, protecting public safety, making sure inmates suffer, punishing inmates, and making prisons more humane. These represent the classic goals of imprisonment: rehabilitation (item 1), incapacitation (item 2), just deserts/retribution (item 3), and deterrence (item 4). The fifth item asks about the goal of improving institutional quality of life. The far-left column presents the percentage of the sample answering "very important" and "important." Three broad conclusions can be drawn from Table 3.8. First, the two goals seen as the most important for correctional officers to advance through their work are rehabilitation (item 1) and incapacitation or "protecting society" (item 2). In both cases, those answering "not important" was under 7%. Second, only about 1 in 4 respondents favor officers being involved in fostering deterrence by punishing inmates so they learn that

Table 3.8. Perceived Importance of Correctional Officers

Items	% Total Important	% Very Important	% Important	% Moderately Important	% Somewhat Important	% Not Important
Stem: How important of a role do you think correctional officers have in the following:						
1. Rehabilitating inmates in prison to reduce crime	52.9	24.7	28.2	23.9	16.4	6.8
2. Protecting public safety by ensuring that inmates are confined securely and safely	50.1	25.4	24.7	24.7	18.3	6.9
3. Making sure inmates in prison suffer for their crimes	11.1	4.0	7.1	21.0	19.8	48.0
4. Punishing inmates so they learn that crime does not pay	25.5	8.7	16.8	23.5	24.5	26.5
5. Making prisons more humane	48.5	22.8	25.7	24.2	18.2	9.1

Notes: The "% Total Important" column includes the sum of the "% Very Important" and "Important" columns.

"crime does not pay." Third, slightly more than 1 in 10 respondents (11.1%) state that it is "very important" or "important" for officers to ensure that "inmates suffer for their crimes." By contrast, nearly half of the sample advocated for officers' importance in "making prisons more humane"; less than 1 in 10 (9.1%) judged this goal as "not important." The public thus is sending the message that they see correctional officers as instruments of reform and protection, not of punishment, suffering, and inhumanity.

Use of Force

Because of modest attention paid to correctional officer use of force in the literature, a battery of items was asked to assess the sample's willingness to endorse officers using force in prisons. An inspection of Table 3.9 reveals that the public does not generally support correctional officers using force. To be sure, some members of the sample felt that, at times, officers must be "willing to get physical" (items 3 and 5). Still, fewer than 4 in 10 respondents agreed with the response. More broadly, across the eight items, the clear conclusion is that the public rejects the use of force as a means of control. For example, low levels of support were found for using force against disrespectful inmates or to get inmates to listen (items 1, 2, and 8). The respondents also firmly rejected the idea (only 12% agreed) that officers should not report a coworker who used excessive force (item 4). By contrast, 6 in 10 favored firing officers who used excessive force (item 7). Most instructive, three-fourths of the sample agreed that a "skilled" officer should be able to enforce order without "getting physical" with their charges (item 6). Again, it appears that the American public wants correctional officers who manage and improve inmates, not those who use force and harm inmates.

In addition to the battery of Likert-type items used to assess the sample's support toward correctional officers using force generally, a use-of-force vignette was also presented to the

Table 3.9. Public Acceptance of Correctional Officer Use of Force

Items	% Total Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neither Agree nor Disagree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
1. When inmates are disrespectful, a correctional officer has to rough them up a bit to show them who is boss.	11.3	2.5	8.8	27.8	37.3	23.6
2. Prisons are violent places, and sometimes the only thing an inmate will listen to is a good whipping.	20.8	5.0	15.8	35.5	25.7	18.1
3. If correctional officers aren't willing to get physical, the inmates will think they run the prison.	37.9	10.0	27.9	34.6	17.6	9.9
4. Officers need to stick together and never report a fellow guard who uses a bit of violence to get control of an inmate.	12.0	2.5	9.5	19.6	34.7	33.4
5. If you are not willing to get physical with an inmate, you have no business being a correctional officer.	37.9	9.1	28.8	34.0	17.2	10.4
6. A skilled correctional officer can get inmates to calm down so they don't have to get physical with them.	75.0	24.7	50.3	21.9	1.7	1.4
7. Any correctional officer that uses unnecessary force against inmates should be fired.	60.7	23.2	37.5	28.5	8.3	2.3
8. Just because an inmate "mouths off" in front of other prisoners it does not give the officer the right to hit them for being disrespectful.	74.2	28.6	45.6	20.5	3.7	1.5

respondents. Table 3.10 reports how each factor in the vignette influenced the public's views toward the force used. The possible factors included whether the inmate was in a gang, the reason they were incarcerated, the nature of the interaction between the inmate and the correctional officer, the action taken by the inmate, and the type of force used by the officer.

Beginning with gang affiliation status, the public is more accepting of correctional officers using force if the inmate is a member of the Aryan Brotherhood gang. Nearly 50% of the sample reported force would be acceptable. Furthermore, 41.9% of the sample felt that force would be appropriate if the inmate was a member of the Black Guerilla Family gang. Both conditions received more support than if the inmate was not known to be in a gang. Regarding the reason for the inmate's incarceration, the sample was most accepting of force being used if the inmate was incarcerated for child molestation (45.6% viewed the force as acceptable). The sample was least accepting of force for the inmate if they were incarcerated for heroin possession (35.4%).

Assessing whether the nature of the interaction matters for views toward the officer using force, the results show that if the nature of the interaction is unknown, the sample was the most accepting of using force (51%). However, when the officer asked the inmate to "please backup to the cell door to get handcuffed," 50.6% of the sample felt the force used was acceptable. And, when the officer was verbally abusive to the inmate, telling them to "back their ass up," and to "not give them any shit," far fewer sample members (21.7%) viewed the force as acceptable when the officer spoke to the inmate in this way. Examining the potential reactions of the inmate when given a command by the officer, the sample was most accepting of force being used when the inmate physically charged and threw poop at the officer (67.2% of the sample viewed the force in response to this action as acceptable). Of the other possible actions taken by the inmate,

Table 3.10. Distribution of Responses for Acceptable Force Ratings Across Manipulations

Experimental Manipulations	Total Acceptable	Very Acceptable	Acceptable Force			
			Acceptable	Neutral	Unacceptable	Very Unacceptable
Gang Affiliation						
Control group (inmate not in a gang)	31.4	12.3	19.1	25.6	27.6	15.4
Member of the Aryan Brotherhood	49.5	20.9	28.6	19.0	21.8	9.7
Member of the Black Guerrilla Family	41.8	15.1	26.7	17.5	27.3	13.4
Reason Inmate is Incarcerated						
Credit card fraud	40.7	16.0	24.7	20.5	25.7	12.1
Heroin possession	35.4	13.0	22.4	21.7	26.2	16.7
Armed robbery	41.9	14.9	27.0	21.5	22.5	14.2
Child molestation	45.6	20.9	24.7	19.3	28.4	6.8
Nature of the interaction						
Control group (interaction not specified)	51.0	24.7	26.3	20.5	21.5	7.0
"…back up to the cell door and put your hands through the slot, so I can handcuff you."	50.6	18.7	31.8	24.8	18.9	5.9
"Back your ass up…put your hands through the slot so I can handcuff you. Don't give me any shit."	21.7	5.2	16.5	17.4	35.8	27.1
Action Taken by the Inmate						
Sits down and refuses to obey	33.7	10.7	23.0	23.3	25.5	17.5
Cusses and flips his middle finger at the officer	24.2	6.6	17.6	20.3	40.2	15.3
Spits on the officer	39.0	14.2	24.8	19.8	30.2	11.0
Physically charges and throws poop at the officer	67.2	33.5	33.7	19.6	6.0	7.2
Force Used by the CO						
Pepper sprays the inmate in the eyes	42.7	16.1	26.6	21.5	25.3	10.6
Tases the inmate with a stun gun	38.8	16.0	22.8	20.2	25.9	15.1

39% of the sample was accepting of the officer using force when the inmate spit on the officer. The public was less accepting of the officer using force when the inmate cussed at and flipped off the officer and sat down and refused to obey.

These data lead to two conclusions. First, acceptance of force is highest when inmates' behavior is resistant and, in particular, when they are physically assaultive. Second, overall, the public is not accepting of the use of force (see Table 3.12 ahead). Again, the public favors correctional officers who are not hacks or enforcers of order but heroes who know to manage inmates skillfully if not humanely.

The sample's views toward possible punishments for the force used in the vignette was also assessed. Table 3.11 shows the effects of the manipulations on support for punishing the officer for using force. Starting with whether the inmate was in a gang, the sample felt most strongly that the officer should not receive a punishment for using force if an inmate is known to be a gang member. Regarding the reason the inmate was incarcerated, the sample was most lenient toward punishing the officer if the offender was incarcerated for child molestation (approximately 43% of the sample said "no punishment").

The nature of interaction between the inmate and the officer also mattered, with the sample supporting punishing the officer when they spoke to and commanded the inmate in a derogatory way (i.e., swearing at them). The sample was more likely to support giving the officer a warning, suspending them without pay, and firing them (both with and without charges being filed) if they swore at the inmate while giving a verbal command. There was less support for punishing the officer for the force used when the officer treated the inmate more respectfully.

Examining the action taken by inmate in response to the officer's command, nearly 6 in 10 members of the sample recommended no punishment for the force used by the officer when

Table 3.11. Distribution of Responses for Punishment Ratings Across Manipulations

Experimental Manipulations	Punishments for Force Used						
	None	Warning	Remove Officer	Suspend, W/ Pay	Suspend, W/O Pay	Fire Officer, W/O Chargers	Fire Officer, W/ Charges
Gang Affiliation							
Control group (inmate not in a gang)	29.3	26.3	18.9	6.1	12.6	2.2	4.6
Member of the Aryan Brotherhood	40.4	25.3	16.9	2.6	10.5	1.0	3.3
Member of the Black Guerrilla Family	41.1	20.5	16.1	3.4	12.0	1.9	5.1
Reason Inmate is Incarcerated							
Credit card fraud	35.0	26.8	17.0	5.3	11.3	0.40	4.2
Heroin possession	34.2	20.2	19.0	2.0	15.1	2.5	7.0
Armed robbery	35.7	26.2	16.5	5.7	10.7	2.1	3.0
Child molestation	42.9	22.7	16.8	3.1	9.6	1.9	3.0
Nature of the interaction							
Control group (interaction not specified)	44.3	23.1	15.1	5.0	8.2	0.71	3.6
"…back up to the cell door and put your hands through the slot, so I can handcuff you."	46.3	21.1	18.7	2.9	7.0	0.72	3.3
"Back your ass up…put your hands through the slot so I can handcuff you. Don't give me any shit."	20.7	27.7	18.2	4.2	19.5	3.7	6.0
Action Taken by the Inmate							
Sits down and refuses to obey	32.0	22.1	19.3	5.2	11.1	3.6	6.8
Cusses and flips his middle finger at the officer	22.5	29.4	20.1	4.6	17.7	1.5	4.3
Spits on the officer	34.2	28.9	17.4	2.5	11.6	1.3	4.2
Physically charges and throws poop at the officer	59.4	15.8	12.2	3.8	6.3	0.46	2.0
Force Used by the CO							
Pepper sprays the inmate in the eyes	39.4	25.6	17.9	3.4	7.8	1.9	4.0
Tases the inmate with a stun gun	34.2	22.5	16.7	4.7	15.6	1.6	4.7

the inmate physically charged and threw poop at them. Of the other available sanctions, the sample supported removing the correctional officer if they used force in an instance where the inmate flipped off and cussed at the officer.

Furthermore, if the officer used force against the inmate after they sat down and refused to obey a direct order, the sample was most willing to support the officer being fired. Finally, comparing whether the sample felt the officer should be punished for the two potential types of force used—pepper spraying versus tasing the inmate—more respondents supported firing the officer and having criminal charges filed against them if they tased the inmate with a stun gun.

One final table, Table 3.12, shows the general distribution of the sample's views toward the acceptability of the force being used in the vignette and support for punishing the officer for using force. As noted, sample members did not show strong support for being physical with inmates. Only about 4 in 10 respondents found the use of force acceptable (24.7%) or very acceptable (16.0%). At the same time, the public did not favor strong discipline against officers using force. About 6 in 10 respondents wanted officers to receive little (24% supported issuing a warning) or no punishment (36.8% supported this option). Only 6% of the sample felt that officers should be fired if they used force against the inmate.

For punishing use of force, nearly 37% of the sample felt that no punishments should be given to the officer for using force. If a punishment were to be given, 24% of the sample felt that a warning should be issued. The next most supported punishment was to temporarily move the officer to a position that has does not have contact with inmates. Only 4.3% of the sample felt that officers should be fired and have charged pressed against them if they used force against the inmate.

Table 3.12. Acceptance of and Punishment for Hypothetical Use of Force Incident

Response Options	%
Acceptance of Force	
1. Very unacceptable	12.9
2. Unacceptable	25.6
3. Neutral	20.8
4. Acceptable	24.7
5. Very acceptable	16.0
Punishment for Force	
1. None	36.8
2. Issue a warning to the officer	24.0
3. Temporarily move the officer to a position that has no contact with inmate	17.3
4. Suspend the officer with pay	4.1
5. Suspend the officer without pay	11.7
6. Fire the officer, without criminal charges	1.7
7. Fire the officer, and press criminal charges against him	4.3

Reducing Misconduct in the Correctional Officer Occupation

Finally, the respondents were asked what reforms they might endorse "to reduce misconduct by correctional officers in jails and prisons." They were asked how much they supported each of six measures. Note that half of the sample received a prime in the form of a news story depicting corruption among correctional officers. Table 3.13 shows the non-primed samples' opinion toward the policies, Table 3.14 shows the opinions of the primed sample, and Table 3.15 compares the total level of support for the policies of both the non-primed and primed groups, side-by-side.

As Table 3.15 shows, exposure to the prime increased support for each of the six measures, ranging from 4.5% (items 1) to 16.2% (item 4). Regardless, the clear finding is that notwithstanding the prime, the public favored reforms aimed at curbing officer misconduct. Thus, more than 7 in 10 respondents (8 in 10 primed respondents) supported requiring correctional officers to don body-worn cameras and to receive more ethical training (items 1 and 2). The same proportion of the sample favored increasing "education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices" (item 5). Furthermore, 6 in 10 (7 in 10 for primed respondents) supported civilian inspection teams in institutions (item 3) and creating a registry of bad officers (item 6). The issue of qualified immunity evoked more disagreement, with about half the sample expressing support (item 4). However, when the respondents were primed with a story about correctional officer corruption, support for eliminating qualified immunity jumped to two-thirds of the sample (item 4).

Table 3.13. Views Toward Policies to Reduce Correctional Officer Misconduct (non-Primed Respondents)

Items	% Total Support	% Strongly Support	% Support	% Neither Support nor Oppose	% Oppose	% Strongly Oppose
1. Requiring correctional officers to wear body-worn cameras	77.2	34.3	42.9	19.4	2.9	0.50
2. Requiring correctional officers to take more ethical training (e.g., on sexual harassment)	72.9	30.4	42.5	23.0	2.8	1.2
3. Requiring jails and prisons to have civilian inspection teams that regularly interview inmates about how they are treated by correctional officers	62.9	24.4	38.5	27.4	7.7	2.1
4. Getting rid of qualified immunity, so that correctional officers are personally liable (can be sued for money) if they mistreat inmates	49.2	21.7	27.5	30.1	14.6	6.1
5. Increasing education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices for correctional officers	75.0	30.6	44.4	21.3	2.7	.95
6. Creating a national, publicly accessible registry of correctional officers who have engaged in misconduct	62.6	25.0	37.6	27.9	5.8	3.7

Table 3.14. Views Toward Policies to Reduce Correctional Officer Misconduct (Primed Respondents)

Items	% Total Support	% Strongly Support	% Support	% Neither Support nor Oppose	% Oppose	% Strongly Oppose
1. Requiring correctional officers to wear body-worn cameras	81.7	41.7	40.2	12.7	4.7	0.70
2. Requiring correctional officers to take more ethical training (e.g., on sexual harassment)	80.4	44.7	35.7	14.4	3.8	1.5
3. Requiring jails and prisons to have civilian inspection teams that regularly interview inmates about how they are treated by correctional officers	71.1	34.3	36.8	19.8	7.2	1.9
4. Getting rid of qualified immunity, so that correctional officers are personally liable (can be sued for money) if they mistreat inmates	66.4	33.0	30.4	19.8	11.3	5.5
5. Increasing education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices for correctional officers	82.7	42.4	40.3	14.1	2.5	0.60
6. Creating a national, publicly accessible registry of correctional officers who have engaged in misconduct	75.1	40.1	35.0	18.9	4.8	1.2

Table 3.15. Views Toward Policies to Reduce Correctional Officer Misconduct (Primed vs. Non-primed Respondents)

Items	Non-Primed Respondents % Total Support	Primed Respondents % Total Support
1. Requiring correctional officers to wear body-worn cameras	77.2	81.7
2. Requiring correctional officers to take more ethical training (e.g., on sexual harassment)	72.9	80.4
3. Requiring jails and prisons to have civilian inspection teams that regularly interview inmates about how they are treated by correctional officers	62.9	71.1
4. Getting rid of qualified immunity, so that correctional officers are personally liable (can be sued for money) if they mistreat inmates	49.2	66.4
5. Increasing education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices for correctional officers	75.0	82.7
6. Creating a national, publicly accessible registry of correctional officers who have engaged in misconduct	62.6	75.1

Sources of Public Perceptions of Correctional Officers:

Multivariate Analyses Testing Models

Beyond investigating the public's attitudes toward the correctional officer occupation, another key contribution of this project is to explore the sources of these opinions. This section presents the results of regression models examining the effects of the five theoretical models on the outcomes.

"Hacks" or "Heroes" and Occupational Prestige

Table 3.16 shows the regression results of predicting beliefs in the image that correctional officers are "hacks" and/or "heroes." Beginning with the CO as Hacks model, White nationalists, those scoring high in the care/harm domain, and respondents that have been punished in the past were significantly more likely to view correctional officers as hacks. By contrast, racially resentful respondents, Whites, those who support rehabilitation, Republicans, those scoring higher on the moral authority/subversion domain, those who think prison work is dangerous, and older respondents are less likely to view correctional officers as hacks. Furthermore, as the respondents' income increases, their belief that correctional officers are hacks decreases. The strongest predictors in the model were support for rehabilitation (ß = -.187) and racial resentment (ß = -.178).

Turning to the CO as Heroes model, fewer variables reached statistical significance. Four conclusions can be drawn. First, in contrast to the Hacks model, race had no impact. Second, both types of correctional attitudes—punitiveness and support for rehabilitation—were positively associated with officers as heroes. Third, both types of moral foundations—care/harm and authority/subversion—also increased positive views of officers. Finally, perceptions of prison

Table 3.16. Sources of Beliefs in Correctional Officers as "Hacks" and Heroes

Variables	CO as Hacks			CO as Heroes		
	b	(SE)	ß	*b*	(SE)	ß
Racial Resentment	-.116**	(.04)	-.178	.049	(.03)	.077
White Nationalism	.077*	(.03)	.101	.014	(.03)	.020
White	-.150**	(.05)	-.093	.020	(.05)	.013
Punitiveness	-.045	(.03)	-.060	.119***	(.03)	.169
Support for Rehabilitation	-.210***	(.05)	-.187	.129**	(.05)	.118
Belief in Redeemability	.025	(.04)	.022	-.052	(.04)	-.049
Republicanism	-.055**	(.02)	-.154	.003	(.02)	.009
Conservatism	.007	(.02)	.020	-.013	(.02)	-.036
Moral Care/Harm	.117**	(.04)	.108	.091**	(.03)	.087
Moral Authority/Subversion	-.122**	(.04)	-.137	.265***	(.04)	.302
Fear of Crime	-.015	(.03)	-.020	.053*	(.02)	.073
Prior Victimization	.032	(.06)	.018	-.033	(.05)	-.017
Prison Danger	-.113***	(.03)	-.145	.223***	(.02)	.294
% Violent Prisoners	-.002*	(.00)	-.061	.002	(.00)	.083
% Black Prisoners	.002	(.00)	.053	-.002	(.00)	-.048
Personal Employment	-.047	(.12)	-.010	.166	(.09)	.048
Personal Relationship with CO	-.058	(.15)	-.015	.157	(.11)	.038
Visited Prison	.093	(.05)	.050	.020	(.05)	.012
Past Punishment	.134*	(.06)	.066	-.030	(.06)	-.015
Vicarious Imprisonment	-.064	(.02)	-.028	.058	(.02)	.028
Negative Media Portrayal	-.017	(.03)	-.022	-.042	(.03)	-.052
Male	-.010	(.05)	-.007	.041	(.03)	.028
Age	-.009***	(.00)	-.213	.001	(.00)	.029
Southerner	.027	(.02)	.051	.007	(.01)	.015
Education	-.025	(.02)	-.050	.000	(.02)	.004
Income	-.035***	(.01)	-.154	.005	(.01)	.023
N	931			931		
R^2	.360			.431		

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

guards as heroes also were increased by the view that prisons are dangerous places to work. Note as well that both models performed well regarding fit. The CO as Hacks model has a R^2 of .360, and the CO as Heroes model has a R^2 of .431.

Table 3.17 shows the results of the regression model examining which respondents are significantly more or less likely to believe that the correctional officer occupation is prestigious. Starting with model fit, 25.1% of the variance in attitudes toward correctional officers' occupational prestige is explained by the variables included in the model. Correctional attitudes mattered, with being punitive and supporting rehabilitation increasing seeing guard work as prestigious. So did scoring high in the moral authority/subversion domain, believing prisons are dangerous places to work, having personal relationships with correctional officers, and being older. By contrast, those that think there are greater numbers of Blacks in prisons and who think the media negatively portrays correctional officers are less likely to view the correctional officer occupation as prestigious.

The Role of Correctional Officers in Prisons: Custody and Treatment

Table 3.18 reports the regression results of models predicting support for the correctional officers as custodians and as treatment providers. Four conclusions merit attention. First, an important finding is that White nationalism increases support for correctional officers as custodians. Second, support for a custodial role is associated with correctional attitudes, with punitiveness positively related and belief in redeemability negatively related to this outcome. Third, having experienced a criminal justice punishment and being male increased a preference of guards as custodians. Such sentiments were increased as well by exposure to negative media portrayals but decreased by age and perceptions of prisons as dangerousness places to work. Fourth, with regard to the model fit, the R^2 was .335.

Variables	CO Prestige		
	b	(SE)	ß
Racial Resentment	.003	(.08)	.002
White Nationalism	-.003	(.06)	-.002
White	.018	(.12)	.006
Punitiveness	.204**	(.06)	.148
Support for Rehabilitation	.350**	(.12)	.164
Belief in Redeemability	.061	(.10)	.030
Republicanism	.008	(.05)	.012
Conservatism	.067	(.04)	.097
Moral Care/Harm	.084	(.08)	.040
Moral Authority/Subversion	.401***	(.09)	.232
Fear of Crime	.091	(.06)	.063
Prior Victimization	-.133	(.13)	-.034
Prison Danger	.209**	(.06)	.139
% Violent Prisoners	.003	(.00)	.056
% Black Prisoners	-.007*	(.00)	-.089
Personal Employment	.207	(.18)	.031
Personal Relationship with CO	.680*	(.31)	.082
Visited Prison	.142	(.12)	.041
Past Punishment	-.218	(.15)	-.057
Vicarious Imprisonment	-.028	(.16)	-.007
Negative Media Portrayal	-.191**	(.06)	-.121
Male	-.051	(.11)	-.017
Age	.006*	(.00)	.076
Southerner	.023	(.04)	.023
Education	-.011	(.04)	-.011
Income	-.014	(.02)	-.032
N		930	
R²		.251	

Notes: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed).

Table 3.18. Sources of Support for the Role of Correctional Officers

Variables	CO as Custodians			CO as Treatment Providers		
	b	(SE)	ß	*b*	(SE)	ß
Racial Resentment	.028	(.03)	.045	-.013	(.03)	-.021
White Nationalism	.073*	(.03)	.105	.048	(.03)	.070
White	-.072	(.05)	-.048	.060	(.05)	.040
Punitiveness	.131***	(.03)	.196	-.010	(.03)	-.015
Support for Rehabilitation	-.076	(.06)	-.073	.328***	(.05)	.320
Belief in Redeemability	-.189***	(.05)	-.190	.260***	(.05)	.265
Republicanism	-.012	(.02)	-.034	-.038*	(.02)	-.113
Conservatism	.011	(.02)	.032	.006	(.02)	.017
Moral Care/Harm	.025	(.04)	.025	.189***	(.03)	.191
Moral Authority/Subversion	.038	(.04)	.045	.106**	(.04)	.129
Fear of Crime	-.004	(.03)	-.006	.014	(.02)	.020
Prior Victimization	-.050	(.06)	-.026	.042	(.06)	.022
Prison Danger	-.078**	(.02)	.108	-.018	(.02)	-.025
% Violent Prisoners	.001	(.00)	.035	-.000	(.00)	-.001
% Black Prisoner	.001	(.00)	.039	-.001	(.00)	-.019
Personal Employment	-.054	(.10)	-.017	.064	(.08)	.020
Personal Relationship with CO	.032	(.14)	.008	.007	(.13)	.002
Visited Prison	.010	(.05)	.006	-.026	(.05)	-.016
Past Punishment	.181**	(.06)	.097	-.015	(.06)	-.008
Vicarious Imprisonment	-.002	(.03)	-.003	-.018	(.02)	-.029
Negative Media Portrayal	-.037	(.03)	-.049	-.023	(.03)	-.031
Male	.152**	(.05)	.106	.022	(.04)	-.016
Age	-.005***	(.00)	-.131	-.001	(.00)	-.025
Southerner	.010	(.02)	-.020	-.001	(.01)	-.014
Education	-.014	(.02)	-.030	.029	(.02)	-.062
Income	-.002	(.01)	-.009	-.012	(.01)	-.058
N		930			930	
R²		.335			.390	

Notes: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed)

Correctional attitudes and moral foundations were related to preferring officers to be treatment providers. Support for rehabilitation, belief in offender redeemability, having a moral intuition to decrease harm, and moral authority were positively associated with seeing guards as involved in bettering inmates' lives. The opposite was obtained for being a Republican. The variables included in the model explained 39% of the variation in attitudes toward correctional officers undertaking a treatment provider role.

The Value of Correctional Officers

Three issues are used to assess the value the public ascribes to correctional officers: salary, confidence in, and importance of. Beginning with Table 3.19, the results are shown for a model predicting support for correctional officers being paid the same, if not more, than police officers. Because the outcome is coded dichotomously, a binary logistic regression framework is used, and odds ratios are reported. Only three variables in the model attained statistical significance. Those scoring higher in the moral care/harm domain and those who think working in prisons is dangerous are significantly more likely to support increasing the pay of correctional officers. By contrast, those scoring higher on the moral authority/subversion domain were less likely to support increasing the pay for correctional officers. No other significant differences were observed. The strongest predictors in the model were belief that prison work is dangerous (ß = .247) and moral care/harm (ß = .204).

Examining Table 3.20, which assesses public confidence in correctional officers, seven variables attained statistical significance. Punitive and respondents scoring higher on the moral authority/subversion domain, those that believe prison work is dangerous and that there are increasing numbers of violent offenders in prisons, older and higher income respondents, are more confident in correctional officers. Conversely, those that think correctional officers are

Table 3.19. Sources of Support for Increasing Correctional Officer Salaries

Variables	CO Salary		
	OR	(SE)	ß
Racial Resentment	1.008	(.11)	.009
White Nationalism	.963	(.10)	-.039
White	.775	(.14)	-.121
Punitiveness	.977	(.10)	-.025
Support for Rehabilitation	.905	(.15)	-.069
Belief in Redeemability	1.144	(.17)	.097
Republicanism	.892	(.06)	-.242
Conservatism	1.050	(.07)	.106
Moral Care/Harm	1.331*	(.07)	.204
Moral Authority/Subversion	.765*	(.17)	-.229
Fear of Crime	1.108	(.09)	.106
Prior Victimization	.948	(.08)	-.020
Prison Danger	1.284**	(.20)	.247
% Violent Prisoners	1.001	(.11)	.016
% Black Prisoners	.998	(.00)	-.045
Personal Employment	1.300	(.00)	.058
Personal Relationship with CO	1.360	(.41)	.055
Visited Prison	1.060	(.61)	.025
Past Punishment	.967	(.20)	-.013
Vicarious Imprisonment	.891	(.21)	-.043
Negative Media Portrayal	.958	(.21)	-.041
Male	.901	(.08)	-.052
Age	.994	(.14)	-.108
Southerner	.963	(.00)	-.056
Education	1.010	(.05)	.016
Income	.968	(.06)	-.112
N		931	
R^2		.058	

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Table 3.20. Sources of Confidence in Correctional Officers

Variables	Confidence in COs		
	b	(SE)	ß
Racial Resentment	.032	(.04)	.048
White Nationalism	-.014	(.04)	-.018
White	.090	(.07)	.056
Punitiveness	.099**	(.03)	.138
Support for Rehabilitation	.107	(.07)	.096
Belief in Redeemability	-.067	(.06)	-.063
Republicanism	.041	(.02)	.114
Conservatism	-.028	(.02)	-.078
Moral Care/Harm	-.005	(.04)	-.004
Moral Authority/Subversion	.267***	(.05)	.297
Fear of Crime	.036	(.04)	.048
Prior Victimization	-.010	(.06)	-.049
Prison Danger	.067*	(.03)	.086
% Violent Prisoners	.002*	(.00)	.063
% Black Prisoners	-.002	(.00)	-.051
Personal Employment	.163	(.09)	.048
Personal Relationship with CO	.060	(.15)	.014
Visited Prison	.058	(.06)	.032
Past Punishment	-.024	(.07)	-.012
Vicarious Imprisonment	.061	(.09)	.029
Negative Media Portrayal	-.105**	(.04)	-.128
Male	-.002	(.06)	-.001
Age	.003*	(.00)	.068
Southerner	-.005	(.02)	-.009
Education	.017	(.02)	.034
Income	.016*	(.00)	.071
N		931	
R^2		.281	

Notes: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed).

negatively portrayed in the media are less confident in them. The strongest predictors in the model were the moral authority/subversion ($\beta = .297$) and punitiveness ($\beta = .138$) variables. Regarding model fit, nearly 28% of the variance in the outcome was explained by the predictor variables.

Turning to the results of the regression models examining the perceived importance of correctional officers to achieving the goals of imprisonment, Table 3.21 shows the effects of the predictors on the five outcomes. Starting with column one, the effects are shown for the model predicting belief in the importance of correctional officers in the rehabilitation efforts of inmates. As shown, those that support rehabilitation, believe in redeemability, scored higher in the moral care/harm and authority/subversion domains, and think there are increased numbers of violent offenders in prisons are more likely to think correctional officers are important in the rehabilitation process. No variables were associated with opposition toward this outcome.

The next column shows the results of the model examining beliefs in how important correctional officers are at protecting public safety (i.e., incapacitation). As shown, punitive respondents, those that support rehabilitation, those scoring higher in moral care/harm and moral authority/subversion domains, those who think prison work is dangerous, and those who believe that correctional officers are portrayed negatively in the media are more likely to rate correctional officers as being important for protecting public safety. No variables were associated with opposing the viewpoint that correctional officers are important for protecting public safety.

Moving to the third model, White nationalists, those with greater fear of crime, and those that believe there are larger numbers of violent offenders in prisons are more likely to endorse the view that correctional officers are important in ensuring just deserts/retribution, by making

Table 3.21. Sources Perceived Importance of Correctional Officers

Variables	Rehabilitate		Protect		Inmates Suffer		Punish		Humane	
	b	ß	b	ß	b	ß	b	ß	b	ß
Racial Resentment	-.016	-.015	.031	.029	-.106	-.108	.075	.068	-.071	-.065
White Nationalism	-.080	-.067	.018	.014	.232***	.206	.139*	.111	-.031	-.025
White	-.069	-.027	.019	.007	-.122**	-.050	-.311**	-.115	.089	.033
Punitiveness	.049	.043	.222***	.191	.173	.160	.259***	.216	-.143**	-.120
Support for Rehabilitation	.425***	.239	.241*	.134	-.069	-.041	.038	.020	.381***	.207
Belief in Redeemability	.361***	.211	-.128	-.074	.044	.028	.057	.032	.181*	.102
Republicanism	-.061	-.105	.039	.067	-.002	-.003	-.069	-.114	-.037	-.061
Conservatism	.044	.076	-.039	-.068	.006	.011	-.013	-.023	-.010	-.017
Moral Care/Harm	.243***	.141	-.055	-.032	-.029	-.018	-.018	-.011	.301***	.169
Moral Authority/subversion	.187**	.130	.160*	.110	.072	.054	.170*	.113	.142	.096
Fear of Crime	.003	.003	.120*	.100	.090*	.080	.045	.036	-.043	-.035
Prior Victimization	.076	.023	.078	.024	.015	.005	.253*	.074	.087	.026
Prison Danger	.050	.040	.240***	.191	.081	.069	.198***	.152	.093	.071
% Violent Prisoners	.003**	.077	.002	.053	.003**	.074	.003*	.063	.002*	.061
% Black Prisoners	-.000	-.003	-.001	-.008	.003	.044	-.003	-.042	.001	.009
Personal Employment	-.119	-.022	-.161	-.029	-.006	-.001	-.032	-.001	-.120	-.021
Personal Relationship with CO	-.037	-.005	-.168	-.024	.050	.008	.028	.004	-.010	-.014
Visited Prison	.079	.027	-.011	-.004	.156	.057	.107	.035	.168	.056
Past Punishment	-.009	-.003	-.078	-.024	-.118	-.039	-.104	-.031	.083	.025
Vicarious Imprisonment	-.011	-.003	-.061	-.018	-.266*	-.085	-.022	-.006	-.156	-.045
Negative Media Portrayal	-.054	-.041	.161**	.122	-.074	-.060	-.059	-.043	.022	.017
Male	-.124	-.050	.079	.032	.044	.019	.120	.047	.011	.004
Age	.003	.043	-.003	-.048	-.012***	-.189	-.012***	-.162	-.002	-.024
Southerner	-.016	-.019	-.009	-.011	-.001	-.002	-.007	-.007	.046	.052
Education	-.019	-.024	-.021	-.026	-.033	-.044	-.043	-.051	.010	.012
Income	-.011	-.031	.011	.031	-.010	-.030	.007	.018	-.014	-.038
N	931		931		931		931		931	
R²	.270		.184		.214		.247		.266	

Notes: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed).

inmates suffer for their crimes. By contrast, Whites, those with close ties to individuals that have been incarcerated (i.e., vicarious imprisonment), and older respondents are less likely to agree with the notion that correctional officers are important for making inmates suffer while in prison.

The fourth model, which examines sources of the belief that correctional officers play an important role in ensuring deterrence by punishing inmates for their crimes, had seven variables reach statistical significance. Specifically, White nationalists and punitive respondents, those whose household had a victim of a crime in the past five years, those who believe prisons are dangerous places to work, and those that think there are greater numbers of violent offenders in prisons are more likely to support this view. By contrast, White and older respondents are significantly less likely to support this view.

The final model examines the effects of the predictor variables on the importance of correctional officers in making prisons more humane. Regarding this belief, those that support rehabilitation, believe in redeemability, score higher in the moral care/harm domain, and believe that there are more violent offenders in prisons are more likely to support this view. Punitive respondents were less likely to think correctional officers are important in making prisons more humane. The strongest predictors in the model are support for rehabilitation ($ß = .207$) and moral care/harm ($ß = .169$).

When inspecting the variation explained in the five models, there was a moderate amount explained in each outcome. For the Rehabilitate model, 27% of the variance was explained, 18.4% in the Protect model, 21.4% in the Inmates Suffer model, 24.7% in the Punish model, and 26.6% in the Humane model.

Use of Force

Recall that two methods were used to examine public views toward correctional officer use of force. The first was a battery of items that tap views toward various issues around force being used on those serving time in prisons. The results of the regression model examining sources of support for the acceptability of officers using force are displayed in Table 3.22. As shown, six factors are associated with a greater acceptance of correctional officers using force against inmates, generally. Specifically, White nationalists, punitive respondents, those that think prison work is dangerous, those currently or previously employed as correctional officers, those who have visited prisons, and males are more likely to support force being used by officers. By contrast, those who support rehabilitation, believe in redeemability, are conservative, score higher on the moral care/harm domain and are older are less likely to support force being used against inmates, generally. Regarding model fit, over 50% of the variance in the outcome variable was explained by the predictors.

The other method used to examine the samples' acceptance of use of force by correctional officers involved a hypothetical use-of-force incident in a vignette. The two outcomes in the experiment were (1) whether the force used by the officer was acceptable, and (2) whether the officer should be punished for the force they used. The results of the regression models predicting the first outcome variable appear in Table 3.23. Two models are presented in the table. Model 1 includes only the experimentally manipulated conditions. Examining the effects of these, when the inmate was a known member of the Aryan Brotherhood, the public was more accepting of force used against them. Furthermore, when the officer treated the inmate in a derogatory way, saying things such as "back your ass up," and "don't give me any shit," the sample was significantly less likely to accept force being used against the inmate.

Table 3.22. Sources of Support for Accepting Correctional Officer Use of Force

Variables	Acceptance of Force		
	b	(SE)	B
Racial Resentment	.044	(.03)	.078
White Nationalism	.163***	(.03)	.252
White	-.023	(.05)	-.017
Punitiveness	.115***	(.02)	.186
Support for Rehabilitation	-.187***	(.05)	-.195
Belief in Redeemability	-.086*	(.04)	-.093
Republicanism	.013	(.02)	.042
Conservatism	-.033*	(.01)	-.109
Moral Harm	-.142***	(.03)	-.152
Moral Authority	-.010	(.03)	-.013
Fear of Crime	.029	(.03)	.045
Prior Victimization	.077	(.05)	.043
Prison Danger	.062**	(.02)	.092
% Violent Offenders	.000	(.00)	.013
% Black Prisoners	.000	(.00)	.002
Personal Employment	.164*	(.07)	.055
Personal Relationship with CO	-.185	(.12)	-.050
Visited Prison	.097*	(.04)	.062
Past Punishment	.014	(.05)	.008
Vicarious Imprisonment	-.008	(.02)	-.014
Negative Media Portrayal	-.045	(.02)	-.064
Male	.089*	(.04)	.067
Age	-.004***	(.00)	-.105
Southerner	-.017	(.01)	.037
Education	.011	(.01)	.025
Income	.007	(.01)	.038
N		930	
R-Squared		.506	

Notes: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed).

Table 3.23. OLS Regression Predicting Acceptance of Use of Force

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	b	ß	*b*	ß
Gang Affiliation				
Control group (inmate not in a gang) (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Member of the Aryan Brotherhood	.378***	.138	.362***	.131
Member of the Black Guerrilla Family	.146	.053	.190*	.07
Reason Inmate is Incarcerated				
Credit card fraud (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Heroin possession	-.106	-.036	-.038	-.013
Armed robbery	-.019	.007	-.012	-.004
Child molestation	.216	.070	.161	.051
Nature of the interaction				
Control group (interaction not specified) (reference group)	–	–	–	–
"…back up to the cell door and put your hands through the slot, so I can handcuff you."	.073	.027	.079	.029
"Back your ass up…put your hands through the slot so I can handcuff you. Don't give me any shit."	-.893***	-.330	-.880***	-.322
Action Taken by the Inmate				
Sits down and refuses to obey (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Cusses and flips his middle finger at the officer	-.280*	-.094	-.272*	-.091
Spits on the officer	.221	.074	.215*	.072
Physically charges and throws poop at the officer	.879***	.292	.921***	.300
Force Used by the CO				
Pepper sprays the inmate in the eyes (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Tases the inmate with a stun gun	-.038	-.015	-.021	-.008
Control Variables				
Racial Resentment	–	–	.022	.020
White Nationalism	–	–	.134*	.106
White	–	–	-.169	-.062
Punitiveness	–	–	.116*	.096
Support for Rehabilitation	–	–	-.063	-.034
Belief in Redeemability	–	–	-.053	-.029
Republicanism	–	–	-.053	-.086
Conservatism	–	–	.045	.074
Moral Care/Harm	–	–	-.108	-.059
Moral Authority/Subversion	–	–	.081	.053
Fear of Crime	–	–	.017	.014
Prior Victimization	–	–	.163	.047
Prison Danger	–	–	.082	.062
% Violent Prisoners	–	–	.001	.032
% Black Prisoners	–	–	-.002	-.030
Personal Employment	–	–	-.035	-.006
Personal Relationship with CO	–	–	.065	.009
Visited Prison	–	–	-.116	-.038
Past Punishment	–	–	.134	.040
Vicarious Imprisonment	–	–	-.028	-.008
Negative Media Portrayal	–	–	-.087*	.063
Male	–	–	.133	.051
Age	–	–	.001	.007
Southerner	–	–	.028	.031
Education	–	–	-.017	-.020
Income	–	–	.009	.024
N	1,000		931	
R²	.264		.382	

Notes: * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001 (two-tailed).

Considering the inmate's reaction to the officer's command, the sample was less accepting of force being used if the inmate flipped off and cussed at the officer. Conversely, if the inmate physically charged and threw poop at the officer, the sample was significantly more likely to support the officer using force against the inmate. The strongest predictors in this model were the language used by the officer toward the inmate (e.g., "back your ass up") (ß =.330) and whether the inmate physically charged and threw poop at the officer (ß = .292). Model 2 shows the results of the full model, which includes in addition to the manipulations a vector of control variables. As shown, when the inmate is a known member of either of the gangs listed (Aryan Brotherhood or Black Guerilla Family) the sample is significantly more accepting of force being used against them. Like Model 1, when the officer ordered the inmate in a derogatory way (i.e., swearing at them), the sample was less likely to support the use of force.

Regarding the reaction of the inmate, if they cuss and flip the officer off, the sample does not support force being used. However, when the inmate reacts more drastically, such as spitting on or physically charging and throwing poop at the officer, the sample is significantly more likely to support the officer using force against them. Of the control variables included in the model, White nationalists and punitive respondents were more accepting of force being used. Moreover, the respondents that think correctional officers are portrayed negatively by the media were less accepting of the force. The strongest predictors in the model were, again, the nature and verbiage of the command the officer gave to the inmate (using the phrases "back your ass up" and "don't give me any shit") (ß = -.322) and if the inmate physically charged and threw poop at the officer (ß = .300).

Whether the sample thinks the officer should be punished for using force was also assessed. The factors that affected views toward punishing officers for using force are shown in

Table 3.24. Like Table 3.23, two models assessed the effects of the just the Manipulations (Model 1), and then the effects of all the variables (Model 2). Starting with Model 1, when the inmate was a known member of the Aryan Brotherhood, the sample was significantly less likely to recommend a punishment for the force used. When the officer used derogatory language when commanding the inmate to "back his ass up" to get handcuffed, and to "not give me any shit," the sample was significantly more likely to recommend a punishment. When the inmate spit on the officer, or physically charged the officer and threw poop at them, the public was significantly less likely to recommend a punishment for the force the officer used. Finally, when the officer used a stun gun to tase the inmate (vs. pepper spray), the sample was significantly more likely to recommend a punishment.

Turning to the full model (Model 2), the first finding is that gang affiliation of the inmate no longer matters. The other manipulations from Model 1 held in Model 2. When the officer used derogatory language to gain compliance the sample supported a punishment for the officer. When the inmate spit on and physically charged the officer, the sample opposed punishing the officer for using force. Again, the sample was more supportive of punishing the officer for using a stun gun versus pepper spray. Regarding the control variables, those that are punitive and scored higher in the moral authority/subversion domain are less likely to support punishing the officer for using force. By contrast, those that score high in the moral care/harm domain are more supportive of punishing the officer for using force. The model fit for the full model nearly doubled, with R^2 increasing from .125 to .231.

Table 3.24. OLS Regression Predicting Punishment for Use of Force

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	b	ß	b	ß
Gang Affiliation				
Control group (inmate not in a gang) (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Member of the Aryan Brotherhood	-.329*	-.092	-.232	-.065
Member of the Black Guerrilla Family	-.208	-.058	-.158	-.044
Reason Inmate is Incarcerated				
Credit card fraud (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Heroin possession	.247	.063	.200	.052
Armed robbery	.032	.008	.000	.000
Child molestation	-.177	-.044	-.123	-.030
Nature of the interaction				
Control group (interaction not specified) (reference group)	–	–	–	–
"…back up to the cell door and put your hands through the slot, so I can handcuff you."	-.152	-.042	-.144	-.040
"Back your ass up…put your hands through the slot so I can handcuff you. Don't give me any shit."	.732***	.206	.758***	.215
Action Taken by the Inmate				
Sits down and refuses to obey (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Cusses and flips his middle finger at the officer	.103	.026	.133	.035
Spits on the officer	-.349*	-.089	-.316*	-.082
Physically charges and throws poop at the officer	-.807***	-.205	-.800***	-.202
Force Used by the CO				
Pepper sprays the inmate in the eyes (reference group)	–	–	–	–
Tases the inmate with a stun gun	.249*	.074	.261*	.078
Controls				
Racial Resentment	–	–	-.071	-.049
White Nationalism	–	–	-.038	-.023
White	–	–	.128	.036
Punitiveness	–	–	-.164*	-.105
Support for Rehabilitation	–	–	-.010	-.041
Belief in Redeemability	–	–	.126	.054
Republicanism	–	–	.059	.074
Conservatism	–	–	-.005	-.007
Moral Care/Harm	–	–	.249*	.106
Moral Authority/Subversion	–	–	-.254**	-.130
Fear of Crime	–	–	-.033	-.020
Prior Victimization	–	–	.103	.023
Prison Danger	–	–	-.095	-.056
% Violent Prisoners	–	–	-.000	-.002
% Black Prisoners	–	–	.004	.044
Personal Employment	–	–	.364	.049
Personal Relationship with CO	–	–	-.270	-.029
Visited Prison	–	–	.099	.025
Past Punishment	–	–	-.099	-.023
Vicarious Imprisonment	–	–	.082	.018
Negative Media Portrayal	–	–	-.042	-.024
Male	–	–	-.163	-.049
Age	–	–	-.001	-.015
Southerner	–	–	-.059	-.051
Education	–	–	.034	.031
Income	–	–	-.030	-.061
N	1,000		931	
R^2	.126		.231	

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Reducing Misconduct in the Correctional Officer Occupation

The final outcome in this project measured support for policies intended to reduce misconduct in the correctional officer occupation. This was done using a priming experiment in which half of the sample was given a news story depicting correctional officer misconduct and corruption. Table 3.25 shows the results of the regression model predicting support for the policies. The first row in the model shows the effect of the prime (i.e., whether the respondent got the news story). As shown, the regression coefficient is significant and positive, which conveys that those who received the prime expressed significantly greater support for policies that might reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation.

In total, four additional factors were associated with increased support for the policies. These included support for rehabilitation, moral care/harm, moral authority/subversion values, prison danger, and the belief there are greater numbers of Blacks currently incarcerated in prisons. Factors associated with decreased support for reform include racial resentment and White nationalism. Regarding model fit, over 50% of the variation in support for policies intended to reduce misconduct in the correctional officer occupation is explained in the model. The strongest predictors in the model was found among those that support rehabilitation (ß = .263) and believe it is morally reprehensible to harm others (ß = .256).

Assessing the Models

This section evaluates and summarizes how well each of the five theoretical models did in predicting the outcome variables. The relationships between each model—racial, correctional attitudes, political, crime/danger, and prison contact—are shown across all 16 outcomes. Table 3.26 shows the effects of the racial model across all the outcomes. Racial resentment (1 significant finding) and the race of the respondent (3 significant findings) tended not to matter

Table 3.25. Support for Reducing Misconduct in Correctional Officer Occupation—Priming Experiment

Variables	Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation		
	b	(SE)	ß
Read News Story (Prime)	.177***	(.04)	.120
Racial Resentment	-.100**	(.03)	-.150
White Nationalism	-.081*	(.03)	-.113
White	-.065	(.05)	-.042
Punitiveness	.003	(.03)	.004
Support for Rehabilitation	.280***	(.05)	.263
Belief in Redeemability	.070	(.04)	.068
Republicanism	-.021	(.02)	-.061
Conservatism	-.007	(.02)	-.021
Moral Care/Harm	.265***	(.03)	.256
Moral Authority/Subversion	.077*	(.03)	.089
Fear of Crime	-.004	(.02)	-.005
Prior Victimization	-.019	(.05)	-.010
Prison Danger	.068**	(.02)	.091
% Violent Prisoners	-.001	(.00)	.030
% Black Prisoners	.002*	(.00)	.063
Personal Employment	-.159	(.09)	-.048
Personal Relationship with CO	.064	(.11)	.016
Visited Prison	-.007	(.04)	-.004
Past Punishment	.038	(.05)	.020
Vicarious Imprisonment	.039	(.02)	.058
Negative Media Portrayal	-.015	(.02)	-.019
Male	.013	(.04)	.008
Age	.000	(.00)	.007
Southerner	.012	(.01)	.023
Education	-.001	(.01)	-.002
Income	-.011	(.01)	-.053
N		930	
R^2		.502	

Notes: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Table 3.26. Direction of Significant Relationships Between Racial Model and Outcome Variables

Outcomes	Racial Resentment	White Nationalism	White
COs as Hacks	-	+	-
COs as Heroes	ns	ns	ns
CO Prestige	ns	ns	ns
CO as Custodian	ns	+	ns
CO as Treatment Provider	ns	ns	ns
CO Salary vs. Police	ns	ns	ns
Confidence in COs	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Rehabilitate	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Protect	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Suffer	ns	+	ns
Importance of COs—Punish	ns	+	-
Importance of COs—Humane	ns	ns	-
Acceptance of CO Force	ns	+	ns
Acceptability of Force Used	ns	+	ns
Punishing Force Used	ns	ns	ns
Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation	-	-	ns

Notes: "+" = significant positive relationship; "-" = significant negative relationship; "ns" = nonsignificant relationship

across the outcomes in this project. By contrast, White nationalism was positively associated with 6 of 16 outcomes. Importantly, these effects were in a noticeable pattern, leading respondents with this racial attitude to want prison guards to be coercive in their work. Thus, White nationalism exerted a significant influence in increasing support for correctional officers to take a custodial approach, to play a role in punishing inmates and making them suffer, and to use force. It also was negatively related to support for reform policies being implemented that would curb officer misconduct.

Table 3.27 presents the direction of significant relationships for the correctional attitudes model on the outcome variables. Notably, punitiveness and support for rehabilitation stand out as robust predictors in this theoretical model. They were significant in 10 and 9 of the 16 models, respectively. Punitive respondents in the sample view correctional officers favorably, with punitiveness associated with increased beliefs that correctional officers are heroes, ratings of higher occupational prestige, and more confidence in officers to do their jobs well and make decisions that are in society's best interests. Those more supportive of rehabilitation also view officers as heroic and as having greater occupational prestige. These respondents also appear to prefer that officers perform a multifaceted role by not only managing inmates but also being a human service worker. This preference is evidenced by the finding that those who support rehabilitation are more likely to think officers should assume a treatment provider role and serve in an important position in the rehabilitation of inmates. They believe as well that officers are important for making prisons more humane.

While less than the other two variables, belief in redeemability mattered in 5 of the 16 models. As theoretically expected, the effects found capture a core theme of this variable: the belief that offenders can change with help and hard work. Thus, those with greater belief in

Table 3.27. Direction of Significant Relationships Between Correctional Attitudes Model and Outcome Variables

Outcomes	Punitiveness	Support for Rehabilitation	Belief in Redeemability
COs as Hacks	ns	-	ns
COs as Heroes	+	+	ns
CO Prestige	+	+	ns
CO as Custodian	+	ns	-
CO as Treatment Provider	ns	+	+
CO Salary vs. Police	ns	ns	ns
Confidence in COs	+	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Rehabilitate	ns	+	+
Importance of COs—Protect	+	+	ns
Importance of COs—Suffer	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Punish	+	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Humane	-	+	+
Acceptance of CO Force	+	-	-
Acceptability of Force Used	+	ns	ns
Punishing Force Used	-	ns	ns
Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation	ns	+	ns

Notes: "+" = significant positive relationship; "-" = significant negative relationship; "ns" = nonsignificant relationship

redeemability agree that officers should assume the role of a treatment provider, rather than a custodian. In this role, officers could assist the offenders in pro-social ways to aid in their redemption. They also think that officers are important in contributing to the goals of rehabilitating inmates and making prisons more humane. In other words, those believing in redeemability think offenders can positively change with assistance from correctional officers through rehabilitation programming and should not be excessively punished in inhumane prison conditions.

Table 3.28 presents the effects of the 4 political variables on the 16 outcomes. It is apparent that the political ideology and party affiliation variables exerted little effect on the outcomes. Republicanism and conservatism only achieved significance in 2 of the 16 models. Republicans were less likely to view correctional officers as hacks and opposed officers assuming a treatment provider role. Conservatives support correctional officers assuming a custodial role and were less likely to support officers using force against inmates. By contrast, the variables drawn from Haidt's (2007, 2012) Moral Foundation Theory were significant in many of the models. These results show the importance of including measures of political psychology and not just standard measures of partisanship and political orientation.

As seen in Table 3.28, the moral care/harm foundation had a statistically significant relationship in 9 of 16 outcomes. Respondents high in caring and wished to reduce harm thus are more likely to view correctional officers as heroes and to see the importance of the work officers do by supporting greater pay for them. Beyond concern for officers, the care/harm foundation increased respondents' compassion and care for the inmates supervised by officers. Specifically, the respondents that scored higher in the moral care/harm domain are more likely to rate officers as important in the rehabilitation process and to view guards as important for making prisons

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Table 3.28. Direction of Significant Relationships Between the Political Model and Outcome Variables

Outcomes	Republicanism	Conservatism	Moral Care/ Harm	Moral Authority/ Subversion
COs as Hacks	-	ns	+	-
COs as Heroes	ns	ns	+	+
CO Prestige	ns	ns	ns	+
CO as Custodian	ns	+	ns	ns
CO as Treatment Provider	-	ns	ns	ns
CO Salary vs. Police	ns	ns	+	-
Confidence in COs	ns	ns	ns	+
Importance of COs—Rehabilitate	ns	ns	+	+
Importance of COs—Protect	ns	ns	ns	+
Importance of COs—Suffer	ns	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Punish	ns	ns	ns	+
Importance of COs—Humane	ns	ns	+	ns
Acceptance of CO Force	ns	-	-	ns
Acceptability of Force Used	ns	ns	ns	ns
Punishing Force Used	ns	ns	+	-
Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation	ns	ns	+	+

Notes: "+" = significant positive relationship; "-" = significant negative relationship; "ns" = nonsignificant relationship

more humane. They are less likely to accept force being used on inmates in prisons, and they are more likely to support punishing officers for using force. Finally, they support reform policies intended to reduce corruption among correctional officers.

The moral foundation of authority/subversion was significant in 11 of the 16 models. Those who place a higher value on respect for authority were both less likely to view officers as hacks and to support punishing them for using force. These findings speak to this moral foundation's legitimate authority thesis whereby officers are viewed as holding, legitimately, a hierarchical position over inmates in which they might need to use force to ensure order. These same respondents are also more likely to view officers as heroic and prestigious and favor correctional officers assuming a custodial role in their work. Their favoring of a custodial role is likely tied to guards' positions in prison being centered around the exercise of authority and control. The custodial officer is in charge of supervising the inmates and of making sure they comply with rules.

By contrast, in a treatment role, the boundary of authority between officer and inmate might be less clear. Furthermore, those who value authority are more confident in officers generally and believe that they are important components of the rehabilitation process of inmates, the punishment of inmates, and the protection of society. Finally, they support reform efforts to mitigate corruption in the correctional officer profession. Because authority is valued, these respondents likely support these policies to weed out the "bad apples" that might undermine legitimacy in the occupation.

Table 3.29 presents the results for constructs within the crime/danger model. Two variables involving crime—fear of crime and prior criminal victimization—had only a few significant effects. Thus, those with greater fear of crime were more likely to view correctional

Table 3.29. Direction of Significant Relationships Between the Crime/Danger Model and Outcomes

Outcomes	Fear of Crime	Prior Victimization	Prison Danger	% Violent Offenders	% Black Prisoners
COs as Hacks	ns	ns	-	-	ns
COs as Heroes	+	ns	+	ns	ns
CO Prestige	ns	ns	+	ns	-
CO as Custodian	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
CO as Treatment Provider	ns	ns	-	ns	ns
CO Salary vs. Police	ns	ns	+	ns	ns
Confidence in COs	ns	ns	+	+	ns
Importance of COs—Rehabilitate	ns	ns	ns	+	ns
Importance of COs—Protect	+	ns	+	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Suffer	+	ns	ns	+	ns
Importance of COs—Punish	ns	+	+	+	ns
Importance of COs—Humane	ns	ns	ns	+	ns
Acceptance of CO Force	ns	ns	+	ns	ns
Acceptability of Force Used	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Punishing Force Used	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation	ns	ns	+	ns	+

Notes: "+" = significant positive relationship; "-" = significant negative relationship; "ns" = nonsignificant relationship

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officers as heroes. Other findings suggest that concern about crime is associated with a more coercive approach to inmates. These respondents believe that correctional officers play an important role in aiding in the incapacitation of inmates and making them suffer for their crimes. Similarly, those whose household had experienced a victimization in the past were more likely to view correctional officers as important for enacting retribution on inmates in the form of punishing them for their crimes.

The most robust variable in the crime/danger model was prison danger, which assessed how dangerous the respondents judged that it is to work in a prison and was significant in 10 of the 16 models. Specifically, those perceiving prison work as dangerous were less likely to believe that correctional officers were hacks and more likely to view them as heroes and to accord guards higher occupational prestige. In addition to these favorable attitudes, these respondents place greater value in officers. Thus, the prison danger variable was associated with increased support for paying correctional officers the same, if not a higher salary than, police officers and with manifesting greater confidence in officers doing their jobs effectively. Those seeing prison as dangerous also were more likely to believe officers are important for keeping society safe from offenders, to favor allowing officers to use force when necessary, and to endorse reforming aspects of the occupation that might reduce corruption inside of prisons. In short, if prisons are seen as dangerous, correctional officers are both more valued and seen as working in occupation merited continued reform.

The final two variables in the model examined calculations of the number of Black and violent offenders in prisons. Those believing there are greater numbers of Blacks in prisons were less likely to view the correctional officer occupation as prestigious and were more likely to endorse policies intended to reduce corruption in the occupation. One possible interpretation of

these results is possible: Those who view the system as being racially oppressive find little prestige in those working in it and support policies to mitigate corruption that might be taking place against what these respondents think are larger numbers of Black inmates in prisons.

The measure asking the respondents to estimate the number of violent offenders in prison yielded significant effects for 6 of the 16 outcomes. A key finding is that those high on this measure were less likely to judge officers as hacks, possibly because these respondents view officers as courageous for putting themselves in harm's way to protect society. These same respondents were also more likely to be confident in officers performing their jobs effectively. Regarding the importance of correctional officers in accomplishing the goals of prisons, these respondents are more likely to view officers as important for the rehabilitation process, punishing inmates, making inmates suffer, and even making prisons more humane. Thus, these respondents might endorse balanced justice. On the one hand, they realize violent offenders need to be rehabilitated and in more humane conditions. On the other hand, they wish for these offenders to suffer and need to learn that crime does not pay by receiving punishment.

The final table, Table 3.30, shows the impact of the variables in the prison contact model on the 16 outcome variables. This perspective had the fewest statistically significant effects of the five theoretical models—6 of 80 possible relationships. This overall finding suggests that views about correctional officers are not impacted greatly by having contact with the prison, whether on the side of workers or on the side of offenders. Some effects, however, merit attention. First, those who are either currently or have been correctional officers are significantly more likely to be accepting of force used against inmates. Working in prison likely has exposed them to incidents where force was required to gain compliance from an unruly inmate. Second,

Table 3.30. Direction of Significant Relationships Between the Prison Contact Model and Outcomes

Outcomes	Personal Employment	Personal Relationship with CO	Visited Prison	Past Punishment	Vicarious Imprisonment
COs as Hacks	ns	ns	ns	+	ns
COs as Heroes	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
CO Prestige	ns	+	ns	ns	ns
CO as Custodian	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
CO as Treatment Provider	ns	ns	ns	ns	+
CO Salary vs. Police	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Confidence in COs	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Rehabilitate	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Protect	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Suffer	ns	ns	ns	ns	-
Importance of COs—Punish	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Importance of COs—Humane	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Acceptance of CO Force	+	ns	+	ns	ns
Acceptability of Force Used	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Punishing Force Used	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Notes: "+" = significant positive relationship; "-" = significant negative relationship; "ns" = nonsignificant relationship

the respondents with personal relationships with officers are more likely to rate the occupation with greater prestige. These respondents might attribute more status because they are able to know the skills needed to surmount the challenges of working in prison. Third, the variables involving punishment were significant in theoretically expected directions. Thus, those who had been previously punished themselves were more likely to view correctional officers as hacks, and those with close ties to persons who have been imprisoned are more likely to agree that correctional officers should assume a treatment provider role. Those with close ties to persons who had been incarcerated also opposed the view that correctional officers should play an important role in the suffering of inmates.

Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation is to provide a panoramic view of public opinion about the American correctional officer, focusing on 16 dependent variables and five theoretical models. The data were divided into two parts—one that focused on public opinion and one that focused on variation in that opinion. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the central finding is that although the public understands that correctional officers must perform custodial roles that maintain institutional order and protect society, Americans want officers to contribute to the improvement of the incarcerated and to avoid the misuse of force and corrupt practices. As expected, correctional attitudes, especially belief in rehabilitation and redemption, increase positive appraisals of officers. The analysis also revealed the importance of including in future studies measures of moral foundations and the racial attitude of White nationalism, a factor associated with approval of officers' use of coercive practices.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION: TAKING STOCK OF PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF CORRECTONAL OFFICERS

The mass imprisonment movement has been at the center of U.S. correctional policy for the past 60 years. Due to more than a ten-fold increase in prison population during this period—from 200,000 inmates in 1960 to over 2 million in 2022—scholars and commentators have studied and discussed at length the toll of mass incarceration on virtually every aspect of society (Garland, 2001; Gottschalk, 2011; Kaeble & Cowhig, 2018; Minton et al., 2021; Petrich et al., 2022). However, an often-neglected collateral development of this movement was the concomitant growth in the number of correctional officers that are tasked with managing the now massive inmate population. At present, approximately 420,000 correctional officers work in the United States (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a). This figure makes correctional officers second only to the police in terms of the largest employment sector of workers in the U.S. criminal justice system (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020b).

Despite the size of the correctional officer occupational workforce and the importance of guards in protecting public safety and assisting in the "correction" of criminal behavior, very little research has assessed the public's opinion toward them. This omission is surprising, given that there is a large literature examining public perceptions of police officers. The law enforcement research has focused primarily on perceptions toward officers and their work (e.g., police brutality and use of force, fear, confidence in them, importance of them, occupational prestige)—lines of inquiry largely ignored with correctional officers (Haas et al., 2014; Klein et al., 1978; McManus et al., 2019; Swanton & Wilson, 1974).

To fill this void in the literature, this dissertation has attempted to provide a comprehensive analysis of how the American public perceives correctional officers and their

work. The project explored five primary areas: (1) the image of correctional officers as "hacks" or as "heroes" and their occupational prestige; (2) whether the public sees the primary purpose of correctional officers' job as custodial and/or treatment; (3) public views toward correctional officers' salary versus the police, confidence in correctional officers, and importance of correctional officers in achieving the goals of imprisonment, (4) public assessment of officers' use of force; and (5) public views toward policies intended to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation.

In addition to assessing the public's attitudes toward the correctional officer occupation, this project examined the sources of these views. A range of potential predictor variables were included in the analysis that measured five theoretically informed models: the racial model, correctional attitudes model, political model, crime/danger model, and prison contact model. Notably, prior research had not considered many of these factors or demarcated competing theoretical models when examining public views toward the correctional officer occupation and role performance (e.g., Sundt, 2009).

The project presents primary data on a newly designed survey that YouGov was commissioned to field during January 12–26, 2022. Recall that YouGov uses an opt-in survey design and, through sophisticated matching, weighting, and post-stratification procedures, produces samples generalizable to the U.S. population (Ansolabehere and Schaffner, 2014; Kennedy et al., 2016). Because of the demographic similarities of this project's sample and the U.S. population, there is increased confidence that the results presented here are reflective of how the American public perceives aspects of the correctional officer occupation measured in this dissertation.

To take stock of the dissertation's findings and implications, this chapter is divided into two sections. Relying on descriptive data, the first section discusses the public perceptions findings and implications these results reveal on the core themes assessed in this dissertation. These include the broad views and images of correctional officers, the role and importance of correctional officers, and use of force. The policy implications of these findings are explored as well. In turn, the second section examines the sources of these opinions. Special attention is paid to factors that stood out as having robust effects across the outcome measures included in this dissertation. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key takeaways and suggestions for future scholarship in this area.

Public Perceptions about Correctional Officers

A variety of perceptions were asked of the respondents regarding the correctional officer occupation. This section groups the discussion into four topics: how the public evaluates or thinks about the occupation of a correctional officer, what role they prefer officers to assume in their work, views on the use of force in prisons by officers, and policy implications.

Evaluating an Occupation

Correctional officers are often portrayed as "hacks." This characterization is especially prominent in movies and newspaper articles (Freeman, 1998; Vickovic et al., 2013). For example, research reports that about 8 in 10 newspaper articles depict officers negatively and that mainstream movies and television shows portray them as corrupt (Freeman, 1998; Vickovic et al., 2013; Welsh et al., 2011). The academic literature similarly promulgates this negative image, such as in well-known works like Sykes's (1958) *The Society of Captives* and Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment (Haney et al., 1973). The "hack" image is personified by

correctional officers being unskilled, brutish, easily corrupted, and with no organizational

commitment (Freeman, 1998; Klofas & Toch, 1982; Sundt, 2009; Tracy & Scott, 2006; Welsh et

al., 2011). Despite this representation, only about 1 in 5 respondents in the current study

endorsed this "hack" image.

Instead, correctional officers are more often seen as heroes—that is, as skilled

professionals working in a hazardous environment. About half the sample embraced this view,

whereas few rejected it. This finding corroborates what Bryant and Morris (1998) found in

Florida approximately two decades ago. The two modal words their sample chose to describe

correctional officers were "tough" and "brave." An interesting finding worth mentioning from

the current project is that about a third or more of the sample did not agree nor disagree with the

items regarding the images of correctional officers. This response points to the "invisible" nature

of prison work, in which few (if any) correctional staff have daily interactions with the general

public (Lombardo, 1981; Schlosser et al., 2010).

The findings on the occupational prestige accorded correctional officers is consistent with

the public's view of guards as heroes rather than hacks. These data reveal that the public does not

see correctional officers simply as performing dirty work and as residing at the bottom of the

social status hierarchy. Although the prestige allocated to the occupation of correctional officer

falls below that of police officers (mean occupational prestige for police = 5.15, correctional

officers = 4.50), prison guards are rated about the same (or above) probation and parole officers.

In fact, correctional officers rank above or near other occupations that do not have high

educational requirements (i.e., college degree).

The project also measured the perceived value of correctional officers to the public. One

method was to probe the sample's views toward the salary of correctional officers. Nearly half of

the sample agreed that correctional officers should be paid the same as police officers. According to the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics (2020a, 2020b), the average annual wage for correctional officers is $52,340 compared to $70,000 for police officers. Thus, about half of the sample supports reducing the gap in pay that currently exists between the two types of officers.

The value ascribed to correctional officers from the sample can also be seen in the confidence the public expresses in them. Approximately 1 in 2 of the respondents agreed with statements about officers doing their jobs effectively, officers' work meriting respect, and officers being honest and trustworthy. Only about 10% of the sample disagreed with these items; the others again fell into the "neither agree nor disagree" category. Thus, it is clear that a majority of those willing to render a judgement are confident that officers are performing their work efficaciously and with integrity.

The key takeaway from this section is that correctional officers are not devalued in society. Their work is seen as important, even a bit heroic. Although their line of work may not necessarily be held in high esteem, they are not seen as simply doing "dirty work" (Sundt, 2009). The issue next is how does the public see correctional officers as being of the most value and most effective.

Preferred Occupational Role: Doing Good

Correctional officers assume a variety of roles and orientations in their work. These include, for example, "agents of care," "custodial orientations," "counseling orientations," "concern for corruption of authority orientations," "punitive orientations," "and social distance orientations" (Cullen et al., 1989; Dowden & Andrews, 2004; Ferdik & Hills, 2018; Johnson et al., 2017; Klofas & Toch, 1982). However, a broad dichotomy generally made is whether officers should assume in their work a custodial role, emphasizing the supervision and control of

inmates, or a rehabilitative role, emphasizing the support and reform of inmates (Cullen et al., 1989; Pogrebin, 1978; Toch & Klofas, 1982; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1989).

The findings of this project show that the sample recognizes the need for officers to assume a custodial role at times. For example, more than 4 in 10 respondents agreed that the primary role of correctional officers is to make sure inmates follow the rules and to punish them when they do not. Moreover, approximately 6 in 10 agreed that officers' main job is to make sure that inmates are watched, fed, and locked in their cells. However, although these items did receive a measure of support, items that asked whether officers should keep social distance from the inmates and not care about them personally were not endorsed, thus attenuating the respondents' support for the custodial role. Thus, these results might indicate the samples' acknowledgment that officers must serve a custodial role to ensure order in prisons but should not do so as automatons without any affect toward inmates.

The preferred role the sample wishes for officers is clearer. Stronger support was found for wanting officers to engage in rehabilitative and human service efforts to improve inmates. Furthermore, much of the sample agreed that correctional officers should play a key role in the rehabilitation process and, consequently, be trained in how to assist inmates in becoming better people. These findings align with the items used to assess the importance of correctional officers in advancing the goals of prisons.

Much like sample members understand that officers need to assume a custodial role to ensure safety and order within the prison, the public also believes officers serve an important function by protecting public safety through their role in the incapacitation of offenders. However, similar to the support found for their role as a treatment provider, half the sample believes officers should also foster inmates' rehabilitation. Furthermore, nearly half the sample

prefers that officers help prisons be more humane. By contrast, only about 1 in 10 respondents endorsed correctional officers making inmates suffer so as to ensure just deserts are exacted. Taken together, the findings of the officers' preferred role and the importance seen in them to accomplish the goals of imprisonment speak to the duality of the correctional officers' job. On the one hand, the public acknowledges that officers must maintain order and safety in prisons. On the other hand, it is the public's will to include correctional officers in the "correction" process of inmates' behaviors during incarceration. In other words, they want the officers to do more good, than bad.

These findings speak to the broader literature showing the public's opinion toward rehabilitation and redemption more generally. Recent research finds that punitive sentiments toward offenders are on the decline (Enns, 2016; Pickett, 2019). At the same time, a handful of studies demonstrate the sustained public support of rehabilitation efforts for offenders and pathways for their redemption in society (Applegate et al., 1997; Burton et al., 2019; Butler et al., 2020; Cullen et al., 2000; Cullen et al., 1990; Maruna & King, 2009; Thielo et al., 2015). Given this consensus of support for rehabilitation and redemption, correctional officers may be viewed by the public as being uniquely situated to assist, rather than inhibit, the broader goal of the rehabilitation and redemption of offenders.

For the correctional officer occupation to align with the public's endorsement of rehabilitation and to the advice of experts in the field calling for the role to shift to one of human services (Russo et al., 2018), understanding who state departments are hiring for these positions takes on added salience. Recent work by Burton and colleagues provides optimism that those seeking careers as correctional officers do in fact endorse rehabilitative and human services orientations (Burton & Miller, 2019a; Burton & Miller, 2019b; Burton et al., 2019; Miller et al.,

2022). However, the basic academy training they receive prior to starting their jobs may not reinforce this correctional orientation. Importantly, a national study conducted by Burton et al. (2018) found that only 25 states train their correctional officers in the use of rehabilitative approaches in their work with inmates. Furthermore, of the states that do provide such training, the average amount of time spent of the topic is limited to just under 4 hours (Burton et al., 2018). Thus, expanding training in rehabilitation for officers is necessary—and more than 70% of the American public agrees.

Use of Force

Working in prisons is dangerous. Correctional officers have one of the highest rates of injury and illness of all occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Although the risk for contracting diseases such as HIV, Hepatitis, and now the Covid-19 virus exists, the primary threat is from the inmate population (Maruschak et al., 2016). More than half of the inmates incarcerated in state prisons are serving time for violent offenses (Sawyer & Wagner, 2020). Thus, in this dangerous and oftentimes unpredictable environment, filled with potentially violent or resistant inmates, situations arise when the use of force among correctional officers is necessary. Given the dearth of research on use of force among correctional officers, a contribution of this study was to evaluate the public's views toward this issue (Mullinix et al., 2021). Notably, research on police use of force is extensive (see, e.g., Klahm & Tillyer, 2010; Pickett et al., 2021).

The results are clear. The public does not support correctional officers using force just because prisoners are disrespectful or even disobedient. In fact, 3 in 4 members of the sample agreed that "a skilled correctional officer can get inmates to calm down so they don't have to get physical with them." By contrast, the public recognizes those choosing to become a correctional

officer need to be prepared to exercise force in some instances. Approximately 4 in 10

respondents believe that if correctional officers are not willing to get physical (1) "the inmates

will think they run the prison" and (2) "they (the officers) have no business being a correctional

officer." These data suggest that the public wants officers to employ force judiciously and only

in those situations where inmates leave guards little choice. In short, the public expects force to

be used in the least amount possible and responsibly.

Policy Implications

These findings suggest that the public wants correctional officers to be skilled

professionals who manage inmates effectively and contribute to their improvement during

incarceration. This preference meshes with Toch and Klofas's (1982) call four decades ago to

"enrich" the role of correctional officers. They argued for expanding the role of the officer

beyond custody and surveillance (which might alienate officers) to one that includes more

responsibilities in the rehabilitation process. This is, notes Toch and Klofas (1982), "because the

officer's role is most susceptible to enrichment in the treatment (human services) area" (p. 36).

Thus, operationally enrichment would look like more connectedness with inmates during the

treatment process and more expression of compassion and empathy toward inmates (Toch &

Klofas, 1982). There is evidence that officers would be open to this enriched role. Prior surveys

of correctional officers from Illinois and Texas found that officers view themselves as the most

important person in an inmate's life and half of the Texas sample believed rehabilitation should

be the main goal of imprisonment (Jacobs, 1978; Teske & Williamson, 1979).

Recent calls by experts in the field align with this view as well. Consistent with Toch and

Klofas's position, Johnson et al. (2017) suggest that correctional officers could become "agents

of care." In this role, officers would assume both custodial and human service roles. They would

develop relationships with inmates and express empathy. They would also earn respect from inmates by developing legitimate authority. In other words, the officers would approach their work from a caring orientation, only using custodial based approaches in situation-specific instances (e.g., to gain compliance from an unruly inmate). In this vein, Russo et al. (2018) recommend that "a shift in orientation from punishment and surveillance to a human-services approach could enhance the corrections sector's ability to recruit new talent." Improved training of newly hired officers might serve as a key avenue to equip correctional officers with the skills and orientation needed to move beyond custodial tasks to deliver human services.

While early work on police training dates back nearly 90 years, research on correctional officer training remains in its infancy (Burton et al., 2018; Ryan et al., 2021). To enrich the role of correctional officers, training should address human service functions that guards must perform on the job. Burton et al.'s (2018) review of pre-service basic training standards for correctional officers revealed many inconsistencies in human services training, both in the topics addressed and duration of the training. For example, only 17 states train officers in how to work with sex offenders (Burton et al., 2018). This omission is disconcerting. In some states, such as Ohio which incarcerates the fifth largest number of inmates in the United States, 1 in 4 of the state's prisoners are serving time for a sex offense (Johnson, 2015). Moreover, and as mentioned previously, only 25 states train officers in general rehabilitative approaches for working with inmates, 19 states train officers in cognitive behavioral interventions, and 16 states train officers in the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) model.

Even for states that train officers in offender rehabilitation, the duration of the training is often minimal (Burton et al., 2018). During their academy training, for example, the average amount of time pre-service officers receive in rehabilitation approaches is less than 4 hours.

Furthermore, less than 3 hours are offered for cognitive behavioral interventions and 2 hours for the RNR model (Burton et al., 2018). Thus, to enrich the occupation to include human services tasks, the shortcomings in training content and duration will need to be fixed. Such reform efforts, however, are warranted. If undertaken, they would be consistent with public opinion (more than 70% support these reforms), follow the advice of experts that were asked to recommend ways to improve the occupation (Russo et al., 2018), and align with suggestions made in the correctional officer literature (Johnson et al., 2017; Toch & Klofas, 1982). In other words, the conditions exist for real change to occur.

Beyond reasons for expanding training, this project highlights another fact: A majority of the public supports a variety of policies intended to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation. For example, approximately 3 in 4 support "requiring correctional officers to take more ethical training (e.g., on sexual harassment)" and "increasing education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices for correctional officers." The public also wishes for accountability among officers. This policy preference is evident by approximately half the sample favoring the elimination of "qualified immunity, so that correctional officers are personally liable (can be sued for money) if they mistreat inmates."

Furthermore, more than 3 in 5 respondents endorsed "requiring jails and prisons to have civilian inspection teams that regularly interview inmates about how they are treated by correctional officers" and "creating a national, publicly accessible registry of correctional officers who have engaged in misconduct." And finally, more than 3 in 4 members of the sample favored equipping correctional officers with body worn cameras. The support observed coincides with current reform efforts for the police—specifically, proposals to equip all police with body worn cameras, getting rid of qualified immunity, and improving training, among other topics

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(Crabtree, 2020; Graham, Cullen, Butler, et al., 2021; Ray & Neilly, 2021; Williams, 2021). Taken together, these findings suggest that the American public believes that supervisory efforts be undertaken to ensure that state criminal justice agents perform their jobs ethically and with the prospect of accountability.

Variation in Public Perceptions About Correctional Officers: Four Key Sources

The multivariate analyses seeking to discern variation in public perceptions of correctional officers was guided by five theoretical models. The factors included in the correctional contact model did not exert a consistent influence on the outcome measures. By contrast, the measures within the correctional attitudes model had general effects. In the other three models, the effects were often limited or inconsistent. However, within each perspective, one factor seemed to be the most important: moral foundations within the political model, perceptions of the prison as dangerous within the crime/danger model, and White nationalism within the racial model. The discussion below focuses on these variables that were salient in shaping public perceptions of correctional officers. Four key sources are considered.

Correctional Attitudes

A key division in the sentencing of offenders and thus in the purpose of prisons is whether they should be an instrument of punishment or an instrument of rehabilitation. When examining public views toward these issues, research shows that it is possible for any single individual to lean one way or the other or even to hold both sets of views (Cullen et al., 2000; Enns, 2016). In other words, just because someone is not punitive does not mean they support rehabilitation. The same holds for the opposite—those that support rehabilitation do not necessarily lack punitive sentiments. Still, public opinion research has shown that a correctional

orientation of punishment versus rehabilitation often predicts people's policy preferences (Burton, Burton, et al., 2020; Burton, Cullen, et al., 2020; Burton, Cullen, et al., 2021; Enns, 2014, 2016; Lehmann et al., 2020).

Recent research has shown that another correctional attitude—consistent with a preference for rehabilitation—also shapes public opinion: a belief in offender redemption. Maruna and King (2009) adapted this concept from attribution theory and its main thesis is that criminality is not a fixed trait (Levy et al., 1998). Rather, criminality is malleable and those who engage in crime can, with help and hard work, desist (Maruna & King, 2009). Prior work consistently finds that belief in redeemability is associated negatively with punitive policies and positively with inclusionary policies (e.g., expungement, ban the box) (Burton, Burton, et al., 2020; Burton, Cullen, et al., 2020; Burton et al., 2021; Butler, 2020; Dodd, 2018; Maruna & King, 2009; Reich, 2017).

Given that guards work in prison settings where inmates may be either receiving rehabilitation services or being treated punitively, it might be expected that these correctional attitudes would affect how the respondents view officers and the roles they would like to see them perform. This thesis appears accurate. Despite some similar results, punitive and rehabilitative correctional attitudes mostly exert opposite effects—with one encouraging a more custodial role and the other a more treatment role.

Thus, punitive respondents see merit in the correctional officer occupation. They rated officers as being more heroic and with greater levels of occupational prestige. Most revealing, punitive views are associated with the role the public believes officers should assume in prisons. Accordingly, punitive respondents want officers to assume a custodial role, and they believe that officers play an important role in accomplishing the incapacitation and specific deterrence goals

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of imprisonment. These same respondents also are understanding and accepting of officers using force to gain compliance of inmates.

Similarly, those who more strongly support rehabilitation also view correctional officers favorably. They, too, believe officers are heroic and have greater occupational prestige. Thereafter, the impact of the two correctional attitudes diverge. Opposite of punitive respondents, those favoring rehabilitation are significantly more likely to want officers to assume a treatment provider role. Furthermore, they believe that officers are important for contributing to the rehabilitation and incapacitation goals of imprisonment and making prisons more humane. They are also less accepting of officers using force, and more supportive of policies intended to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation.

Notably, belief in redeemability influenced several of the outcomes related to the role and perceived importance of correctional officers. As might be expected the direction of the association was similar to that of holding rehabilitative attitudes. Thus, those with greater belief that offenders can change were more likely to endorse officers assuming a treatment provider role. At the same time, they significantly opposed officers assuming a custodial role and officers using force against inmates. It might be the case that these respondents would rather see officers and inmates work through issues interpersonally rather than through the exercise of force. These respondents also believe that correctional officers are important in the rehabilitation goal of imprisonment and in making prisons more humane. It appears that the effects of believing in the malleable nature of criminality in those they oversee shapes the public's views toward officers' roles and importance. Collectively, these findings suggest that future studies of correctional officers—in fact of any correctional policy outcome—must include correctional attitudes in the analysis to avoid model misspecification.

Moral Foundations

Within political science and the social sciences more generally, studies of political attitudes have focused on political party (or "partisanship") and political ideology (ranging from "very liberal" to "very conservative"). Scholars such as Kinder and Kalmoe (2017) strongly argue that political ideologies are inconsequential, and group membership (i.e., political party) matter more for policy preferences. While these developments and arguments continue, Johnathon Haidt offered an alternative perspective in his now-classic book, *Righteous Mind*. He advanced the idea that policy views are influenced more fully by political psychology, which is more complex than Kinder and Kalmoe's (2017) group identity thesis.

As noted, Haidt (2007, 2012) introduced Moral Foundations Theory. Broadly, MFT posits that people's preferences and actions are guided by five underlying cognitive moral frames that derived originally in the course of human evolution: care/harm, fairness/cheating, loyalty/betrayal, authority/subversion, and sanctity/degradation. As one example, let us focus on the moral foundation that Haidt calls "care/harm." In the evolutionary process, humans developed the capacity to care so that their offspring would survive and keep the family's lineage intact. Today, this moral intuition causes individuals to respond to instances of suffering, whether in children or in others. Importantly, the degree to which people embrace the care/harm principles varies. Most everyone is affected by the care/harm foundation, but some—especially political liberals—are particularly sensitive to the suffering of others.

Due to space limitations and substantive empirical expectations, this study included measures of two foundations: care/harm and authority/subversion. Care/harm was included because prisons can be a source of correction (care) or of pain (harm). Haidt's perspective would anticipate that those with strong moral intuitions for care would favor prisons that were

correctional and minimized suffering. By contrast, the authority/subversion moral foundation reflects a preference for social order based on a respect for hierarchical authority. A preference for authority and the belief that obedience and deference are moral virtues thus might lead respondents to be more supportive of guards' exercising control within the prison (Haidt, 2012).

These expectations were confirmed to a degree. Those scoring higher in the care/harm domain were more likely to view correctional officers as heroic and to support increasing their annual salaries. These findings speak to the care the respondents express for officers: The respondents respect the fact that they do a dangerous job and view them as heroic and deserving of higher pay. Moreover, the care the respondents have for those the officers manage—inmates—also becomes clear. Those higher in the care/harm domain were more likely to view officers as important in the rehabilitation process and in making prisons more humane. They also oppose officers using force in prisons, support punishing the officers that do, and favor policies to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation.

These findings speak to the duality of effects of this measure produced across the outcomes. On the one hand, we see the care the respondents have for the officers, which is expressed by seeing them as heroic and supporting their increased pay. On the other hand, we see the care/harm domain extended to inmates, such as in the public's ascribed importance to officers to participate in rehabilitating inmates and making prisons more humane and their opposition to force being used against inmates. These findings are consistent with prior literature showing that care/harm leads people to be less punitive and less supportive of police violence and more supportive of policies intended to mitigate harm (Burton, Pickett, et al., 2021; Jonson et al., 2021; Schutten et al., 2021b; Silver et al., 2022).

Moreover, the respondents that scored higher on the authority/subversion domain were also likely to view officers as heroic, as having higher occupation prestige, and expressed more confidence in them. These respondents, in addition to believing correctional officers are important for ensuring the rehabilitation goal of prisons, think officers are important for keeping society safe through incapacitation and punishing inmates to ensure specific deterrence. Like those high in the care/harm domain, they were more supportive of policies intended to reduce corruption and misconduct in the correctional officer occupation. Still, one important difference surfaced: Those scoring high in the authority/subversion domain were less likely to support punishing officers for using force against inmates.

Taken together, these results point to several conclusions. First, those high on this domain recognize the authority of correctional officers and thus see them as prestigious, heroic, and are confident in them. Second, these sample members likely believe officers are important for ensuring several of the goals of imprisonment because they see them in positions of authority and thus as part of their job to ensure imprisonment's goals are achieved. Finally, because these respondents score higher on this domain, they view the importance of legitimate authority that correctional officers must gain in the eyes of the inmates. As a result, they were more apt to support policies intended to mitigate factors that might illegitimate authority, such as corruption and misconduct.

The broader point of these findings is that the effects of politics cannot be reduced to just partisanship and ideology. Across the 16 models analyzed, political partisanship (Republicanism) and political ideology (Conservatism) each had a statistically significant effect only twice. Thus, it is evident that underlying moral foundations that might shape policy preferences should also be included when examining views toward correctional policy issues.

Perceived Dangerousness of Prison Work

Prisons are dangerous places in which to work. Research suggests that correctional officers have the fourth highest incident rate of non-fatal injuries among all U.S. workers (Lahm, 2021; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Furthermore, approximately one-third of all work-related injuries experienced by correctional officers are due to violence and assaultive acts by inmates, and most job-related deaths are due to an inmate assaulting them with a firearm, knife, or other sharp instrument (Denhof & Spinaris, 2016; Konda et al., 2013; Liu & Taylor, 2019). Prisons are also dangerous for inmates. Recent data reveal that mortality rates of state prison inmates have been increasing over the last two decades (Carson, 2021). Thus, prisons pose physical risks for both officers and inmates.

Among the crime/danger model measures included in this project, "prison danger" (i.e., the respondents' perception of how dangerous it is to work in prisons) was the most salient predictor. Fear of crime and past victimization did not exert significant effects as consistently. Those who perceive prison work as being more dangerous tend to view officers more favorably. For example, they are less likely to see officers as hacks and more likely to see them as heroic. They are also more confident in officers, view them as having greater occupational prestige, and support increasing their pay. This perception does not lead respondents to favor a human services orientation for officers, however. Concerns about rehabilitation and humane institutions recede in importance in the face of physical hazards. Instead, those viewing prisons as dangerous want officers to play a role in ensuring the incapacitation and specific deterrence goals of imprisonment. Similarly, this assessment of danger is associated with greater acceptance of officers using force. Still, it also encourages support for efforts to reduce officers' misconduct and corruption in the occupation.

These findings make intuitive sense. Those who believe working in prisons is dangerous view those who do it as admirable and, as a result, see them as heroic and deserving of higher pay. Furthermore, because these respondents do in fact view prison work as hazardous, they recognize why this is so: Everyday, officers are enmeshed in the inmate population. Thus, because they know the risks posed by the inmates to officers and society at large, they are more likely to believe that officers are important in the incapacitation and specific deterrent goals of imprisonment. Use of force is similarly seen as a necessary reality of the job. This roster of significant effects points to the importance of including evaluations of perceived dangerousness in future research on correctional policies.

White Nationalism

Most past studies of public perceptions in the crime and corrections area have included two standard variables: race and racial resentment (Cullen et al., 2021). However, there is now an emerging literature in political science, but brought into criminal justice (Graham, Cullen, Butler, et al., 2021; Kulig et al., 2021), that argues that policy preferences are affected by White *in-group* attitudes—that is, not just by what *Whites think about Blacks* but about *what Whites think about Whites* (Cullen et al., 2021). The importance of White in-group attitudes increased decidedly with the election of Donald Trump in 2016 who accentuated White identity and showed hostility toward Blacks, Muslims, and immigrants at the southern U.S. border (Fording & Schram, 2020; Graham, Cullen, Butler, et al., 2021; Jardina, 2019; Kulig et al., 2021). The current study is important in assessing whether White nationalism—a belief that the United States should remain a White nation culturally and demographically—affects perceptions of correctional officers and their occupational role. Given the racialized nature of prisons, there were a variety of theoretical expectations for this variable (Beck & Blumstein, 2018).

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Importantly, White nationalism produced a handful of statistically significant effects across the outcome variables, typically endorsing officers using coercion to enforce social order. Thus, those scoring higher on the White nationalism index endorse correctional officers assuming a custodial role in prisons. Furthermore, they believe that correctional officers are important for two of the five goals of imprisonment: making inmates suffer (retribution) and punishing inmates (specific deterrence). The results clearly depict the type of officer that these respondents wish to work in prisons: custodially-oriented officers who place little focus on human service functions and who view their role to be one of punishing inmates and making their time in prison painful. Consistent with this position, the respondents with greater White nationalist views were both more likely to support officers using force against inmates and less likely to support policies intended to reduce corruption and misconduct among correctional officers.

This pattern of relationships suggest that White nationalist respondents might view prisons as one possible societal mechanism to protect in-group (White) interests. These respondents likely view correctional officers as the gatekeepers between criminals (likely Black offenders in their minds) and a society in which they wish to "preserve the values and ways of life that have created a great country" (Kulig et al., 2021, p. 288). They might view offenders as disruptive to their ideal society and as people with low work ethic and without pro-White values. Thus, they wish for the prisons, and those in best position to contribute to the inmates' experience (correctional officers), to be punitive and to cause suffering. This posture is evident by White nationalists' acceptance of force being used against those in prisons, and their outright opposition toward policies that could reduce corruption among correctional officers in prisons (e.g., equipping officers with body cameras, holding officers criminally liable for excessive force

used against inmates). In summary, these findings speak to the importance of including in future analyses not only White animus (e.g., racial resentment) but also White in-group attitudes.

Conclusion

In an era of mass incarceration, correctional officers have grown to be a large occupation. At present, more than 400,000 men and women work as correctional officers in the United States (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020a). Although much of their work remains invisible to the American citizenry—conducted privately behind the walls of the nation's carceral institutions—they perform an essential societal function (Lombardo, 1981). Everyday within prisons, they are the front-line staff that is responsible for maintaining institutional order. This task is integral to having prisons that not only keep inmates confined within the walls but also make the institution safe for all inside (e.g., visitors, medical personnel).

As Sykes (1958) noted six decades ago, maintaining order in prisons is challenging. Guards are always outnumbered and could, at any time, be attacked and potentially murdered. This issue is currently being exacerbated by the high turnover rate in the corrections sector. For example, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction faces more than 1,000 job openings, with guards pursuing warehouse jobs that "don't involve the hazards of prison work: gangs, mountains of paperwork and the prospect of urine or feces being thrown at you" (Bischoff, 2022, p. 18A). In Georgia, which possesses the fourth largest inmate population in the United States, one correctional officer went before lawmakers at a Georgia House of Representatives meeting and stated that: "On a 'good day,' he had maybe six or seven officers to supervise roughly 1,200 people" (Blakinger et al., 2021). Thus, for those guards who continue to work in this profession, there are increasing challenges and threats from a multitude of sources (e.g., overcrowding, the Covid-19 virus).

Prisons are painful for inmates because they are depriving in diverse ways (Sykes, 1958). Guards must supervise inmates, many of whom are under stress and have animus toward their keepers (Conover, 2000; Sykes, 1958). At the same time, prisons are called "correctional institutions" for a reason: Their other purpose is to reform inmates. If released prisoners are not improved, they will reenter society and potentially recidivate. According to recent estimates approximately 2 in 3 inmates return to prison within 3 years (Antenangeli & Durose, 2021). This grim reality means that innocent citizens will be victimized and that offenders will experience ruined lives and end up in prison again.

Notably, since the inception of the American penitentiary two centuries ago, this noble goal of seeking the reform of prisoners has informed prison policy and practice (Cullen & Gilbert, 1982). Although the nature of institutions and periods of punitiveness have often thwarted the realization of this higher purpose, the pursuit of rehabilitation remains a clear moral foundation in the United States. Indeed, this dissertation presents data showing that the American public clearly favors equipping correctional officers with the skills not only to supervise inmates but also to play a role in saving their charges from a life in crime. Recently collected data show that those entering the correctional officer profession also favor an occupational approach that involves the delivery of human services (Burton & Miller, 2019a, 2019b; Burton et al., 2019; Miller et al., 2022). The future of corrections needs to embody this purpose, seeking not only to ensure order but also to create a humane environment in which officers are trained and encouraged to improve those they supervise. As the public understands, officers choose to enter the confined and dangerous space of the prison where most strive to be heroes and not hacks. They merit our giving them the ability to meet high professional standards and our support in enabling them, each day, to undertake heroic acts, large and small.

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Full Survey Questionnaire

Notes:

Please have all respondents see this prior to starting the survey.

Text:

In this survey, you will be asked about your views regarding several criminal justice issues, including LEGAL SANCTIONS (punishments for crime) and CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS (sometimes referred to as "prison guards"). Correctional officers work within the criminal justice system, primarily in jails and prisons. A correctional officer's job is to supervise inmates serving time.

Q1-Q3. Questions Regarding Prison Experiences and Perceptions

Have you ever visited an inmate in prison?
1. Yes
2. No

Out of every 100 people who are IN PRISON OR JAIL in this country, what number do you think are BLACK?

      Please enter a number from 0 to 100: ___

Out of every 100 people who are IN PRISON OR JAIL in this country, what number do you think are serving time for a VIOLENT offense?

      Please enter a number from 0 to 100: ___

Q4. Correctional officers as "Hacks" or "Heroes" (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Most correctional officers work in the prison because nobody else would hire them.
2. Most correctional officers are not very good at their job.
3. Most correctional officers are brutes, who like prisons because they can yell at and beat up inmates.
4. Most correctional officers are corrupt—they would sell drugs, cigarettes, or cell phones to inmates if offered enough money.
5. Most correctional officers try to do as little work as possible.
6. Most correctional officers plan on working in the prison for only a couple of years and have no interest in learning the skills needed to be a professional officer.
7. Correctional officers work on the "toughest beat" in the country because their job requires them to cope with many stressors.
8. It takes courage to work in a prison where the risk of being attacked by an inmate is ever-present.
9. Correctional officers are heroes—they play the essential role in our society of making sure that the worst among us do not escape from prison.
10. Correctional officers are professionals who use their skills not only to keep inmates locked up but also to help inmates better themselves while behind bars.
11. Those who work as correctional officers are some of the bravest individuals in society.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

 ➢ Manipulations will be randomized.

Introductory Text:

Presented below is a hypothetical encounter between a correctional officer and an inmate. We would like to know what you think about the correctional officer's behavior in this encounter. Please read the text below and then answer the questions that follow.

A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER is asked by his supervisor to REMOVE AN INMATE from his cell. The inmate is [**Manipulation A**] currently serving time for [**Manipulation B**]. When the officer arrives at the cell, [**Manipulation C**] [**Manipulation D**] the officer. In response, the officer [**Manipulation E**].

Manipulation A
… *[empty, control group]*
…a known member of the Aryan Brotherhood prison gang and
…a known member of the Black Guerrilla Family prison gang and

Manipulation B
…credit card fraud
…heroin possession
…armed robbery
…child molestation

Manipulation C
…the inmate *[control group]*
…he asks the inmate: "Please back up to the cell door and put your hands through the slot, so I can handcuff you." The inmate
…he tells the inmate: "Back your ass up to the fucking door and put your hands through the slot so I can handcuff you. Don't give me any shit or I'll make your world a living hell." The inmate

Manipulation D
…sits down and refuses to obey
…cusses and flips his middle finger at
…spits on
…physically charges

Manipulation E
…Pepper sprays the inmate in the eyes
…Tases the inmate with a stun gun

Q5. Acceptable Use of Force (Follow-up Question)

In your view, how acceptable or unacceptable was the correctional officer's behavior in this situation?

1. Very Unacceptable
2. Unacceptable
3. Neutral
4. Acceptable
5. Very Acceptable

Q6. Punishment for Use of Force (Follow-up Question)

What action, if any, should legal authorities take against this correctional officer for his behavior?

1. None
2. Issue a warning to the officer
3. Temporarily move the officer to a position that has no contact with inmates
3. Suspend the officer with pay
4. Suspend the officer without pay
5. Fire the officer, without criminal charges
6. Fire the officers, and press criminal charges against him

Question Stem:

Policymakers concerned with developing effective crime policies need to better understand how people feel about those who commit crimes. We would like your opinion on some of these policies.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. It is important to try to rehabilitate adults who have committed crimes and are now in the correctional system.
2. It is a good idea to provide treatment for offenders who are supervised by the courts and live in the community.
3. Rehabilitation programs should be available even for offenders who have been involved in a lot of crime in their lives.
4. All rehabilitation programs have done is to allow criminals who deserve to be punished to get off easily.
5. I would not support expanding the rehabilitation programs that are now being undertaken in our prisons.
6. Most offenders can go on to lead productive lives with help and hard work.
7. Given the right conditions, a great many offenders can turn their lives around and become law-abiding citizens.
8. Most criminal offenders are unlikely to change for the better.
9. Some offenders are so damaged that they can never lead productive lives.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q8. Moral Foundations—Care/Harm (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. If I saw a mother slapping her child, I would be outraged.
2. It can never be right to kill a human being.
3. Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue.
4. The government must first and foremost protect all people from harm.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q9. Occupational Prestige (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How would you rate the PRESTIGE (or social standing) of each occupation listed below? Please use a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 represents the lowest prestige and 7 represents the highest prestige.

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Correctional Officer
2. Jailer
3. Police Officer
4. Probation Officer
5. Parole Officer
6. Security Guard at a Bank
7. Park Ranger
8. Public Defender
9. College Professor
10. Medical Doctor
11. Computer Scientist
12. Local Delivery Truck Driver
13. Cashier in a supermarket
14. Salesperson in a Furniture Store
15. Factory Worker
16. Bank Teller
17. House Carpenter
18. School Teacher
19. Firefighter
20. Professional Childcare Worker
21. Plumber
22. Electrician
23. Social Worker
24. Mental Health Counselor
25. Substance Abuse Counselor

Response Option in Column:

1. Very Low
2. Low
3. Somewhat Low
4. Medium
5. Somewhat High
6. High
7. Very High

Q10. The Role of Correctional Officers in Prisons (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Correctional officers' primary role should be making sure inmates follow the rules and punishing them when they do not.
2. Correctional officers should not try to get to know inmates but keep at a distance.
3. Correctional officers should focus on supervising inmates and not care about them personally.
4. The main job of a correctional officer is to make sure inmates are watched, fed, and locked in their cells at night.
5. Correctional officers should play an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates.
6. Rehabilitation programs would be better off if correctional officers were more involved with them.
7. A positive relationship between correctional officers and inmates lessens the likelihood that an inmate will reoffend when released.
8. Correctional officers should be trained in how to help inmates become better people.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q11. Confidence in Correctional Officers (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Most correctional officers do their job well.
2. You can count on correctional officers to make decisions that are in inmates' best interests.
3. I have respect for the work correctional officers do.
4. Most correctional officers are honest and trustworthy.
5. Most correctional officers know how to perform their jobs effectively.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q12. Importance of Correctional Officer Goals (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How important of a role do you think correctional officers have in the following:

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Rehabilitating inmates in prison so they can become productive citizens
2. Protecting society by ensuring that inmates remain confined in prison
3. Making sure inmates in prison suffer for their crimes
4. Punishing inmates so they learn that crime does not pay
5. Making prisons more humane

Statement in Column:

1. Not Important
2. Somewhat Important
3. Moderately Important
4. Important
5. Very Important

Q13-Q18. Additional Questions Regarding Corrections and Crime

Questions:

We want to know if you have, or are currently, worked as a correctional officer. Please select the answer that best describes you:
1. I have never worked as a correctional officer.
2. I am currently working as a Correctional officer.
3. I am not currently working as a correctional officer, but I have been one in the past.

Correctional officers and police officers both work within the criminal justice system. Which officers do you think should be PAID more?
1. Police officers—a lot more
2. Police officers—a little more
3. Both should be paid the same
4. Correctional officers—a little more
5. Correctional officers—a lot more

When correctional officers are the MEDIA (e.g., a news story. TV show, movie), how are they usually portrayed?
1. Very Positively
2. Positively
3. Neither Positively nor Negatively
4. Negatively
5. Very Negatively

Over the past five years, has anyone in your household been the victim of a crime?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

How afraid or unafraid are you that someone will try to commit a SERIOUS CRIME (e.g., burglary, assault) against you or a member of your family in the next five years?
1. Very Afraid
2. Afraid
3. Neither Afraid nor Unafraid
4. Unafraid
5. Very Unafraid

Have you ever watched *The Shawshank Redemption* movie starring Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman about inmates in a prison?
1. No, I have never seen this movie.
2. Yes, it is one my favorite movies.
3. Yes, I liked the movie.
4. Yes, I did not like the movie all that much.
5. Yes, I really disliked this movie.

Q19. Personal Relationships with Correctional Officers (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

Do you know any people CURRENTLY EMPLOYED as correctional officers that…

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Are in your family
2. Are good friends
3. Are your neighbors
4. Went to school with you

Statement in Column:

1. Yes
2. No

Q20. Moral Foundations—Authority/Subversion (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Respect for authority is something all children need to learn.
2. When the government makes laws, those laws should always respect the traditions and heritage of the country.
3. People should never curse the founders or early heroes of their country.
4. People should never disrespect their bosses, teachers, or professors.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q21. Acceptance of Correctional Officer Use of Force (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. When inmates are disrespectful, a correctional officer has to rough them up a bit to show them who is boss.
2. Prisons are violent places, and sometimes the only thing an inmate will listen to is a good whipping.
3. If correctional officers aren't willing to get physical, the inmates will think they run the prison.
4. Officers need to stick together and never report a fellow guard who uses a bit of violence to get control of an inmate.
5. If you are not willing to get physical with an inmate, you have no business being a correctional officer.
6. A skilled correctional officer can get inmates to calm down so they don't have to get physical with them.
7. Any correctional officer that uses unnecessary force against inmates should be fired.
8. Physical force should only be used to control an inmate when a correctional officer has no other choice.
9. Just because an inmate "mouths off" in front of other prisoners does not give the officer the right to hit them for being disrespectful.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q22. Punitiveness (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How much do you support or oppose each of these proposed crime policies?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Making sentences more severe for all crimes
2. Increasing the use of the death penalty for murders
3. Increasing the use of mandatory minimum sentencing laws (e.g., an automatic five-year-sentence for drug possession, laws requiring life imprisonment for repeat offenders)
4. Trying more juvenile offenders as adults in adult courts

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Support
2. Support
3. Neither Support nor Oppose
4. Oppose
5. Strongly Oppose

Q23. Racial Resentment (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

Now, thinking about the different racial and ethnic groups in the United States, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. There is a lot of discrimination against Blacks in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead.
2. It is really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder, they could be just as well off as Whites.
3. Irish, Italians, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.
4. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve.
5. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q24. Past Punishment (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

Have you ever been SENTENCED to any of the following punishments for committing a crime?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Community supervision (e.g., probation, electronic monitoring)
2. Incarceration in a local jail (county or community)
3. Incarceration in state or federal prison

Statement in Column:

1. Yes
2. No

Q25. Vicarious Imprisonment (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

Many people have been held in jail or prison for a night or more at some point in their lives. Have any members of the following groups, NOT including yourself, ever been held in jail or prison for one night or longer.

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Your immediate family (e.g., current significant other/romantic partner, parent, brother, sister, children including step, foster, adoptive)
2. Your extended family (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, grandparent)
3. Close friends

Statement in Column:

1. Yes
2. No

Notes:

This experiment randomizes whether respondents are provided with information from a recent news article pertaining to correctional staff misconduct.

Two Experimental Groups (randomly assigned)

1. *Control group: No News Story – just skip to question Q26.*
2. *Treatment Group: Read the News Story Below, then afterward they go to Q26.*

NEWS > NATIONAL NEWS • News

Inside federal prisons, employees are committing the crimes

(Balsamo & Sisak, 2021)

More than 100 federal prison workers have been arrested, convicted or sentenced for crimes since the start of 2019, including a warden indicted for sexual abuse, an associate warden charged with murder, guards taking cash to smuggle drugs and weapons, and supervisors stealing property such as tires and tractors. An Associated Press investigation has found that the federal Bureau of Prisons, with an annual budget of nearly $8 billion, is a hotbed of abuse, graft and corruption, and has turned a blind eye to employees accused of misconduct. In some cases, the agency has failed to suspend officers who themselves had been arrested for crimes.

A correctional officer and drug treatment specialist at a Kentucky prison medical center were charged in July with threatening to kill inmates or their families if they didn't go along with sexual abuse. A California inmate said she "she felt frozen and powerless with fear" when a guard threatened to send her to the "hole" unless she performed a sex act on him. He pleaded guilty in 2019. The Bureau of Prisons has lurched from crisis to crisis in the past few years, from the rampant spread of coronavirus inside prisons and a failed response to the pandemic to dozens of escapes, deaths and critically low staffing levels that have hampered responses to emergencies.

Q26. Views Toward Correctional Reform (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

Below is a list of REFORMS that have been proposed to try to reduce MISCONDUCT by CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS in jails and prisons. How much do you
support or oppose each of these reforms?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Hiring more correctional officers to ensure that prisons are staffed at maximum levels
2. Requiring correctional officers to wear body-worn cameras
3. Requiring correctional officers to take more ethical training (e.g., on sexual harassment)
4. Requiring jails and prisons to have civilian inspection teams that regularly interview inmates about how they are treated by correctional officers
5. Getting rid of qualified immunity, so that correctional officers are personally liable (can be sued for money) if they mistreat inmates
6. Increasing education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices for correctional officers
7. Creating a national, publicly accessible registry of correctional officers who have engaged in misconduct

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Support
2. Support
3. Neither Support nor Oppose
4. Oppose
5. Strongly Oppose

Q27. Experiment on Support for Allowing Sex (Experimental Vignette)

Question Stem:

CONSENSUAL SEX is a sexual act between willing adults—that is, the individuals involved want to have sex with each other. How much do you support or oppose allowing [**Manipulation**] to have consensual sex with each other, while incarcerated?

Manipulation A

1. …INMATES in jails and prisons in America
2. …MALE INMATES in men's jails and prisons in America
3. …FEMALE INMATES in women's jails and prisons in America

Response Options:

1. Strongly Support
2. Support
3. Neither Support nor Oppose
4. Oppose
5. Strongly oppose

Q28. Contingent Valuation of Sex as Punishment (3x4 Experimental Question)

Notes:

This experiment randomizes the punishment and length of sex ban.

Question Stem:

To begin, we want to know how two different things compare in your mind.

[**Manipulation A**]

If you had to choose between receiving this physical punishment or [**Manipulation B**], which would you choose?

Response Options:

1. Physical punishment
2. Giving up sex

Manipulation A (Randomly assign)
1. Please think about experiencing the physical punishment of CANING where you are publicly BEATEN with a half-inch rattan (wooden) cane. Imagine receiving 50 hits.
2. Please think about experiencing the physical punishment of FLOGGING where you are publicly WHIPPED with a leather strap. Imagine receiving 50 lashes.
3. Please think about experiencing the physical punishment of AMPUTATION where you have a part of your body CUT OFF in public. Imagine having your HAND cut off.

Manipulation B (Randomly assign)
1. …being forced to give up SEX for ONE YEAR
2. …being forced to give up SEX for FIVE YEARS
3. …being forced to give up SEX FOREVER—for the remainder of your natural life.

Q29. Perceptions of Consequences of Banning Sex

Question Stem:

How do you think BANNING SEX between inmates affects the frequency of RAPE in jails and prisons?

Response Options:

1. Greatly increases it
2. Increases it
3. Has no effect
4. Decreases it
5. Greatly decreases it

Q30. White Nationalism (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. If Blacks and Hispanics outnumber White Americans in the United States, they will turn it into a weak, second-rate country.
2. Although people won't admit it, White Americans and their culture are what made America great in the first place.
3. America must remain mostly a White nation to remain #1 in the world.
4. We need to keep the U.S. a mostly White nation—which is what God meant it to be.
5. The immigrants now invading our country—and their liberal supporters—want to turn America into a third-world country where White people are a tiny minority.
6. Although everyone is welcome in this county, the number of immigrants allowed in each year must be kept low so America remains a mostly White nation.
7. America is experiencing the Great Replacement: there is a conspiracy to replace White people and White culture with people of color.

Statement in Column:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q31. White Identity (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

We want to know how important each of the following is to you. How important:

Statement in Row (Randomize Ordering):

1. Is being White to your identity?
2. Is it that White people in this country have a lot to be proud of?
3. Is it that Whites in this country feel they have a lot in common with one another?
4. Is that many Whites are unable to find a job because employers are hiring minorities instead?
5. Is it that Whites work together to change laws that are unfair to Whites?

Statement in Column:

1. None at all
2. A little
3. A moderate amount
4. A lot
5. A great deal

Q32. Prison Danger (Matrix Question)

Question Stem:

How dangerous is it to work in a prison?

Response Options

1. Not dangerous
2. A little dangerous
3. Moderately dangerous
4. Dangerous
5. Extremely dangerous

Appendix B.

YouGov Core Profile Items
(Presented as they are shown to respondents)

1. In what year were you born?

2. Are you a male or female?

A. Male
B. Female

3. What racial or ethnic group best describes you?

A. White
B. Black
C. Hispanic/Latino
D. Asian
E. Native American
F. Middle Eastern
G. Mixed Race
H. Other

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

A. No high school degree
B. High school graduate
C. Some college, but no degree (yet)
D. 2-year college degree
E. 4-year college degree
F. Postgraduate degree

5. What is your marital status?

A. Married, living with spouse
B. Separated
C. Divorced
D. Widowed
E. Single, never married
F. Domestic partnership

6a. Thinking back over the last year, what was your family's annual income?

A. Less than $10,000
B. $10,000-$19,999
C. $20,000-$29,999
D. $30,000-$39,999
E. $40,000-$49,999
F. $50,000-$59,999
G. $60,000-$69,999
H. $70,000-$79,999
I. $80,000-$99,999
J. $100,000-$119,999
K. $120,000-$149,999
L. $150,000 or more
M. Prefer not to say

6b. What was your family's annual income last year? (asked if "$150,000 or more" is selected for item 6a)

A. $150,000-$199,999
B. $200,000-$249,999
C. $250,000-$349,999
D. $350,000-$499,999
E. $500,000 or more

7. What is your state of residence?

8a. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a….?

A. Democrat
B. Republican
C. Independent
D. Other
E. Not sure

8b. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or a not very strong Democrat? (asked if "Democrat" is selected for item 8a)

A. Strong Democrat
B. Not very strong Democrat

8c. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or a not very strong Republican? (asked if "Republican" is selected for item 8a)

A. Strong Republican
B. Not very strong Republican

8d. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic or the Republican Party? (asked if "Independent," "Other" or "Not Sure" is selected for item 8a).

A. The Democratic Party
B. The Republican Party
C. Neither
D. Not sure

9. In general, how would you describe your own political viewpoint?

A. Very liberal
B. Liberal
C. Moderate
D. Conservative
E. Very Conservative
F. Not sure

10. How important is religion in your life?

A. Very important
B. Somewhat important
C. Not too important
D. Not at all important

11. Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs….?

A. Most of the time
B. Some of the time
C. Only now and then
D. Hardly at all
E. Don't know

12. What is your employment status?

A. Working full time now
B. Working part time now
C. Temporarily laid off
D. Unemployed
E. Retired
F. Permanently disabled
G. Taking care of home or family
H. Student
I. Other

Appendix C.

Measurement of All Study Variables

Variable: ***CO as Hacks***

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. Most correctional officers work in the prison because nobody else would hire them.
2. Most correctional officers are not very good at their job.
3. Most correctional officers are brutes, who like prisons because they can yell at and beat up inmates.
4. Most correctional officers are corrupt—they would sell drugs, cigarettes, or cell phones to inmates if offered enough money.
5. Most correctional officers try to do as little work as possible.
6. Most correctional officers plan on working in the prison for only a couple of years and have no interest in learning the skills needed to be a professional officer.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: *CO as Heroes*

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. Correctional officers work on the "toughest beat" in the country because their job requires them to cope with many stressors.
2. It takes courage to work in a prison where the risk of being attacked by an inmate is ever-present.
3. Correctional officers are heroes—they play the essential role in our society of making sure that the worst among us do not escape from prison.
4. Correctional officers are professionals who use their skills not only to keep inmates locked up but also to help inmates better themselves while behind bars.
5. Those who work as correctional officers are some of the bravest individuals in society.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: ***Occupational Prestige***

Question Stem:

In terms of your OWN VIEWS, how would you rate the PRESTIGE (or social standing) of each occupation listed below? That is, how much prestige do these occupations deserve?

Items

1. Correctional Officer
2. Jailer
3. Police Officer
4. Probation Officer
5. Parole Officer
6. Security Guard at a Bank
7. Park Ranger
8. Public Defender
9. College Professor
10. Medical Doctor
11. Computer Scientist
12. Local Delivery Truck Driver
13. Cashier in a supermarket
14. Salesperson in a Furniture Store
15. Factory Worker
16. Bank Teller
17. House Carpenter
18. School Teacher
19. Firefighter
20. Professional Childcare Worker
21. Plumber
22. Electrician
23. Social Worker
24. Mental Health Counselor
25. Substance Abuse Counselor

Response Option in Column:

1. Very Low
2. Low
3. Somewhat Low
4. Medium
5. Somewhat High
6. High
7. Very High

Variable: ***Negative Media Portrayal***

Question Stem:

When correctional officers are the MEDIA (e.g., a news story. TV show, movie), how are they usually portrayed?

Response Options

1. Very Positively
2. Positively
3. Neither Positively nor Negatively
4. Negatively
5. Very Negatively

Variable: *CO as Custodian*

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. Correctional officers' primary role in prisons should be making sure inmates follow the rules and punishing them when they do not.
2. Correctional officers should not try to get to know inmates but keep at a distance.
3. Correctional officers should focus on supervising inmates and not care about them personally.
4. The main job of a correctional officer is to make sure inmates are watched, fed, and locked in their cells at night.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: *CO as Treatment Provider*

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. Correctional officers should play an important role in the rehabilitation of inmates in prisons.
2. Rehabilitation programs in prisons would be better off if correctional officers were more involved with them.
3. A positive relationship between correctional officers and inmates in prison lessens the likelihood that an inmate will reoffend when released.
4. Correctional officers should be trained in how to help inmates become better people.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Question Stem

Correctional officers and police officers both work within the criminal justice system. Which officers do you think should be paid more?

Response Options

1. Police officers should be paid a lot more.
2. Police officers should be paid a little more.
3. Both officers should be paid the same.
4. Correctional officers should be paid a little more.
5. Correctional officers should be paid a lot more.

Variable: ***Confidence in COs***
_____

Question Stem:

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

Items

1. Correctional officers do their job well.
2. You can count on correctional officers to make decisions that are in society's best interests.
3. I have respect for the work correctional officers do.
4. Most correctional officers are honest and trustworthy.
5. Most correctional officers know how to perform their jobs effectively.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: ***Importance of COs***

Question Stem:

How important of a role do you think correctional officers have in the following:

Items

1. Rehabilitating inmates in prison to reduce crime
2. Protecting public safety by ensuring that inmates are confined securely and safely
3. Making sure inmates in prison suffer for their crimes
4. Making prisons more humane
5. Showing inmates how to be law-abiding people

Response Options

1. Not Important
2. Somewhat Important
3. Moderately Important
4. Important
5. Very Important

Variable: ***Acceptance of CO Force***

Question Stem:

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

Items

1. When inmates are disrespectful, a correctional officer has to rough them up a bit to show them who is boss.
2. Prisons are violent places, and sometimes the only thing an inmate will listen to is a good whipping.
3. If correctional officers aren't willing to get physical, the inmates will think they run the prison.
4. Officers need to stick together and never report a fellow guard who uses a bit of violence to get control of an inmate.
5. If you are not willing to get physical with an inmate, you have no business being a correctional officer.
6. A skilled correctional officer can get inmates to calm down so they don't have to get physical with them.
7. Any correctional officer that uses unnecessary force against inmates should be fired.
8. Just because an inmate "mouths off" in front of other prisoners does not give the officer the right to hit them for being disrespectful.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

> ➢ Manipulations will be randomized.

Introductory Text:

Below, a hypothetical encounter between a correctional officer and inmate in a prison is described. We would like to know what you think about the correctional officer's behavior in this encounter. Please read the text below and then answer the questions that follow.

A CORRECTIONAL OFFICER is asked by his supervisor to REMOVE AN INMATE from his cell. The inmate is [**Manipulation A**] currently serving time for [**Manipulation B**]. When the officer arrives at the cell, [**Manipulation C**] [**Manipulation D**] the officer. In response, the officer [**Manipulation E**].

Manipulation A
… *[empty, control group]*
…a known member of the Aryan Brotherhood prison gang and
…a known member of the Black Guerrilla Family prison gang and

Manipulation B
…credit card fraud
…heroin possession
…armed robbery
…child molestation

Manipulation C
…the inmate *[control group]*
…he asks the inmate: "Please back up to the cell door and put your hands through the slot, so I can handcuff you." The inmate
…he tells the inmate: "Back your ass up to the fucking door and put your hands through the slot so I can handcuff you. Don't give me any shit or I'll make your world a living hell." The inmate

Manipulation D
…sits down and refuses to obey
…cusses and flips his middle finger at
…spits on
…physically charges and throws poop at

Manipulation E
…Pepper sprays the inmate in the eyes
…Tases the inmate with a stun gun

Variable: ***Acceptable Force*** **(asked immediately after the above vignette)**

In your view, how acceptable or unacceptable was the correctional officer's behavior in this situation?

1. Very Unacceptable
2. Unacceptable
3. Neutral
4. Acceptable
5. Very Acceptable

Variable: ***Punishing Force*** **(asked immediately after the above vignette)**

What action, if any, should legal authorities take against this correctional officer for his behavior?

1. None
2. Issue a warning to the officer
3. Temporarily move the officer to a position that has no contact with inmates
4. Suspend the officer with pay
5. Suspend the officer without pay
6. Fire the officer, without criminal charges
7. Fire the officer, and press criminal charges against him

Priming Experiment (The below story is to be shown to 50% of the sample)

Notes:

This experiment randomizes whether respondents are provided with information from a recent news article pertaining to correctional staff misconduct.

Two Experimental Groups (randomly assigned)

3. *Control group: No News Story – just skip to question Q32.*
4. *Treatment Group: Read the News Story Below, then afterward they go to Q32.*

Inside federal prisons, employees are committing the crimes

(Balsamo & Sisak, 2021)

More than 100 federal prison workers have been arrested, convicted or sentenced for crimes since the start of 2019, including a warden indicted for sexual abuse, an associate warden charged with murder, guards taking cash to smuggle drugs and weapons, and supervisors stealing property such as tires and tractors. An Associated Press investigation has found that the federal Bureau of Prisons, with an annual budget of nearly $8 billion, is a hotbed of abuse, graft and corruption, and has turned a blind eye to employees accused of misconduct. In some cases, the agency has failed to suspend officers who themselves had been arrested for crimes.

A correctional officer and drug treatment specialist at a Kentucky prison medical center were charged in July with threatening to kill inmates or their families if they didn't go along with sexual abuse. A California inmate said she "she felt frozen and powerless with fear" when a guard threatened to send her to the "hole" unless she performed a sex act on him. He pleaded guilty in 2019. The Bureau of Prisons has lurched from crisis to crisis in the past few years, from the rampant spread of coronavirus inside prisons and a failed response to the pandemic to dozens of escapes, deaths and critically low staffing levels that have hampered responses to emergencies.

Variable: ***Reducing Misconduct in CO Occupation***

Question Stem:

Below is a list of REFORMS that have been proposed to try to reduce MISCONDUCT by CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS in jails and prisons. How much do you
support or oppose each of these reforms?

Items

1. Requiring correctional officers to wear body-worn cameras
2. Requiring correctional officers to take more ethical training (e.g., on sexual harassment)
3. Requiring jails and prisons to have civilian inspection teams that regularly interview inmates about how they are treated by correctional officers
4. Getting rid of qualified immunity, so that correctional officers are personally liable (can be sued for money) if they mistreat inmates
5. Increasing education requirements and pre-hiring screening practices for correctional officers
6. Creating a national, publicly accessible registry of correctional officers who have engaged in misconduct

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: *Racial Resentment*

Question Stem:

Now, thinking about the different racial and ethnic groups in the United States, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. There is a lot of discrimination against Blacks in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead.
2. It is really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder, they could be just as well off as Whites.
3. Irish, Italians, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.
4. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve.
5. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. If Blacks and Hispanics outnumber White Americans in the United States, they will turn it into a weak, second-rate country.
2. Although people won't admit it, White Americans and their culture are what made America great in the first place.
3. America must remain mostly a White nation to remain #1 in the world.
4. We need to keep the U.S. a mostly White nation—which is what God meant it to be.
5. The immigrants now invading our country—and their liberal supporters—want to turn America into a third-world country where White people are a tiny minority.
6. Although everyone is welcome in this county, the number of immigrants allowed in each year must be kept low so America remains a mostly White nation.
7. America is experiencing the Great Replacement: there is a conspiracy to replace White people and White culture with people of color.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: ***Punitiveness***

Question Stem:

How much do you support or oppose each of these proposed crime policies?

Items

1. Making sentences more severe for all crimes
2. Increasing the use of the death penalty for murders
3. Increasing the use of mandatory minimum sentence laws, like "Three Strikes," for repeat offenders
4. Trying more juvenile offenders as adults in adult courts

Response Options

1. Strongly Support
2. Support
3. Neither Support nor Oppose
4. Oppose
5. Strongly Oppose

Question Stem:

Policymakers concerned with developing effective crime policies need to better understand how people feel about those who commit crimes. We would like your opinion on some of these policies.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Items

1. It is important to try to rehabilitate adults who have committed crimes and are now in the correctional system.
2. It is a good idea to provide treatment for offenders who are supervised by the courts and live in the community.
3. Rehabilitation programs should be available even for offenders who have been involved in a lot of crime in their lives.
4. All rehabilitation programs have done is to allow criminals who deserve to be punished to get off easily.
5. I would not support expanding the rehabilitation programs that are now being undertaken in our prisons.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: ***Belief in Redeemability***

Question Stem:

Policymakers concerned with developing effective crime policies need to better understand how people feel about those who commit crimes. We would like your opinion on some of these policies.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Items

1. Most offenders can go on to lead productive lives with help and hard work.
2. Given the right conditions, a great many offenders can turn their lives around and become law-abiding citizens.
3. Most criminal offenders are unlikely to change for the better.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: ***Moral Care/Harm***

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. If I saw a mother slapping her child, I would be outraged.
2. It can never be right to kill a human being.
3. Compassion for those who are suffering is the most crucial virtue.
4. The government must first and foremost protect all people from harm.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: *Moral Authority/Subversion*

Question Stem:

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Items

1. Respect for authority is something all children need to learn.
2. When the government makes laws, those laws should always respect the traditions and heritage of the country.
3. People should never curse the founders or early heroes of their country.
4. People should never disrespect their bosses, teachers, or professors.

Response Options

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Variable: *Fear of Crime*

Question Stem:

How afraid or unafraid are you that someone will try to commit a SERIOUS CRIME (e.g., burglary, assault) against you or a member of your family in the next five years?

Response Options

1. Very afraid
2. Afraid
3. Neither afraid nor unafraid
4. Unafraid
5. Very unafraid

Variable: ***Prison Danger***

Question Stem:

How dangerous is it to work in a prison?

Response Options

1. Not dangerous
2. A little dangerous
3. Moderately dangerous
4. Dangerous
5. Extremely dangerous

Variable: ***Prior Victimization***

Question Stem:

Over the past five years, has anyone in your household been the victim of a crime?

Response Options

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

Variable: *% Black Prisoners*

Question Stem:

Out of every 100 people who are IN PRISON OR JAIL in this country, what number do you think are BLACK?

Response Options

Please enter a number from 0 to 100: ___

Variable: *% Violent Prisoners*

Question Stem:

Out of every 100 people who are IN PRISON OR JAIL in this country, what number do you think are serving time for a VIOLENT offense?

Response Options

Please enter a number from 0 to 100: ___

Variable: ***Personal Employment***

Question Stem:

We want to know if you have, or are currently, worked as a correctional officer. Please select the answer that best describes you:

Response Options

1. I have never worked as a correctional officer.
2. I am currently working as a Correctional officer.
3. I am not currently working as a correctional officer, but I have been one in the past.

Variable: ***Personal Relationship with CO***

Question Stem:

Do you know any people CURRENTLY EMPLOYED as correctional officers that…

Items

1. Are in your family
2. Are good friends
3. Are your neighbors
4. Went to school with you

Response Options

1. Yes
2. No

Variable: ***Visited Prison***

Question Stem

Have you ever visited anyone in prison?

Response Options

1. Yes
2. No

Variable: ***Past Punishment***

Question Stem:

Have you ever been SENTENCED to any of the following punishments for committing a crime?

Items

1. Community supervision (e.g., probation, electronic monitoring)
2. Incarceration in a local jail (county or community)
3. Incarceration in state or federal prison

Response Options

1. Yes
2. No

Variable: ***Vicarious Imprisonment***

Question Stem:

Many people have been held in jail or prison for a night or more at some point in their lives. Have any members of the following groups, NOT including yourself, ever been held in jail or prison for one night or longer.

Items

1. Your immediate family (e.g., current significant other/romantic partner, parent, brother, sister, children including step, foster, adoptive)
2. Your extended family (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, grandparent)
3. Close friend

Response Options

1. Yes
2. No