

AN EXAMINATION OF NON-STRUCTURAL
DETERMINANTS OF ALIENATION IN THE
PRISON COMMUNITY

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The Metropolitan Criminal Justice Center operates the Pilot City program in Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Virginia Beach, Virginia. Established in September, 1971, the Center is a research and program planning and development component of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Center's Pilot City program is one of eight throughout the nation funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the U. S. Department of Justice. The basic purpose of each Pilot City project is to assist local jurisdictions in the design and establishment of various programs, often highly innovative and experimental in nature, which will contribute over a period of years to the development of a model criminal justice system. Each Pilot City team is also responsible for assuring comprehensive evaluation of such programs, for assisting the development of improved criminal justice planning ability within the host jurisdictions, and for providing technical assistance to various local agencies when requested.

The Pilot City Program has two primary responsibilities -- to the host municipalities and to the improvement of the criminal justice system. In Virginia, responsibility for adult corrections, except for offenders sentenced for one year or less to local jails, rests entirely with the State Department of Welfare and Institutions. Thus the Pilot City Program's activities in the adult corrections area consist primarily of program planning assistance to local correctional efforts and research regarding such currently important issues in Virginia as sentencing procedures and criteria, community corrections, and institutional programming and management (as reflected in this monograph).

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A rapidly growing body of theoretical and empirical literature has related adaptations to confinement in correctional settings to such variables as social background characteristics of the inmates (Schrag, 1961; Irwin and Cressey, 1962; Ward and Kassebaum, 1965; Glaser, 1964; Giallombardo, 1966; Wellford, 1967; Irwin, 1970; Tittle, 1972; Thomas, 1973; Thomas and Foster, 1973), criminal career variables (Schrag, 1961; Irwin and Cressey, 1962; Wellford, 1967; Gibbons, 1968; Irwin, 1970; Thomas, 1973), structural characteristics of the institutional setting (Grusky, 1959; Zald, 1962; Glaser, 1964; Street, 1965; Berk, 1966; Street, Vinter, and Perrow, 1966; Cline, 1968; Wilson, 1968; Mathiesen, 1971; Akers, Hayner, and Gruniger, 1972), length of sentence and proportion of sentence served (Clemmer, 1940, 1951; Wheeler, 1961; Garabedian, 1963; Glaser, 1964; Wellford, 1967; Atchley and McCabe, 1968; Wilson, 1968), extent and type of contact with the larger society during the period of confinement (Clemmer, 1940, 1951; Thomas, 1973; Thomas and Foster, 1973; Zingraff, 1973), the inmates' perceptions of their probable postrelease life-chances (Wheeler, 1961; Garabedian, 1963; Glaser, 1964; Wellford, 1967; Thomas and Foster, 1972, Thomas, 1973), types of social role adaptations that inmates assume within the structure of the inmate society (Schrag, 1944, 1961; Sykes, 1958; Garabedian, 1963; Irwin and Cressey, 1962; Giallom-

bardo, 1966; Wellford, 1967; Edwards, 1970; Thomas and Foster, 1972, 1973), inter-personal contacts within the prison (Clemmer, 1940; Wheeler, 1961; Wilson, 1968; Tittle, 1972), and the alienative effects of confinement (Tittle, 1964; Wilson, 1968; Tittle, 1969; Thomas and Miller, 1971; Neal, Snyder, and Balogh, 1974).

The alienation of the inmate population appears to be a particularly crucial consideration in the maximum security institutions with a coercive organizational structure (cf. McCorkle and Korn, 1954; Goffman, 1961; Wilson, 1968). Most of the research has focused on the process of assimilation into the inmate society, a process which Clemmer (1940:291) termed prisonization. This has led most researchers to examine alienation only as an independent variable. Nevertheless, the examination of the determinants of alienation in prison settings is clearly an important topic for research because an understanding of factors that promote alienation are of interest in their own right and because alienation of inmates has been shown to be a sound predictor of their assimilation into what is typically an oppositional inmate normative system (Tittle, 1964; Thomas and Miller, 1971; Tittle, 1972; Thomas and Zingraff, 1974).

At least two types of research are required. First, there is a need for thorough comparative analyses of prison organizations which will allow us to expand our understanding of the differential consequences of confinement along the

spectrum from custodial to treatment-oriented institutions. Such analyses would, among other benefits, help identify the extent to which variations in organizational structures may alter the level of alienation among the inmate population.

Second, in addition to the critical importance of the organizational variable, studies of single prison organizations remain an important means of exploring the factors which contribute to differential levels of alienation within a specific prison organization. Differential organizational structures will not account for all of the variance in those variables that are of interest; there are ample reasons to expect important within-organization differences (cf. Wilson, 1968). Indeed, if the structural variable were all-important, there would be no such within-institution variation other than that attributable to variations in the perceptions of those who are confined within the organization. Thus non-structural variables may be important predictors of alienation.

A more thorough understanding of the non-structural determinants and consequences of alienation can be expected to come from two types of research. In comparative organizational studies the structural variable can be held constant, thereby allowing the examination of the determinants and consequences of alienation within a homogeneous type of organizational setting. Second, a series of studies of single prisons can be conducted in an attempt to accumulate the same type of knowledge. The comparative approach will, of course, do

everything that the single institution study can, and in addition provide the numerous advantages inherent in comparative designs. But few researchers have access to the resources of time, funding, and personnel required to execute comparative analyses properly. Thus, much of our knowledge will continue to be derived from the cumulative impact of single case studies. There is little disadvantage in such an approach so long as researchers who examine single prison organizations frame their research questions in a way appropriate for the type of design they are executing.

Given these considerations, our purpose in this paper will be to examine a number of theoretically significant determinants of alienation among inmates confined in a coercively-oriented maximum security penitentiary. Although we are not able to focus on that aspect of alienation directly attributable to confinement in this type of organization, we can explore the hypothesis that the variation in the levels of alienation experienced by the inmates in our sample is influenced by a broad spectrum of variables not immediately given simply by the characteristics of the organization itself. Specifically, our goal is to examine the possible effects of five sets of potential determinants of alienation: social background characteristics, criminal career variables, extent of contact with the larger society during periods of incarceration, postrelease life-chances as perceived by the inmates, and duration of exposure to the various influences of prison life.

Moreover, we will attempt to explicate the relative importance of each of these potential influences.

THEORETICAL MODEL

Two general theoretical paradigms have been developed in earlier attempts to account for the consequences of imprisonment: the "deprivation model" and the "importation model" (cf. Cline, 1968; Thomas, 1970; Tittle, 1972). Both models have focused on variations in the degree of prisonization or on the consequences of that process, but their logic is equally appropriate for considerations of the determinants of alienation. Indeed, it has been argued that many of the variables described in both theoretical models influence the prisonization process through their potential to stimulate increased levels of alienation which, in turn, promotes increased prisonization. (Thomas and Miller, 1971; Thomas and Zingraff, 1974).

Of the two perspectives, the deprivation model is clearly the better developed (Sykes, 1958; Sykes and Messinger, 1960; Mathiesen, 1968). The basic assertions of the model may be briefly reviewed. Inmates enter prison organizations having already been exposed to the degradations associated with arrest, trial, and conviction. Upon their entry into the prison they are exposed to still another set of experiences which tend to reaffirm their status as rejected members of the larger society. They are stripped of personal possessions, individual decision-making prerogative, and many legal rights and otherwise deprived of their identity as individuals. Moreover, by

virtue of their status as inmates, they must confront the numerous other problems and pressures associated with confinement including the deprivation of heterosexual contacts and of freedom of movement, the need to learn to live in the midst of potentially if not actually hostile and aggressive individuals, the loss of self-esteem, and feelings of rejection and isolation (McCorkle and Korn, 1954; Sykes, 1958; Garfinkel, 1956; Sykes and Messinger, 1960; Goffman, 1961). Each of these problems must be resolved or accomodated to, but the individual inmate is ill-equipped to affect a resolution by himself. But he is not by himself. Although the coercive structure of the prison organization typically limits or eliminates the opportunity to resolve problems with the cooperation of the prison staff, the inmate quickly turns to his fellow inmates for most or all supportive contacts. Thus, the foundation for the emergence of an adaptive inmate subculture is present. The greater the duration of exposure to the influences of this subculture as well as those linked to the prison organization, the greater the impact upon the inmate. In short, the deprivation model provides a structural-functional explanation of the dynamics of prison life. The collective response to a broad spectrum of problems, once institutionalized, provides the normative framework for a continuing subculture into which subsequent generations of inmates are encouraged to assimilate for their own sake and as a further contribution to the resolution of problems that cannot be effectively handled through individual responses.

The closed-system character of the deprivation model has not escaped criticism (cf. Irwin and Cressey, 1962; Wellford, 1967; Thomas, 1970; Thomas and Foster, 1972, 1973; Tittle, 1972). On a purely logical level, the deprivation model is unable to account for the seemingly inevitable emergence of what is typically described as a negative, oppositional, and antisocial sub-culture, particularly in coercively-oriented institutions. The presence of common problems of adjustment may be viewed as a sufficient condition for some kind of response, but certainly not for a specific response. Second, as we have noted earlier, numerous empirical examinations have shown that variables far removed from the immediate context of the prison may have a considerable influence on the quality of adaptations made by prison inmates.

These logical and empirical challenges to the adequacy of the deprivation model have done much to stimulate the development of a considerably broader conceptualization of responses to imprisonment, the importation model. Unlike the deprivation model, with its primary focus on the prison setting and the problems which this setting presents to the inmate population, the importation model suggests that the form of adaptations made to confinement are both conditioned by the preprison socialization of the inmates and mediated by the quality of their contacts with the larger society during the period of their confinement and their perceived postrelease life-chances. Proponents of the importation model have noted, for example, striking similarities between descriptions of the

normative system characteristic of many lower socioeconomic brackets and discussions of the "inmate code." (e.g., compare Sykes and Messinger, 1960, with Miller, 1958). It seems quite probable that the inmate code may in many ways be a relatively slight modification of the normative system into which many inmates were socialized prior to their confinement. Further, the importation model notes that many problems which push inmates toward whatever support is to be found within the inmate society are far removed from the prison. For example, the inability to maintain meaningful and supportive contacts with friends and relatives, the loss of one's capacity to provide support for a family, and the fear of not being able to reintegrate into the larger society upon release all represent problems that may be added onto the existing burden of confinement, and these additions may be capable of accounting for substantial proportions of the variations noted in responses to confinement. Thus, the broader scope of the importation model and its greater emphasis on social processes rather than static structures provide a more inclusive theoretical framework for explaining the inmate normative system.

The basic tenets of both the deprivation and the importation models are directly relevant to our immediate interest in the potential determinants of alienation that are not directly linked to the structure of the prison organization. It is likely that some inmates are more likely to be alienated before their entry into the prison than are others. (For example, younger inmates may be more likely to be alienated than older inmates,

blacks more than whites, those from urban areas more than those from small communities, those with low educational levels more than those who are relatively well-educated.) Indeed, variables normally included among preprison experiences have already been identified with alienation in other types of research. Further, other types of preprison experiences associated with participation in criminal behavior systems prior to confinement should also correlate with alienation because they reflect a level of detachment or estrangement from the dominant norms and values of the larger society. Equally important, during an inmate's period of confinement there are potential determinants of alienation which are both removed from and in many ways beyond the control of the prison organization. Two possible examples are the consequences of having interpersonal ties with those in the larger society broken or strained by incarceration and the effects of anticipating serious problems of reintegration into the larger society upon release. The importation model suggests that these several sets of preprison and extraprison factors may be expected to alter the levels of alienation experienced by prison inmates regardless of the type of organizational structure within which they are confined. The deprivation model suggests that the greater the duration of exposure to the influences of the inmate society and the problems created by the organizational structure of the prison, the greater the level of alienation which must be dealt with by the inmate.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In order to explore potential sources of alienation among prison inmates, we will examine data obtained from a systematic random sample of inmates who were confined in a maximum security institution for adult male felons in Virginia in 1970. Of the 810 inmates permanently assigned to the working population, 405 were selected for inclusion in the sample. This initial sample was supplemented through the inclusion of an additional 37 inmates who were confined in a maximum security cell block within the institution. When the data collection began a number of those in the sample were unavailable for contact for such reasons as their having been transferred to another institution, illness, and conflicts with institutional work schedules that could not be avoided. Of the 401 inmates who were available for contact, properly completed questionnaires were obtained from 336 (83.8 percent of those available). Additional information on each of these inmates was required, and we were permitted full access to the institutional records. In matching the questionnaire data with the records, however, we found sufficiently large deviations between self-reported and official records data on 43 cases (13.8 percent of those who had completed their questionnaire) that their responses are not included in this analysis. Thus, our report is based on data obtained from 276 inmates for whom both complete questionnaire and adequate records data were available (68.8 percent of our sample of 401 cases).

The operational measures of the variables that are included in our analysis are described below.

Powerlessness. Of the several dimensions of alienation described by Seeman (1959) and others, powerlessness, defined as a general feeling of helplessness and subordination to the power that is invested in others, appears to best reflect the dimension of alienation that is of the greatest theoretical significance in research on confined populations. The degree of powerlessness was measured through a modification of the scale described by Neal and Rettig (1967). From the initial pool of items, final item selections in this and the other attitudinal measures described below were accomplished by correlating each item score with the summated scale score of the scale in which it appeared. Unless the item-to-scale-score correlation was significant at the .001 confidence level, the item was not included in the final scale. The higher the scale score on this variable, the lower the level of alienation. The mean of the final six-item Likert-type measure is 13.53, and the standard deviation is 5.00.

Preprison Influences. Previous research on alienation suggests the need to examine the potential associations between a number of social background and demographic characteristics that include race, size of city of residence prior to incarceration, age, educational attainment, marital status, and social class of origin as reflected by the occupational status of the inmate's father. The nominal nature of our measures of race, residence,

and marital status led us to treat them as dichotomous dummy variables in our analysis. Our expectations are that blacks, those from urban areas, those who are relatively young, less well-educated, unmarried, and who are from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds will be more alienated than others.

Criminal Career Variables. Those who have been involved in behavior which led to official reactions from social control agencies are expected to be more alienated than those without such experiences. Our measures of this type of influence include self-reported age at first arrest, first court appearance and first conviction.

Extraprison Contacts. The extent to which an individual is able to sustain relationships with associates in the larger society during his period of confinement should reduce his level of estrangement and feelings of rejection and isolation. We employ a self-reported measure of number of letters received and number of letters written as an index of the extent of contact with the larger society.

Postprison Expectations. We would anticipate that inmates who anticipate their release from prison with apprehension and fear will be more alienated than those who feel they can approach release with considerable self-confidence. A nine-item Likert-type scale provides our measure of this variable. The higher the scale score, the more positive the postprison expectations. The mean of the scale is 39.71 with a standard deviation of 9.54.

Temporal Variables. Many previous studies have investigated the importance of the variable of the amount of time spent in incarceration. In some research time has been shown to be an important predictor of such dependent variables as levels of prisonization (cf. Clemmer, 1940; Wheeler, 1961); in others, including a recently completed study of the relationship between time in prison and alienation (Neal, Snyder, and Balogh, 1974), time variables have not been noted as significant influences (cf. Atchley and McCabe, 1968). In an attempt to resolve this issue with some degree of confidence, we have included a series of four measures of the influence of time on alienation: the total time spent in prison on this and previous sentences, the total length of this sentence, the total amount of time served on this sentence, and the proportion of the total time on this sentence that had already been served.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In order to evaluate the initial degree of association between each of the several predictor variables and level of alienation we constructed an intercorrelation matrix. Such a simplistic approach, however, does not allow the resolution of several important questions. First, which of the several sets of variables account for the greatest proportion of variance in the dependent variable? Second, which of the variables within each set of variables facilitates the best variance explanation? Third, to what extent can we improve our predic-

tions of alienation by taking into account the best predictors from each of the several sets of independent variables?

Despite criticisms from advocates of the so-called "school of 'weak measurement' theorists" (Baker, Hardyck, and Petrinovich, 1966: 291), the use of multiple regression analysis seems ideally suited for such a problem even though assumptions with regard to level of measurement are necessarily violated. The importance of such a violation, while still a disputed point, does not seem nearly as acute as many have suspected (cf. Lord, 1953; Burke, 1953; Anderson, 1961; Boneau, 1960; Baker, Hardyck and Petrinovich, 1966; Kerlinger and Pedhazur, 1973). Thus, we have employed multiple regression techniques in this analysis as a means of resolving the questions posed in the previous paragraph.

	x 1	x 2	x 3	x 4	x 5	x 6	x 7	x 8	x 9	x 10	x 11	x 12	x 13	x 14	x 15	x 16	x 17
x 1	1.0	.080	-.130	-.110	-.034	.291	-.085	-.099	-.099	.017	-.148	.050	-.040	-.094	-.123	-.061	-.094
x 2		1.000	-.198	.169	.176	-.194	-.135	-.172	-.178	-.119	.038	.171	-.171	-.042	.101	-.123	-.022
x 3			1.000	-.258	-.217	.106	.399	.410	.422	.349	.128	.241	.391	-.077	-.095	.142	-.156
x 4				1.000	.138	-.413	-.008	-.002	-.001	-.151	.095	-.186	-.114	.146	.190	.067	.290
x 5					1.000	-.031	-.141	-.152	-.113	-.055	-.003	.071	.056	-.047	-.076	-.063	-.004
x 6						1.000	-.044	-.051	-.031	.062	.051	.094	.157	-.158	-.134	-.102	-.291
x 7							1.000	.963	.929	-.070	-.059	.027	-.109	.044	-.002	-.129	.059
x 8								1.000	.966	-.061	-.034	.017	-.121	.053	.003	.116	.043
x 9									1.000	-.162	-.044	.034	-.108	.057	.053	.148	.048
x 10										1.000	.225	.167	-.035	-.092	-.123	-.047	-.004
x 11											1.000	-.451	.343	.093	-.040	-.105	.011
x 12												1.000	.505	-.068	-.034	.162	-.065
x 13													1.000	-.035	-.120	.065	-.094
x 14														1.000	.390	.135	.168
x 15															1.000	.196	.197
x 16																1.000	.251
x 17																	1.000

x₁ = ethnicity
x₂ = size of city
x₃ = age
x₄ = education
x₅ = marital status
x₆ = social class of origin
x₇ = age at first arrest
x₈ = age at first court appearance
x₉ = age at first conviction

x₁₀ = total number of years spent in prison on all charges
x₁₁ = number of letters received per week
x₁₂ = number of letters written per month
x₁₃ = postprison expectations
x₁₄ = powerlessness scale
x₁₅ = proportion of sentence served
x₁₆ = sentence
x₁₇ = time served this sentence

Table 1 shows that only a relatively small number of the independent variables are significantly correlated with levels of powerlessness. The only significant variables from the preprison set are education level and social class of origin; from the extraprisson set, number of letters written and number of letters received; and postprison expectations. Still, in order to examine these findings more systematically, a series of four multiple regression equations were calculated, one for the effect of preprison influences on powerlessness; one for the criminal career variable influences; one for a combination of the two extraprisson contact variables and postprison expectations; and one for the influence of the four temporal variables. Each of the four equations is given below:

Preprison Influences

Equation (1)* $X_1 = 18.83 + -.064X_1 + -.057X_2 + -.157X_3 + 2.54X_4 + -.009X_5 + -.210X_6$

Criminal Career Variables

Equation (2) $X_1 = 14.234 + .540X_7 + -1.389X_8 + .820X_9$

Temporal Variables

Equation (3) $X_1 = 14.987 + -.130X_{10} + .090X_{11} + -.025X_{12} + -.058X_{13}$

* A stepwise solution was employed for each of the equations reported in this analysis. X_1 = ethnicity; X_2 = size of city; X_3 = age; X_4 = education; X_5 = marital status; X_6 = social class of origin; X_7 = age of first arrest; X_8 = age at first court appearance; X_9 = age at first conviction; X_{10} = total number of years spent in prison on all charges; X_{11} = number of letters received per week; X_{12} = number of letters written per month; X_{13} = postprison expectations; X_{14} = powerlessness scale; X_{15} = proportion of sentence served; X_{16} = sentence; X_{17} = time served this sentence.

Extraprison Contacts

Equation (4) $X_1 = 8.311 + .191X_{15} + .061X_{16}$

No single variable nor single set of variables accounts for more than a relatively small proportion of the variance in levels of alienation. The multiple correlations for equations 1 through 4 respectively are .460, .211, .183, and .261. Further, when the results of F-tests on each of the regression coefficients in each of the equations were examined, we found that most were not significant at our predetermined confidence level of .01. This fact is amply attested to by the fact that the effect of one variable, number of letters received, was so insignificant that it was not even included in the equation. In addition, not one of the F-tests on the four alternate measures of temporal influences yielded significant results. We are at something of a loss to provide an interpretation of both the small amount of variance that is attributable to each set of variables or of the fact that some variables, particularly those that reflect measures of temporal influences, seem to be almost totally insignificant. Still, it is important to examine the proportion of variance in alienation that can be accounted for when the best predictors from each set of variables are merged into a single equation. Thus, we elected to take each of the variables from Equations 1 through 4 whose regression coefficients were significant at the .01 confidence level in order to construct an equation which would determine the total amount of variance in alienation that can be accounted

for by preprison, criminal career, extraprisson contact,
postprison expectation and temporal variables.

COMBINED PREDICTIONS

Equation (5) $X_1 = 14.242 + -.265X_3 + .189X_4 + -.196X_6 +$
 $.124X_8 + .055X_{15} + .107X_{16}$

As we noted in our examination of the regression equations which included the variables from each of the several sets of influences, our overall equation which incorporates what appeared to be the best predictors from each set of predictors does not provide us with the means to account for a very large proportion of the variance in X_1 , our measure of the powerlessness dimension of alienation. The multiple correlation coefficient produced by this equation was .442, indicating that the combined effects of variables from several theoretically meaningful sets of variables can account for some 19.6 percent of the variance in the alienation variable. Further, two of the variables in the equation, X_{15} and X_{16} , did not produce significant regression coefficients. In order to determine the relative importance of the remaining four variables, a final set of stepwise equations were computed in such a way as to force each of the four predictor variables into the equation as the last element, i.e. to allow the initial three variables to account for as much of the variation in alienation as they could and then checking to determine our estimate of the unique contribution of the fourth variable.

This series of equations showed that X_6 , social class of

origin, was the most important variable in Equation 5; X_4 , self-reported level of educational attainment, was the next most important predictor; X_3 , age, was the third most important factor; and X_8 , age at first court appearance, was the least important predictor.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Two alternative theoretical perspectives, the importation and the deprivation models, have been developed in attempts to account for variations in responses to confinement among inmate populations. A major difference between the two approaches is the relatively greater emphasis in the importation model on the influence of variables other than the immediate institutional context. In our analysis we have attempted to focus attention on what would appear to be a critically important dimension of confinement: the extent to which the inmates experience high levels of alienation. Although alienation has often been utilized as a predictor of other important dependent variables in analyses of prisons, particularly as a predictor of levels of prisonization, little research has focused on an examination of the determinants of alienation itself. This is perhaps due to the fact that prisonization has been linked to alienation as well as to variables which are a part of the prison setting and to others which represent the effects of extraprison influences. Such findings, however, do not necessarily mean that the same factors which determine prisonization are also causally related to alienation. Thus,

we selected what would appear to be theoretically significant predictors of alienation from several sets of relevant factors: social background and demographic variables in the preprison experience of the inmates, criminal career variables, extraprisson contact variables, postprison expectations, and several measures of temporal influence.

In our analysis we designed several multiple regression equations which would resolve two basic questions. First, to what degree is alienation linked to the influences of any one set of predictor variables? Second, to what extent can we improve our ability to account for alienation when we take into account the most significant influences from each set of predictor variables? Our findings were a disappointment in that we expected that variables included in our analysis would account for a substantial proportion of the variance in alienation. Clearly this was not the case. Preprison variables account for more of the explained variance than do those from any other set, and some importance may be ascribed to both criminal career variables and extraprisson influences. Length of time served, total length of sentence, total amount of time served on this and other sentences, and the proportion of this sentence served are almost totally unrelated to levels of alienation.

Our analysis shows that the importation model, while perhaps of considerable utility in other regards, does little to account for the alienation of inmates in the maximum secur-

ity institution within which this research was conducted. Indeed, using the best predictors of alienation that we could derive from a pool of sixteen independent variables, we were only able to attribute some 19.6 percent of the variance in levels of alienation to influences closely associated with importation model propositions. This finding raises two possibilities. First, it is possible that we simply failed to include measures of influences not related to the prison context that would, had they been included, have allowed far better predictions of alienation. Quite frankly, that does not appear to be very probable. Second, it is also possible that the most significant influence on levels of alienation among inmates who are confined in institutions of this type are specific to the prison organization, a possibility that is central to the deprivation model. Were we forced to choose between these two alternative explanations, and our choice is necessarily speculative given the absence of appropriate measurements, we would hypothesize that a substantial proportion of the unexplained variance can be attributed to structural pressures inherent in the adoption of the coercive type of organizational form exemplified by a maximum security penitentiary. This, were it to be supported in adequate comparative analyses, would lead to the additional conclusion frequently argued in the existing literature that the adoption of a coercive organization structure will create at least as many problems for those responsible for such institutions as it can possibly resolve.

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