

Crime Prevention and Security Management

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Martin Gill

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Andrew Goldsmith • Mark Halsey • Andrew Groves

Tackling Correctional Corruption

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Andrew Goldsmith
Flinders University
Adelaide, Australia

Mark Halsey
Flinders University
Adelaide, Australia

Andrew Groves
Deakin University
Burwood, Australia

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Series Editor's Introduction

In this book Andrew Goldsmith, Mark Halsey and Andrew Groves present and evaluate an approach to corruption called 'correctional integrity'. They argue this is 'broader and prospective' than approaches that are typically discussed in the context of tackling corruption. Though its appeal extends way beyond just this. It incorporates a range of approaches which share a commitment to 'the well-being of others and the avoidance of self-protection and self-interest'. It focuses on creating a trusting environment, one that enables prison staff to engage meaningfully with clients and supports and creates the optimal conditions to enable prisoners to re-enter society and desist from criminal activities. These same conditions also serve to prevent corruption. Clearly this can be a challenge in correctional (mainly custodial although some community) settings where conflict is easily triggered and fuelled by—amongst other things—staff shortages, crowded conditions and prisoner anxieties. That is the context in which the authors research and argue their case.

Corruption—the abuse of entrusted power for private gain—has long been an area of interest for those who have studied correctional settings, and a challenge for those who have sought to tackle abuse in institutions generally and prisons specifically. Here, so much activity is hidden and so too are the impacts of being a victim. For example, some of the harms caused by prison staff acting in a corrupt way are less tangible than purely economic consequences including activities such as supplying drugs to

prisoners, turning a blind eye to violence or intimidation, making false reports on incidents, or sexual or emotional exploitation. The authors discuss these and other consequences as well as the knock-on effects which includes: putting staff and prisoners at risk, as well as serving to undermine justice and fairness for those who are especially vulnerable and often without easy access to routes to be heard.

As you will read the authors frame their discussion around five key themes: inappropriate relationships; trafficking of contraband; unlawful assaults; the improper access and release of information; and procurement. Much of the discussion focuses on creating a culture that is both conducive to generating good practices in prisoner management and resistant to the conditions that create and enable corrupt acts. Similarly there is an extensive discussion of power relationships. You will learn about *endogenous influences* that develop inside correctional settings, usually between officers and prisoners; and *exogenous* ones that exist between those inside institutions with those outside.

The authors trace various vulnerabilities that undermine good practice and this leads them to focus on a multitude of responses. For example, understanding the nature of harms and how they arise provides guidance for action; this may include setting rules, which to be effective must include officers' input; then staff need to be trained to equip them with knowledge and skills. In a different way they note how staff feeling isolated and lonely at work can leave them open to being manipulated; while prisoners who are isolated and not engaged are more likely to be involved in illicit activities such as the trafficking goods from drugs and alcohol to mobile phones and weapons. The point is that trafficking creates vendettas, leads to violence and an environment in which corruption flourishes. It is not just about engaging each side in meaningful relationships and activities, other issues emerge as important including the design of the environment in which staff and clients interact.

The authors argue that central parts of integrity are 'upon the system's ability to project and support a vision of correctional integrity that welcomes expression of concern about present operations and finds ways of responding sensitively and concretely to those concerns'. Creating integrity needs to be a meaningful priority of leadership, and professionalisation (which is discussed throughout) is a pre-requisite and a condition for

creating conditions conducive to correctional integrity. Perhaps what is also important is that the authors raise issues in this book about correctional settings that could usefully generate ideas for preventing corruption in other sectors.

Martin Gill
October 2015

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In the course of turning the report into this book, we have had the opportunity to undertake more research into these matters and to expand upon the coverage as well as filling in some gaps. Inevitably we have had the chance to discuss our understanding of many of the topics with persons working in or knowledgeable of the correctional sectors in several countries, particularly the USA, the UK and Australia. Their comments, as readers will discover, have helped shaped the book. Many of them would prefer to remain anonymous so we don't propose to name them here. We thank those persons for their input. Some of the primary data presented in this book stems from a grant awarded by the Australian Research Council (FT120100284).

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List of Abbreviations

AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ANCD	Australian National Council on Drugs
CCC	Corruption and Crime Commission
CO	Correctional Officer
CMC	Crime and Misconduct Commission
CSAC	Corrective Services Administrators' Council
CSO	Community Service Order
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GBP	Great British Pound
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons
ICAC	Independent Commission Against Corruption
NPREC	National Prison Rape Elimination Commission
NSW	New South Wales
NZ	New Zealand
RUA	Random urinalysis
SA	South Australia
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USD	United States Dollar