

# The “subject” of respect: reputation within and beyond custody

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- P: The stress in my mind was so full on ... I started losing it ... I stopped eating ... They put me on anti-depressants ... [which] helped out a bit ... I'd get let out for an hour a day and that [went] on for about three or four months ... I was just in total lock down ...
- I: What was that doing to you? ...
- P: It broke me ... I cried in there heaps of times, you know ... Just the silence, so long sometimes, can get to you. You know, being on your own, in a room with no TV, no radio, you got one sheet, a bar of soap and a cup. That's all you got in your room. And a pillow ... Nothing. Absolutely nothing apart from that ... It was hard, you know ... I'd never wish it on anybody ... Solitary confinement ... Turned the power off, turned the water off ... No lights ... The most [frequent] thing going through my mind ... was my parents ... I was allowed a two minute phone call. That was enough to say, "Hi, bye, I love you" ... Twice a week ...
- I: ... What did you take away from [all this]?
- P: Not to do it again ... [I learnt] how to deal with myself, how to take that loneliness and use it. It's hard to say what I learnt from it, you know, because I'm locked up again ... (SX, 2m30s, I3)

Liebling, A., Durie, L., Stiles, A. and Tait, S. (2005) 'Revisiting Prison Suicide: the role of fairness and distress', in A. Liebling and S. Maruna (eds) *Effects of Imprisonment* (Willan: Cullompton), pp. 209-31

- '[H]uman beings need fairness and respect: that is, they need to know that actions and decisions taken in relation to them are morally justifiable and to be in environments that treat them with dignity' (pp. 211-12)

- ‘They [ie the best of the staff] sort it out, they talk to you, you know. They **respect what you say**, they **listen to you**. They bloody get both ears out [...]. They listen to you, man. They don’t fuckin’ just do what they think is good for them’

(N, 40:54).

A. Liebling (& H. Arnold) (2005)

*Prisons and Their Moral Performance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

- ‘Respect ... [is] recognition of the inherent dignity and worth of the person, and of **differences between individuals**’ (p. 212, emphasis added)

I: So you went to the Youth Court ... again?

P: Yeah.

I: And I take it the judge knew who you were? ...

P: Yeah, they knew who I was ... He was telling me that I'm a **menace to society**. It was in the news and in the paper ... Telling me I should be locked away for a long time. That I can't read, I can't write.

(KS, 14:20 I2, 18 years, 5 detention orders)

David Middleton (2004)  
'Why we should care about respect'  
*Contemporary Politics*, 10(3/4): 227-41

- '[I]t is not insignificant that we tend to notice respect far less than **dis**respect'  
(230, emphasis added)

- P: They throw away some peoples' letters ... Like [you] put a request in to get ... a new pair of shoes. You think, "Why isn't it coming?", and you go and ask them and she says, "You never put a request in". And I said, "Miss, I put it on the trolley the other day when you done room checks". She says, "It might have dropped off". I say, "Miss, you wheeled that trolley from that gate to your office, and nothing [fell] on the floor" ... As soon as they say, "You must have dropped it", ... all you gotta do is say, "Yeah, I might have dropped it", you know, like a dumb-fuck ... If you try to debate [them], it's not worth it. So [you say], "Yeah, I dropped it". The next day you grab 50 or 60 request [forms] and ... you put a request in every day. Then you get them coming back to you [saying], "You're not allowed to put that much requests in" ...
- I: How long ... did you have to wait before you got a new pair of shoes?
- P: I was walking around in shoes with no soles for a long time ... weeks (KI, I2, 43m32s)



- 'Respect matters because it structures our social lives in very meaningful ways ... [W]hat seems clear is that **without respect we cannot be social citizens.** Without respect it is difficult to engage in the business of giving respect, for **what worth is the respect of the worthless person?**' (236, emphasis added)

- ‘There’s different levels of respect ... Cause you got **prison level respect**, and you got **outside level respect**, the respect from the community, that comes in a different deal ... You get respect from the community by doing good things. You get respect in prison by being a hard-arsed fucker that won’t take shit from anyone. It’s weird, the different levels of respect ... you get from the outside and you get from the inside. Yeah, they’re totally two different things’.

(SV, 16:1 I2, Age 18, 4 detention orders)

R. Buttny & P.L. Williams (2000)

'Demanding respect: The uses of reported speech in discursive constructions of interracial contact'

*Discourse & Society* 11(1): 109-33

- 'Respect seems to be such a protean notion that it resists a singular meaning; instead it is used in multiple ways as part of various discursive positionings' (p. 110)

- I: [W]hat's been the hardest thing ... in terms of making connections to people and places and things that will help when you're [out]?
- P: When you have a life of crime and that, **people don't trust you** ... They haven't got faith in you, you know. They think you're just one big fuck up and you always will be, you know. Sorry about the swearing all the time. That **you will be a screw up** ... and **you won't get anywhere in life**. You know, you're just a bum ... Go away cause you gonna rip me off or something ... (JO, 16:13, I2)

- ‘The [police] all know me ... **As soon as they see me they come straight on my case** ... Like, even in town when I’m shopping with my mum – just recently – and I was out, a cop knew me ... Bang! He just come straight up to me [and] says, “I want to search you”... And my mum was like shocked that he just come up and said [that]. Like he didn’t say, “What’s your name?”, cause he knew it ... He goes, “**I know your history**” ... and he goes, “Empty out your pockets”. And he didn’t find nothing ... **It was just disrespect** and embarrassed me in front of my mum ... It made me feel, like, upset. I was like shattered because they come and done it in front of my mum. It would have been better if they took me to the station ... **Cause you’ve done wrong in the past they think you’re always going to do wrong** ... So it’s like every time they see you, it’s like they’re trying to pin you to anything they can’ (LE, 24:18 I2)

G. Deleuze & F. Guattari (1996)  
*A Thousand Plateaus*  
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

- ‘You will be a subject, nailed down as one, a subject of the enunciation recoiled into a subject of the statement – otherwise you’re just a tramp.’ (p. 159)

- Forms of institutional disrespect (occurring within and beyond custody) have implications for the preparedness and capacity to desist from crime
- Respect as a means for collapsing the “dividing practices” (Foucault) which frame the limits of custodial and post-custodial subjectivity
- Respect as precondition for permitting responsibility over “non-trivial” things

# respect, subjectivity, responsibility

- P: The routine is hard to get out of ... **They take all responsibilities off you.** And when you get out you still think you've got no responsibilities whatsoever ...
- I: What's the biggest thing in here you can take ... responsibility for?
- P: The words coming out of your mouth ... You can choose what you have for breakfast – a piece of toast or a bowl of cereal. You can choose what you want to drink – a cup of cordial or a cup of water. There's not many things. Like staff might say, "Oh, you've got choices to do that or you've got choices to do that", ... but if you asked the boys ... "What options do the staff allow you to do?" , they'll say what I say. There's not many. I can't even come up with one ... You can choose to go in the games room or not, but only after [a] certain time. It's very controlled ... I ask the question every single day, "Why do you want us to take responsibility for our actions when you don't allow us to?" (UX, I4, 38m50s)



McKendy, J. (2006)

“I’m Very Careful About That”: narrative and agency of men in prison’,  
*Discourse and Society*, 17:4, pp. 473-502.

- ‘Imprisonment involves not just physical confinement, but also discursive or ideological confinement. What men in prison are prompted to say, the sorts of discursive opportunities they are afforded, the kinds of stories that are officially ratified – all of these are severely restricted ... Even as demands are placed on them to take on the project of making themselves over into rational, self-possessed responsible agents, opportunities to actually do that are sorely lacking’ (p. 496)

- P: I was put in foster care at the age of 7...[Since then] I've moved 63 times ... I used to trust no one ... Like, there were times when I just felt life wasn't worth living ... I had to do whatever FAYS told me to do ... I had no say in anything ... One [family] I remember had a bamboo stick and they put duck tape around it and they hit me with that.
- I: ... Why would they do that?
- P: Well because one night I was hungry and I woke up while everyone else was asleep. I went and grabbed one of those little small packets of chips. And in the morning [the parents] come in and [the father] smacked me across the fingers, broke my fingers ... It was put in a cast. And the next day when I walked in the door, I got yelled at, and I thought of calling the police on them...Then they hit me with a stick again ... And I waited til they left ... and I went to FAYS and told them to move me. (BA,1:29)
- P: At night time [in lock-up] I just sit there when you got nothing to do. I just think about, like, "Why did you get yourself into this mess?" (BA, 13:27, Age 16, 5 detention orders)

Maruna, S. and Mann, R. (2006)  
'A Fundamental Attribution Error? Rethinking cognitive distortions',  
*Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 11, pp. 155-77.

'When challenged about having done something wrong, all of us reasonably account for our own actions as being influenced by multiple, external and internal factors. Yet, we pathologize prisoners and probationers for doing the same thing' (p. 158)