

The Relationship of Inmate Attributions to
Coping Behaviour and Current Feelings

Kathryn Saulnier
University of Manitoba



THE RELATIONSHIP OF INMATE ATTRIBUTIONS TO
COPING BEHAVIOUR AND CURRENT FEELINGS

BY

KATHRYN FAY SAULNIER

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between inmates' attributions of causality for their criminal behaviour and their current feelings and ability to cope with imprisonment. A random sample of 60 inmates of a medium security penitentiary was interviewed. Both quantitative and open-ended questions were used to elicit attributions of causality by respondents. The Beck Depression Inventory (1967) and Levenson's multidimensional locus of control measure (1972) were also administered. Coping scores were obtained from the inmates themselves and also from penitentiary social service staff members. The major finding of the study was strong support for the existence of an actor-observer bias in the explanation of inmates' offenses. Staff members made significantly more internal attributions regarding inmates' crimes than did the prisoners themselves. Related to this difference in perception between actors and observers, it was also found that staff rated inmates as making less progress, they expected more recidivism, and attributed the causes of the crime to more stable factors than did the inmates. Other predictions that were confirmed included the following: staff who made stable ratings tended to have greater expectations for reinvolvement, inmates who had previously been imprisoned in a penitentiary tended to make stable attributions regarding their behaviour, those who felt their crime was very serious gave multiple explanations for their behaviour, and those who had committed their crime with one or more accomplices tended to make external attributions regarding their actions. The existence of loneliness and depression was found to be associated with poor inmate coping. Several unpredicted results were also found, and are discussed within an attributional framework.

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The Relationship of Inmate Attributions to Coping Behaviour and Current Feelings

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the relationship of inmate attributions to coping behaviour and current feelings. I believe this is important for several reasons. First, it provides an extension of attribution concepts to the prison setting, aiding in establishing the replicability and generalizability of previous findings. Second, it presents an opportunity to test somewhat conflicting views within attribution theory, and explore several logically incompatible hypotheses. Third, the present study has practical value in that it suggests several implications for rehabilitation.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory is concerned with how people explain the causes of behaviour. According to Heider (1958) people tend to attribute acts to environmental factors or to internal properties inherent in the actor. Internal explanations focus on the actor's personality traits or "dispositions". In addition to this internal and external dimension in attributions, Weiner (1974) and others believe our explanations of behaviour can be classified along a stable-unstable dimension. Stable causes are seen as enduring; unstable causes as temporary. Any given attribution can be classified on both dimensions simultaneously. Thus, there are four major types of attributions: internal, stable; internal, unstable; external, stable; external, unstable. An example of these attribution concepts embedded in a crime report used by Carroll and Payne (1977) in parole research follows:

Mr. Green is a 25-year-old male convicted of second-degree murder. He was in a bar having a drink and talking to the victim when they began to argue, push and punch each other. He pulled out a gun and shot the victim several times; the victim was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital. Mr. Green surrendered himself to police called by the bartender. He has no previous record of convictions. Interviews indicated that he could not find a good job because his skill had been replaced by mechanization. The circumstances around the crime had been acting on him for some time.

Thus, the background information of the crime can be seen to suggest an external, stable causal attribution for the behaviour, if it is construed as being due to a long-term lack of a job.

The stability dimension has been shown to relate to predictions of future behaviour. Research has demonstrated that expectations for future behaviour are based on past behaviour to the extent that the perceived course is stable over time (Feather & Simon, 1971; Frieze & Weiner, 1971; Valle & Frieze, 1976; Weiner, Nierenberg & Goldstein, 1976). When an act is attributed to a stable cause, people expect similar acts in the future; the same act attributed to an unstable cause generates a much more moderate expectation. In a prison setting this led to the hypothesis that attributions to stable causes would lead to higher expectations for recidivism, by both the inmate himself and by prison staff.

Related to the concept of causal assignment, research with severe accident victims has demonstrated that blaming another predicts poor

coping, whereas self-blame predicts good coping (Bulman & Wortman, 1977). Individuals who had been paralyzed in serious accidents were intensively interviewed to elicit attributions of blame and causality; coping scores were obtained from a social worker and a nurse familiar with each respondent's case. Individuals were described as coping well if they had accepted the reality of their injury and were attempting to deal positively with the paralysis. Patients who had a positive attitude towards physical therapy, who were motivated to work towards improvement of their physical abilities and who reflected a desire to be as physically independent as possible were considered to be coping well. This definition of coping was provided to nurses and social workers, who then rated the patient on a 16-point scale with endpoints of "coped very poorly" and "coped extremely well". Results suggested that blaming another was a successful predictor of poor coping; self-blame was a successful predictor of good coping. Extensions of these findings suggested that inmates who blamed others (an external attribution) would cope poorly, while those who blamed themselves (an internal attribution) would cope well.

Actor-Observer Bias

Jones and Nisbett (1971) have argued that an actor-observer bias exists in attributions. Actors are more apt to attribute their behaviour to external causes which might excuse their offenses, while observers are more apt to attribute their behaviour to internal causes. This has been one of the most widely researched attributional biases (e.g., West, Gunn & Chernicky, 1975) and is a generally well-established principle. It has an important implication for the criminal justice system, which, it could be argued, is organized around the concept of individual

responsibility.

Wells (1980) has questioned the existence of an actor-observer bias in causal explanations for delinquent behaviour. To test the postulate, she had samples of institutionalized adolescents and public-school ninth-graders rate the likelihood of 12 attributions for delinquent behaviours. The attributions were grouped into "situational" and "dispositional" scales; the situational explanations referred to forces external to the actor, and the dispositional explanations referred to enduring traits in the actor. Differences in attributions were assessed for three delinquent behaviours: illegal drug use, illegal alcohol use, and joyriding. Wells found that adolescents attribute their own and others' delinquent behaviour to situational over dispositional causes, a finding which she interpreted as being in contrast to the Jones and Nisbett thesis. However, closer scrutiny of her actual results allows an interpretation that is consistent with traditional attribution theory. Wells reported a main effect for attribution type, namely that adolescents attribute their own and others' delinquent behaviour to situational over dispositional causes. Secondly, with respect to "own and others' behaviour", she reported that adolescents use both dispositional and situational attributions to a greater degree when explaining others' delinquent behaviour than when explaining their own delinquent behaviour. Wells interpreted these results as being in contrast to the actor-observer bias, although such a conclusion is not completely warranted on the basis of her data.

The fact that Wells found adolescents using more dispositional attributions when explaining others' delinquent behaviour than when

explaining their own is definitely consistent with the notion of an actor-observer bias. Even her main effect for attributions offered some support for the actor-observer bias in that adolescents attributed their own delinquent behaviour to situational over dispositional causes. Only the fact that situational explanations were also used more often when explaining others' delinquent behaviour than when explaining one's own is not. Thus it appears that a more accurate interpretation of Wells' data would be that evidence of an actor-observer bias was found on the dispositional measure, but not on the situational measure. Wells chose not to emphasize the aspect of her research which is in support of the actor-observer bias. Rather, in her discussion she used the main effect for attribution type (i.e., her dispositional vs. situational scales) to talk about the absence of an actor-observer bias. This bias is, however, a relative concept best assessed in terms of her "own vs. others' behaviour" measure. In the present study an actor-observer bias was expected to be present. It was hypothesized that inmates as a group would be more likely to attribute their acts to external causes, while prison staff would be more apt to attribute the same acts to something about the inmate himself.

Diffusion of Responsibility

Research in the area of diffusion of responsibility has demonstrated a significant inverse relationship between the number of participants and the degree of attributed responsibility (Feldman & Rosen, 1978). In a study specifically investigating attributions of responsibility for criminal behaviour, these authors found that single perpetrators were considered more responsible than those acting with a partner. From an attributional

perspective, when many people commit a crime together, an observer can say a given offender's action reflects what Kelley (1973) terms high "consensus". When behaviour is not unique to the individual, but rather is shared by others, "consensus" is said to exist. Under this attributional condition, one would expect diffusion of responsibility to occur. In the present study it was hypothesized that inmates who acted alone would assume more personal causation, while those who had accomplices would be more apt to make environmental attributions.

Background Variables

Various background variables have been shown to relate to causal assignment. Kelley (1973) defines "consistency" as responding to a stimulus presented in different modalities and on different occasions in the same way. Thus, an individual who engaged in bank robberies in various cities at various times could be seen as reflecting "consistency" in his behaviour. According to Kelley, acts reflecting high consistency and low consensus (rarely committed by others) are attributed internally to the actor. McArthur (1972) found that given information of a low consensus, high consistency situation, 85% of her college student subjects explained items such as this in terms of something about the person. It was expected that inmates with long prior records would perceive their criminal actions as due to stable causes and would attribute their behaviour to personal dispositions.

In addition to consideration of an inmate's previous record, and whether he engaged in the crime alone or with an accomplice, severity of an act's consequences can also be seen as an antecedent to causal assignment. Rosen and Jerdee (1974) found that severe consequences lead to greater

attribution of personal responsibility. Walster (1966) reports that an individual is seen as more responsible for an act when the consequences are severe. On the basis of this research it could be hypothesized that violent crimes will be more likely to receive internal attributions. However, Harvey, Harris and Barnes (1975) have found that if a person's behaviour is extremely negative, he may exaggerate the situational constraints in an apparent effort to ward off personal blame. In support of this, Panell (Note 1) found that violent criminals were more externally oriented and less likely than non-violent criminals to take personal responsibility for their actions. Perhaps this conflict in the literature is illustrative of Kelley's observation that extreme events lead to multiple causal explanations--that is, extreme events get "more" explained than less extreme events (Kelley, 1973). The present study sought to clarify these contradictions.

Attributions and Affect

The relationship between locus of causality and affective experiences has been studied in a variety of settings, most notably in achievement contexts. Weiner, Russell and Lerman (1978) found that the depression-related labels of hopeless, helpless, and depressed, and related affects such as resigned and aimless, most appear when there is an internal, stable attribution for failure. This would seem to be inconsistent with Bulman and Wortman's (1977) finding that accident victims who engaged in self-blame (internal attributions) were most likely to cope well. However, the factors of controllability and stability may be possible explanations of this apparent contradiction. It may be that individuals who make internal unstable attributions are able to cope well, because they feel

they have some control over the forces which temporarily shaped their behaviour. However, those who attribute their behaviour to internal stable causes may be more likely to resign themselves to feelings of depression and hopelessness.

In accord with this analysis, Dweck and Goetz (1978) found the perception of failure in achievement situations as insurmountable is associated with attributions of failure to invariant factors, such as lack of ability, and is accompanied by seriously impaired performance. These same authors found that mastery-oriented behaviour tends to be associated with attributions of failure to variable, or unstable, factors, such as lack of effort. This research, where children were confronted with failure in intellectual problem-solving situations, was conceptualized as analogous to the phenomenon of learned helplessness, first investigated systematically in animals by Seligman and Maier (1967). The children who gave up in the face of failure tended to see the remedy as beyond their control, to see the probability of success following failure as negligible, whether they responded or not. Children whose performance deteriorated ("helpless" children) tended to attribute failure to largely uncontrollable external factors, or to a stable internal factor such as ability, both of which imply that failure is difficult to overcome. The study clearly demonstrated that despite the initial proficiency of both the "helpless" and the "mastery-oriented" children, the cognitions they entertained about their failure differed and their performance over failure trials became progressively divergent. In the prison situation attributions may also guide selection of coping patterns. It was hypothesized that attributions to invariant, stable factors would lead

to a feeling of helplessness and hence inhibit coping skills.

Dweck and Goetz (1978) point out that if helplessness, the perception of failure as uncontrollable, indeed causes responses to failure, it should be possible to successfully alter children's responses to failure by altering their attributions for failure. This was accomplished by teaching helpless children to attribute their failures to a lack of effort--as mastery-oriented children did, thus helping them to cope with failure effectively. Implications for the penitentiary system suggest that those programs which stress intervening with cognitions and factors over which an inmate has some control may yield more positive outcomes. This is consistent with Rotter's (1970) view that a major task in creating behaviour change involves changing expectations. Rappaport (1977), however, notes that teaching the subject that he or she can succeed or escape is not enough; a second element, that of a system in which success is possible is necessary. This suggests that interventions must reach beyond individuals and also change actual possibilities, both within the penitentiary and in the "real world".

Based on his analysis of the literature, Carroll (1978) has argued that good events receive more praise, and bad events more blame, when attributed internally to the actor, rather than externally, and especially when attributed internally and intentionally (e.g., Shaw & Reitan, 1969; Sosis, 1974; Weiner & Kukla, 1970). This led to the hypothesis that prison staff would make differential assessments of inmates, depending on both how the inmate was coping, and whether they attributed his criminal behaviour internally or externally. When internal attributions were made

and an inmate believed he was coping well, it was predicted that staff would make very positive assessments. However, when internal attributions were made and the individual was not coping well, it was predicted assessments would be negative.

Person-Environment Fit

Price and Blashfield (1975) suggest it is important to look at dimensions of both the environment and the individual inhabitants within them. This allows assessment of the degree of person-environment congruence and its effects on behaviour. Holland (1966) has suggested that the congruence or lack of congruence between setting characteristics and characteristics of individuals may affect important outcomes such as vocational achievement, satisfaction and personal stability. The phenomenon of person-environment congruence is also important because of its apparent relationship to adequacy of interpersonal functioning. For example, in a well-controlled study Wechsler and Pugh (1970) have found that psychiatric hospitalization rates are higher for persons whose individual demographic characteristics did not correspond with overall demographic characteristics of the community in which they lived. Similarly, Pervin (1968) has shown that college dropout rates are higher for those students who displayed high degrees of incongruence between personal and college characteristics. Related to this, the personal attraction literature demonstrates that when people's values are different, they tend to dislike one another, leading to negative evaluations (Huston, 1974). In a prison setting, it could be hypothesized that negative ratings of inmates would most likely occur when the perceptions of staff (a setting characteristic)

and prisoners did not fit--when there was a discrepancy in the attributions each made regarding the inmate's criminal behaviour.

Locus of Control

In addition to providing a framework for understanding causal explanations for specific acts, attribution concepts also relate to an individual's generalized tendencies. For example, the extent to which people believe they exercise control over their lives (internally controlled) or the degree to which they feel their destinies are beyond their own control and are determined by fate, chance, or powerful others, has been conceptualized as a general orientation (Rotter, 1966). Levenson (1972) has developed a locus of control measure which seeks to differentiate between two classes of externals--to measure belief in chance expectancies as separate from a powerful others orientation. The rationale behind this tripartite differentiation came from the reasoning that people who believe the world is unordered (chance) behave and think differently from people who believe the world is ordered but that powerful others are in control. Thus, it appears these orientations are tapping quite different beliefs and therefore should not be grouped together under the rubric of external control. Lao (1970) found empirical evidence of this in a study of Black college students, where "personal control" and "systems blame" (expectancy for control over social systems) emerged as independent factors. She hypothesized that for southern Black students, a belief in external control on the systems blame factor may be more reality based than an internal belief, and may therefore predict positive behaviour. Results showed that students scoring high on external locus of control with regard to the systems blame factor also reported that they favoured

collective approaches to the civil rights movement and preferred protest actions as opposed to negotiations significantly more than students who scored in the internal direction. Thus, belief in external factors relating to causality does not necessarily imply a belief in chance factors.

Using a multi-dimensional measure of locus of control, including three scales (Internal, Powerful Others and Chance) Levenson (Note 2) found that expectations of control by powerful others related positively to both punishment for trouble-making behaviour and to length of time in prison. The experience of living in a highly regimented and confined environment fostered perception of an all-powerful authority structure. As well, those inmates who had been sanctioned frequently scored highly on the "powerful others" measure. A similar relationship was expected to exist in the present study of locus of control in prison inmates.

In summary, the present study examined the attributions made by inmates of Stony Mountain, a medium security prison in Manitoba. The relationship of the inmates' attributions to their coping behaviour, as determined by self and staff ratings, and to their current feelings, was assessed. Specific hypotheses included:

1. Inmates who made internal attributions regarding their criminal behaviour would cope better than those who made external attributions, particularly if they saw their behaviour as due to a fluctuating, unstable cause.

2. Attributions to invariant, stable causes would lead to higher expectations for recidivism, by both staff and inmates.

3. An actor-observer bias would be evident in the attributions of staff and inmates, such that staff would tend to attribute acts to something about the inmate himself, while prisoners would be apt to attribute their acts to external causes.

4. Inmates with long prison records (consistency) would make stable attributions and tend to use personal dispositions.

5. Inmates acting alone would assume more personal causation than those acting with an accomplice(s).

6. Inmates who had been imprisoned for a long time, or who had been subjected to numerous disciplinary measures, would be more likely to have a "powerful others" orientation on a locus of control measure.

7. Staff ratings of inmates would be more likely to be negative when staff and inmate attributions were discrepant than when they were congruent.

8. Inmates who made attributions to internal, stable factors would experience feelings similar to helplessness.

9. Severe crimes would receive multiple causal explanations rather than attributions to single factors.

10. When an inmate's behaviour was attributed internally by staff, and he believed he was coping well, he would receive very favourable staff evaluations. When he was coping poorly, and internal attributions were made, he would receive negative staff evaluation.

Method

Subjects

Using a random numbers table, 93 inmates at a medium security penitentiary were selected from a card file with no limitations as to

age or type of crime. These men were sent a letter describing the study and asking for their participation (see Appendix A). The sample was drawn from an institution located approximately 9 miles from Winnipeg. It is operated by the federal government, and the population averages approximately 380. The final sample on which data analysis was based consisted of 60 inmates. Of the 93 men selected, ten were transferred to another penitentiary prior to being interviewed, four were released, two were in the hospital, one escaped, one died and five declined when asked to participate. An additional ten were not interviewed due to time limitations.

The nine social service staff (Living Unit Development Officers) assigned to each inmate in the study were also asked to complete a brief questionnaire. Typically social workers or trained in the social sciences, they are responsible for monitoring the progress of inmates and assisting in individual program planning.

Measurement of Variables

The present study involved collection of data through various methods: interviews, administration of questionnaires, and an examination of prison records. Each data source will be briefly discussed.

Inmate Measures

Each respondent was first given the "Criminal Attribution Scale", an eight-item forced-choice instrument developed by Panell and Panell (Note 1). Each item consists of an internal and external statement pertaining to a specific crime. Four of the items relate to violent crimes and four relate to non-violent crimes. An example of an item

from the scale relative to a violent crime, namely assault, follows:

Choice A. If a guy hits his boss, it was probably because the guy has a bad temper.

Choice B. If a guy hits his boss, it was probably because the boss was riding him and was asking for it.

The items, which were randomly ordered, were developed from actual statements made by probationers in California. Panell (Note 1) reports that in a study of San Diego probationers a correlation between the "Criminal Attribution Scale" and the Seeman Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (1963) was found to be significant at the .01 level (\underline{r} value not reported). The complete scale can be found in Appendix B.

The second measure to be administered to respondents was a multidimensional measure of locus of control developed by Levenson (1972) including three scales: Internal, Powerful Others, and Chance. Each of the scales consists of eight items in a Likert format which were presented to the subject as a unified attitude scale of 24 items (see Appendix C). Scores were obtained on each of the three scales. Levenson found that the Internal, Powerful Others and Chance scales had high internal consistency and were not correlated with a measure of social desirability. Test-retest reliabilities for a one-week period were: $\underline{r} = .64$ (I Scale); $\underline{r} = .74$ (P Scale), and $\underline{r} = .78$ (C Scale). Following are sample items from each of the three scales:

Internal: Whether or not I get to be a leader depends mostly on my ability.

I can pretty well determine what will happen in my life.

Chance: It's chiefly a matter of fate whether or not I have a few

friends or many friends.

When I get what I want, it's usually because I'm lucky.

Powerful Others: If important people were to decide they didn't like me, I probably wouldn't make many friends.

In order to have my plans work, I make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over me.

Respondents answered on a scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

Following completion of these forced-choice measures of attribution, an interview schedule developed by the author was conducted in which background information was gathered and the individual asked in open-ended fashion what factors he felt led up to his crime. This was an open-ended attempt to determine what inmates perceived to be the causes of their criminal behaviour. Responses gathered in this way were coded using a scheme fashioned after Elig and Frieze's (1974) Coding Scheme of Perceived Causality (CSPC). This was designed for analyzing attributions regarding success and failure in achievement and social settings. The coding instructions and several samples of the inmates' stories are in Appendix G. Each inmate's response was scored on a 5-point scale for internality/externality and stability/unstability. Ratings were based on a reading of the entire story, not on segments or phrases. Two graduate students coded all responses. An internal attribution was defined as one in which the location of the cause was in the person whose crime was being explained. Causes such as the person's ability, personality, effort, motivations or mood were to be classified as internal in location. External attributions were defined as causes outside the person--causes located in other people,

in luck, in the situation, or in social norms or pressures. Mutual attributions were defined as shared causes between the person and other factors. Uncertain attributions were considered to lie between internal and external attributions, and the same code used for both uncertain and mutual attributions. The inter-rater reliability was $r = .921$, $p < .001$ for the location dimension. Stable causes were defined as causes which were not expected to vary over time, while unstable causes were perceived as fluctuating. Consistent with what Elig and Frieze (1975) found, this dimension was the most difficult for raters to judge. The inter-rater reliability was $r = .659$, $p < .001$ for the stability dimension.

A check-list of specific causes which could be categorized around internal/external and stable/unstable dimensions was presented and participants were requested to indicate the factors they felt played a part in their crime. The checklist (see Appendix D) included such items as "influence of my friends", "alcohol", "immaturity", and "grew up/lived in a bad neighbourhood". Inmates were then asked specific 5-point questions dealing with the stability of the causes to which they attributed their behaviour and the control they felt they exercised over these factors. For example, two of the items in this section were:

Did the crime occur because of something that changes easily (such as luck, fate, your mood)--or because of something pretty unchanging (such as long-term lack of a job, or other unchanging qualities of a person or situation)?

How much control did you have over the main things that led up to the crime?

A check-list of feelings (see Appendix D) was presented, and participants asked to indicate on a 5-point scale (ranging from "not at all" to "extremely") which emotions they experienced when charged with the crime. The affects listed were: guilty, ashamed, surprised, mad, astonished, revengeful, furious, incompetent, resigned, apathetic, and inadequate. These were selected because they are among the dominant affects associated with failure in achievement-related contexts (Weiner, Russell & Lerman, 1978). Five-point questions dealing with the inmate's assessment of how he was coping and his expectations regarding recidivism were administered. A four-item, short form of the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau & Cutrona, in press) was also included in the data collection battery for exploratory purposes. The concept seemed relevant and important because inmates as a group are particularly susceptible to isolation from social relations. The scale itself was selected from several available measures of loneliness because of its shortness. The items are an optimal subset of the longer UCLA scale which has a high alpha coefficient (.90+), and encouraging known-group, discriminant and construct validity (Russell, Peplau & Cutrona, in press). The complete interview schedule and questionnaire format can be found in Appendix D.

The final inmate measure consisted of verbal administration of the Beck Depression Inventory (see Appendix E). Developed by Aaron Beck (1967), this measure consists of 21 symptom categories describing behavioural manifestations of depression (e.g., sadness, fatigability, social withdrawal). It consists of a graded series of four to five self-evaluative statements, ranked in order of severity of expression of the symptom. Each inmate

was asked to choose the statement which was closest to his present state. Internal consistency of this measure was demonstrated by significant relationships between each item and Beck Depression Inventory total scores, and by an odd-even item correlation of 0.86, Spearman-Brown corrected to 0.93 (Beck et al., 1961). No test-retest reliability data are reported in the original reports, but Miller and Seligman (1973) report a test-retest reliability of 0.74 for 31 normal undergraduates with a three-month interval. Pehm (1976) describes this scale as the best of presently available self-report measures of general depression severity. Standard scoring was used in computing depression scores, with the range of the scale going from 0 to 63.

Staff Measures

The social service staff person assigned to each inmate in the study was asked to complete a brief questionnaire, developed by the author (see Appendix F). Items again were administered in a 5-point format, dealing with staff attributions regarding the individual's criminal behaviour, their expectations for recidivism and their assessment of how the inmate was coping in the prison setting. A sample item follows:

Overall, how well do you feel Inmate X is coping in prison?

Additional questions asked about how well staff felt each inmate was getting along with fellow-prisoners and how much progress they felt each was making on problems relating to criminal behaviour. Reliability of staff responses was difficult to determine, given that each inmate has only one Living Unit Development Officer assigned. In two cases an inmate had recently been transferred to another staff member's caseload, and in these instances both staff members were asked to complete questionnaires.

There was 100% agreement between the staff ratings of these individuals in both cases.

Records

Institutional records were examined and the following information noted: type of crime, sentence, date of admission to the penitentiary, and number of times disciplined (number of institutional charges).

Results

Following a description of the sample participants and a brief outline of several composite measures, the results of each prediction discussed earlier will be presented.

Description of Sample

The mean age of the sample was 26.7 years, with a range from 18 to 40 years. Natives comprised 36.7% of the sample, Caucasians 56.7%, and 6.6% were in the "other" category (Black, Pakistani, Turkish, Portugese). With regards to education, 5% had completed less than Grade 6, 35% were in the category Grades 6 - 9, 47% were in the category Grades 10 -12, 8% had completed some university credits, and 5% had a university degree. With regards to religion, 42% of the sample listed "none", 22% were Protestant, 18% Roman Catholic, 7% native Indian religion, and 12% other (i.e., Muslim, Jewish). The crimes for which the men were imprisoned, and the frequency of each, are shown in Table 1. The major categories were break, enter and theft related charges (36.6% of the sample had committed this type of offense), robbery (28%), manslaughter/murder (23.6%), rape/indecent assault (16.6%), and drug offenses (16.6%). Length of sentence received is shown in Table 2. The average time spent in prison at the time of the interviews was two years, five months.

Table 1

Inmate Sample Classified by Crime

Crime Category	Percent of Sample Charged
1. Break, enter and theft Theft under \$ 200 Theft over \$ 200 Possession of stolen goods	36.6
2. Robbery with violence with assault	28.0
3. Manslaughter Murder Attempted murder	23.6
4. Rape Indecent assault Gross indecency	16.6
5. Trafficking Importing narcotics Possession of narcotics	16.6
6. Miscellaneous--parole revocation, unlawfully at large, cause disturbance, mischief, procuring	15.0
7. Assault	11.6
8. Fraud, false pretences	10.0
9. Weapons offenses	10.0

*does not total 100% as some inmates committed crimes in several categories

Table 2

Length of Sentence Received

Sentence	Frequency
2 - 2½ years	20%
2½ - 5 years	35%
5 - 10 years	30%
10 - 23 years	8%
life	7%
TOTAL	<hr/> 100%

Other descriptive aspects of the sample are of interest and will be reported here. On the check-list of specific causes presented, 53.3% of the sample indicated "alcohol" had played a part in their crimes, 51.7% checked off "a need for money", 48.3% listed "being drunk at the time", 41.7% indicated "lack of control" and 33% of the sample checked off "immaturity". Approximately one third of the inmates indicated "drugs" (30%) and being "aimless" (30%) were factors in their criminal behaviour. The entire check-list and the frequency of each category are shown in Table 3.

The mean score on the Panell Criminal Attribution Scale (Note 1), designed to assess attributions regarding crime in general, was 10.4, standard deviation = 1.07. This scale ranges from 8, indicating purely internal attributions, to 16, indicating external explanations. It is of interest to note that when asked to choose attributions for crimes in general, the inmates tended to give quite internal explanations (none of the respondents had a score greater than 12 on this measure).

With regards to the size of network, nearly one half of the inmate sample indicated they had no outside friends (49.2%) and no outside relatives (49.2%). The mean score on the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau & Cutrona, Note 3) was 9.75. In a Los Angeles study involving 250 people between the ages of 18 and 40 the mean score was 8.2 (Russell, 197). Approximately 19% of the inmate sample had scores greater than 12 on the loneliness measure, which has a range from 4 to 16. The correlation between loneliness and the inmate question dealing with how well each individual felt he was coping in prison was $-.41$, $p = .001$. Those who felt they were coping very well tended to have a low score on the loneliness

Table 3

Causal Check-List Categories

Category	Frequency*
Alcohol	53.3%
Need for money	51.7%
Drunk at the time	48.3%
Lack of control	41.7%
Immaturity	33.3%
Drugs	30.0%
Aimless	30.0%
Problems at home	26.7%
Grew up/lived in bad neighbourhood	18.3%
Influence of friends	16.7%
Victim asked for it	16.7%
Mental problems	10.0%
Parents didn't treat me right	8.3%
Nobody would give me a job	8.3%

* Frequencies do not total 100% as each inmate checked off as many categories as he felt were relevant.

scale.

Development of Composite Measures

Both social service staff and inmates completed numerous items related to coping, and to facilitate data analysis these were reduced to composite measures.

Staff Composites

Staff were asked to complete items dealing with their assessment of how each inmate was coping in prison (COPING), how much progress he was making on problems related to criminal behaviour (PROGRESS), how well he was getting along with fellow prisoners (FELLOWS) and how likely they felt that a similar crime would occur in his life (REINVOLVED). These four measures were correlated with each other, with the resultant matrix shown in Table 4. Although all the measures were significantly correlated, there were two pairs that had a particularly strong relationship. The correlation between "reinvolved" and "progress" was $-.738$, $p < .001$, and the correlation between "fellows" and "coping" was $.767$, $p < .001$. This reduction of the four measures to two composites made conceptual sense as well. The "reinvolved/progress" composite seemed to deal with progress the inmate was making that would assist him in the future, possibly resulting in a low level of recidivism, while the "coping/fellows" composite appeared to be a measure of internal adjustment to prison life. The two composites correlated $.424$, $p < .001$ with each other, and correlations with the total of all four items were $.885$, $p < .001$ and $.798$, $p < .001$ for the "future" and "internal adjustment" composites respectively. The two composite solution was chosen because of the high correlations among the measures in each pair, and because the two appeared to be tapping

Table 4

Correlation Matrix
Staff Ratings of Inmate Coping

	Fellows	Progress	Coping
Reinvolved	-.336 (<u>p</u> =.004)	-.738 (<u>p</u> < .001)	-.369 (<u>p</u> =.002)
Fellows		.374 (<u>p</u> =.002)	.767 (<u>p</u> < .001)
Progress			.405 (<u>p</u> =.001)

different dimensions of coping.

Inmate Composite

The inmates were asked similar questions with regard to progress, coping, getting along with fellow inmates and reinvolvement. They also responded to an item dealing with how well they were able to maintain outside relationships while in prison. The correlation matrix of these measures is found in Table 5. The "progress", "outside relationships" and "overall coping" items all correlated with one another at $r > .32$, and no other constellation of variables intercorrelated as well. On this basis the three items were used to form a composite inmate coping measure.

In summary, two staff composites were formed, one dealing with internal adjustment to prison life, and the second with coping variables related to the future. One inmate coping composite was formed, which correlated $.18$, $p = .09$, with the staff composite related to internal adjustment and $.10$, $p = .22$ with the composite related to the future. All further data analyses were based on these composite measures.

Internality/Externality Measures

Both open-ended and structured measures of attributions regarding each inmate's criminal behaviour were obtained. The open-ended measure involved raters' assessments of each individual's description of factors leading up to his crime. The structured measure involved response to the following question:

Overall, think about the causes of the crime. Did it occur mainly because of something about you (such as your personality or habits), or was it due to something

Table 5

Correlation Matrix
Inmate Ratings of Coping

	Progress	Outside Relationships	Overall Coping	Do Again
Get along with fellows	.07 (<u>p</u> =.294)	.214 (<u>p</u> =.051)	.429 (<u>p</u> < .001)	-.118 (<u>p</u> =.187)
Progress		.383 (<u>p</u> =.001)	.369 (<u>p</u> =.002)	-.313 (<u>p</u> =.008)
Outside relationships			.324 (<u>p</u> =.006)	-.319 (<u>p</u> =.007)
Overall coping				-.019 (<u>p</u> =.444)

about the situation or another person or persons?

Answers were given on a 5-point Likert-type scale, with end-points of 1 = "something about me" and 5 = "something about the situation or other persons". The correlation between the open and closed-ended methods of measuring attributions was .485, $p < .001$. It was decided to use the closed-ended measure for several reasons. Elig and Frieze (1979) found discrepant results when using both open-ended and scale ratings. In a study designed to compare various methods of measuring causal attributions, they concluded that overall, scale measures seem to be the method of choice. They state that the scale method provides generally better support for some of the basic theoretical relationships between causal attributions and future expectancies and affect than do either the percentage or open response methods. In the present study, both methods were used for analysis, but in light of the Elig and Frieze finding, the 5-point scale method was preferred and reported. As well, the 5-point rating of stability, rather than the open-ended measure, was preferred and reported.

Results of Predictions

1. The first hypothesis stated that inmates who made internal attributions regarding their criminal behaviour would cope better than those who made external attributions. In particular inmates who made internal and unstable attributions were expected to cope well. This was tested with several 2 x 2 analyses of variances, using both inmate and staff coping composites as the dependent variables. A median split was done on the internality and stability ratings. The results using the inmate composite measure of coping as the dependent variable, which were all nonsignificant, are presented in Appendix H. Results using the

"progress/reinvolved" staff composite as the dependent variable are presented in Table 6, with all means and standard deviations shown in Table 7. The expected interaction between the internality and stability dimensions was not found. There was a significant main effect for the inmate rating of internality. However, it was not as predicted: inmates who made external attributions received higher staff ratings on the "progress/reinvolved" composite than did inmates who made internal attributions regarding their criminal behaviour, $F(1,56) = 7.149$, $p = .01$. This result was also seen in a correlation analysis of the same data. It showed a moderate relationship between the inmate rating of internality and the staff "progress/reinvolvement" composite ($r = .25$, $p = .029$). Results using the "coping/fellows" staff composite were nonsignificant (see Appendix I).

2. The second prediction was that attributions to invariant, stable causes would lead to higher expectations for recidivism, by both staff and inmates. There was a significant correlation between the stability and reinvolved measures for staff ($r = .313$, $p = .007$), but the expected correlation was not found with the inmate measures ($r = .155$, $p = .12$). Thus it appeared that for staff, stability ratings did relate to expectations for recidivism.

3. The third hypothesis concerned a rather central concept in attribution theory, the actor-observer bias. It was predicted that staff would tend to attribute acts to something about the inmate himself, while prisoners would be apt to make external attributions regarding these same acts. Paired samples t-tests were used to test this hypothesis. Consistent with this prediction, staff were found to make significantly more internal attributions than did the inmates themselves, $t(59) = 2.92$, $p = .0025$.

Table 6

Analysis of Variance Summary Table
Relationship of Inmate Ratings of Internality and Stability to
"Progress/reinvolved" Staff Composite

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Internality (A)	39.786	1	39.786	7.15	.01*
Stability (B)	0.244	1	0.244	0.04	.84
A x B	12.968	1	12.968	2.33	.13
Residual	311.655	56	5.565		

*significant

Table 7

Mean Scores on "Progress/Reinvolved"

Staff Composite

		Inmate Rating of Causes	
		External	Internal
Inmate Rating of Stability	Stable	$\bar{x} = 5.72$	$\bar{x} = 4.71$
		S.D. = 2.42	S.D. = 2.49
	Unstable	$\bar{x} = 6.26$	$\bar{x} = 3.17$
		S.D. = 2.45	S.D. = .98

The means on the 5-point internality measure (1 = "something about me", 5 = "something about the situation or other persons") were 2.87 for inmates and 2.12 for prison officials, with standard deviations of 1.62 and 1.30, respectively.

Other findings related to the differences in perception between actors and observers are of interest. It was found that staff attributed the causes of the crime to more stable factors than did the inmates, $t(58) = -3.29$, $p = .001$; they expected more recidivism, $t(58) = -10.98$, $p < .001$; and rated the inmates as making less progress, $t(58) = 3.70$, $p < .001$. The differences between staff and inmate ratings of getting along with fellow inmates and overall coping were not significant.

4. The fourth hypothesis suggested inmates with long prison records, seen as indicative of consistency in their behaviour, would make stable attributions. As an accurate measure of length of prior record was not available, this prediction was tested comparing those who had never been imprisoned in a penitentiary before with those who had served federal sentences previously. A median split done on the stability rating divided the sample into those who made stable attributions and those who gave unstable explanations for their behaviour. Results of a chi-square test of significance indicated a systematic relationship existed between these two variables, $\chi^2(1) = 4.33$, $p = .038$. As predicted, inmates who had been imprisoned previously tended to make stable attributions. The strength of this relationship was indicated by the phi statistic, $\phi = .303$.

It was also hypothesized that consistency would lead to personal dispositions. A chi-square done to test this was not significant, $\chi^2(1) = 2.48$, $p = .12$. However, the relationship was in the expected direction, $\phi = .24$,

such that inmates who had been imprisoned before tended to make internal attributions.

5. The fifth prediction was that inmates acting alone would assume more personal causation than those acting with an accomplice. Within the sample of 60 inmates, 27 had acted alone, 14 had one accomplice, 18 had two or more partners, and one fellow stated he did not know. As predicted, a significant positive correlation was found between the number of accomplices and the inmates' rating of externality ($\underline{r} = .22$, $\underline{p} = .04$).

6. The sixth hypothesis stated that inmates who had been imprisoned for a long time, or who had been subjected to numerous disciplinary measures, would be more likely to have a "powerful others" orientation on Levenson's (1972) locus of control measure. In the present study two measures of "times disciplined" were obtained--self-report data on all 60 inmates, and information from the institution files was available for 29 of the participants. As the correlation between these two measures was $.83$, $\underline{p} < .001$, it was decided that the self-report data provided a highly accurate, valid measure of frequency of discipline. As well, the self-report data was the most complete as it was available on all 60 participants. The expected positive correlation between "times disciplined" and "powerful others" was not found ($\underline{r} = -.12$, $\underline{p} = .18$). The correlation between length of time imprisoned and score on the "powerful others" measure was also nonsignificant ($\underline{r} = -.008$, $\underline{p} = .48$).

7. The seventh prediction was that staff ratings of inmates would be more likely to be negative when staff and inmate attributions were discrepant than when they were congruent. To test this, the differences in staff and inmate ratings of internality/externality and stability/unstability

were correlated with the two staff composite measures, "progress/reinvolved" and "coping/fellows". None of the correlations were significant. For internality/externality differences, the correlation with "progress/reinvolved" was .14, $p = .15$, and the correlation with "coping/fellows" was .10, $p = .23$. Difference scores for staff and inmate ratings of the stability dimension correlated $-.02$, $p = .45$ with "progress/reinvolved" and $-.17$, $p = .10$ with the "coping/fellows" composite.

8. The eighth hypothesis suggested that inmates who made attributions to internal, stable factors would experience feelings similar to helplessness. Following a median split done on the internality and stability ratings, three 2 x 2 ANOVAs were performed with "resigned", "apathy" and "depression" as the dependent variables. The expected interaction between internality and stability ratings was not found with any of these three feelings. Summary tables of the results may be found in Table 8. For both "resigned" and "apathy" there was a main effect for the stability rating, such that inmates who attributed their behaviour to ongoing, stable factors had higher scores on the "resigned" and "apathy" items than did inmates who made unstable attributions (resigned, $F(1,56) = 4.92$, $p = .03$; apathy, $F(1,56) = 3.87$, $p = .05$).

9. The ninth prediction was that severe crimes would receive multiple causal explanations rather than attributions to single factors. Each inmate rated the severity of his crime on a scale ranging from one to five. As predicted, a significant correlation was found between each inmate's own rating of the severity of his crime and the number of explanations given, $r = .33$, $p = .006$.

10. The last hypothesis predicted that when an inmate's behaviour

Table 8

Analysis of Variance Summary Table
Relationship of Inmate Ratings of Internality and Stability
to Feelings

Source	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>			<u>F</u>		
		Resigned	Apathy	Depression	Res	Apa	Depr.
Internality (A)	1	3.00	1.33	23.91	1.30	.61	.46
Stability (B)	1	11.38	8.46	4.62	4.92*	3.87*	.09
A x B	1	2.19	.28	4.80	.95	.13	.09
Residual	56	2.31	2.91	52.49			

* $p < .05$

was attributed internally by staff, and he himself believed that he was coping well, he would receive very favourable staff evaluations. When he rated himself as coping poorly, and staff made internal attributions, negative staff evaluations were expected. This was tested with 2 x 2 analyses of variances performed on the two staff composite measures of coping as the dependent variables. A median split was done on the location measure ("internal" vs. "external") and also on the inmate coping rating ("coping well" vs. "coping poorly"). On the analysis using the "progress/reinvolved" staff composite as the dependent variable the expected interaction between staff ratings of causality and inmate ratings of coping was not found (see Table 9). There was a significant main effect for the inmate ratings of coping, such that inmates who perceived themselves as coping well received higher staff ratings on "progress/reinvolved" than did inmates who perceived themselves as coping poorly, $F(1,56) = 4.53$, $p = .038$. The mean staff coping rating for inmates who perceived themselves as doing well was 6.01; the mean for prisoners who perceived themselves as doing poorly was 4.57. There was also a significant main effect for the staff rating of internality, such that when staff perceived the causes of an inmate's crime as due to external factors, he was given higher ratings than when staff perceived the causes of his crime as due to internal factors, $F(1,56) = 7.57$, $p = .008$. The mean score on the "progress/reinvolved" composite for inmates whom staff made external attributions about was 5.88; the mean for those they made internal attributions about was 4.6.

The results of the analysis using the composite related to internal adjustment to prison life, "coping/fellows", are shown in Table 10. The mean values and standard deviations for the various conditions are shown

Table 9

Analysis of Variance Summary Table
Relationship of Inmate Rating of Coping and Staff Rating
of Internality to Staff Coping Composite "Progress/Reinvolved"

Source	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Staff Rating of Internality (A)	1	40.65	7.57	.008 *
Inmate Rating of Coping (B)	1	24.32	4.53	.038 *
A x B	1	2.72	.51	.480
Residual	56	5.37		

*significant

Table 10

Analysis of Variance Summary Table

Relationship of Staff Ratings of Internality and Inmate Ratings
of Coping to "Coping/Fellows" Staff Composite

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Staff Rating of Internality	2.091	1	2.091	.62	.43
Inmate Coping	6.957	1	6.957	2.07	.16
A x B	21.760	1	21.760	6.47	.01*
Residual	188.251	56	3.362		

*significant

Table 11

Mean Scores on "Coping/Fellows" Staff Composite

		Staff Rating of Causes	
		External	Internal
Inmate Rating of Coping	Very well	$\bar{x} = 8.39$	$\bar{x} = 6.90$
		S.D. = 1.75	S.D. = 1.80
	Poorly	$\bar{x} = 6.57$	$\bar{x} = 7.64$
		S.D. = 1.70	S.D. = 2.16

in Table 11. No main effects were significant. The interaction between staff ratings of causality and inmate ratings of coping was significant, $F(1,56) = 6.47$, $p = .014$, but it was not in the predicted direction. When staff perceived the causes of an inmate's crime as due to external factors, those prisoners who thought they were coping well had higher scores on the staff composite than those who thought they were coping poorly. This was not true when staff perceived the causes of their crimes as due to internal factors.

Discussion

The results provide clear evidence for the importance of attributional variables in a penitentiary setting. Following a discussion of the implications of the hypotheses which were supported, those which were not confirmed will be outlined and interpreted within an attributional perspective.

An actor-observer bias in attributions made by social service staff and the inmates was strongly indicated. Staff consistently made more internal attributions about an inmate's crime than did the individual himself. As mentioned earlier, Wells (1980) questioned the existence of an actor-observer bias in causal explanations for adolescents' delinquent behaviour. However, the present study provides clear support for the existence of this classical tenet of attribution theory in a penitentiary setting. As well, several other significant differences in perception were found between staff and inmates. Staff rated inmates as making less progress, they expected more recidivism, and attributed the causes of the crime to more stable factors than did the inmates themselves. The ramifications of these findings are numerous. Feelings of hostility and frustration

between inmates and staff may be heightened by the tendency for staff to see the prisoners in a rather negative light. The causal explanations given for criminal acts can influence the treatment received by offenders at various points in the justice system. Decisions regarding parole and security classifications may be affected by the type of attributions staff make (see Perlman, 1980). As well, research on the "self-fulfilling prophecy" suggests that expectations can influence outcomes, a possibility that may be influencing therapy offered in the penitentiary.

Other dominant findings included the following: previous imprisonment was shown to relate to stable attributions, inmates who perceived their crimes as serious tended to give multiple explanations, and those who had acted with accomplices tended to make external attributions. These results indicate the importance of background variables in understanding causal attributions, replicating and extending previous work in this area (e.g., Feldman & Rosen, 1978; Kelley, 1973). It was also found that staff who had made stable ratings tended to have high expectations of recidivism. Again, this finding has an important implication for future decisions regarding an inmate, such as recommendation for parole, day passes, or transfer to a minimum-security institution.

Contrary to prediction, inmates who made internal attributions regarding their criminal behaviour were not found to have higher coping scores. Rather, there was no significant relationship between inmates' own ratings of their coping and their causal attributions, while staff tended to give higher coping scores to those inmates who made external attributions. This latter result may be explained within an attributional framework. Weiner and Kukla (1970) suggest that external attribution of



failure serves ego-defensive purposes. They argue that success is attributed to internal factors so that the person's self-esteem is enhanced, while failure is attributed to external factors so that the person may maintain his or her self-esteem. It may be that inmates with higher self-esteem (external attributions) function better and thus receive higher ratings from the staff. An inmate who perceives commission of his crime as a "failure" and thus makes external attributions may be seen by staff as acknowledging his mistake and thus rated more highly on coping measures. Perhaps staff see externals in a more favourable light because they understand the inmate committed his crime mainly because of circumstances or other people. These factors may be seen as more changeable, and therefore one could argue that externals present a better risk.

The expected correlation between length of time imprisoned and score on the "powerful others" measure of locus of control was not found in the present study. This result becomes more interpretable when looking at mean scores on the "powerful others" measure. Levenson (1974), who found a significant correlation between length of time imprisoned and powerful others orientation, reported the following mean scores: for men imprisoned less than six months, 14.2; for men imprisoned greater than five years, 21.5. She reported a mean score of 16.7 on the scale among a sample of 96 community adults (Levenson, 1972) while Sherman and Ryckman (1980) reported a mean score of 14.7 among a sample of 104 undergraduate women. In the present study the mean score of the inmate sample on the "powerful others" measure was 21.6, a score equal to that found for long-term prisoners in Levenson's sample. It appeared that in the present study inmates experienced a strong "powerful others" orientation, regardless

of their length of imprisonment. This suggests existence of a ceiling effect, so no differences due to length of time imprisoned could be detected.

Contrary to prediction, inmates who made internal, stable attributions regarding their behaviour did not experience feelings similar to helplessness. However, there was a main effect for stability such that inmates who attributed their crime to stable factors tended to score highly on the measures of resignation and apathy. It may be that the internality dimension does not relate to affective experience in the penitentiary setting, or perhaps the absence of the expected interaction was due to a rather weak operationalization of helplessness. Affective variables do, however, appear to relate to coping. In supplementary analyses significant relationships were found between inmate ratings of coping and depression ($r = -.36$, $p = .003$) and their ratings of coping and loneliness ($r = -.32$, $p = .007$). Inmates who rated themselves as coping well tended to have low scores on the loneliness and depression measures.

The expected relationship between congruence of staff and inmate attributions and high staff coping scores was not found. This hypothesis was drawn from the literature on person-environment fit, and congruence of ratings does not appear to be a strong measure of person-environment fit, as staff ratings do not provide an extremely valid measure of the "environment" variable. Thus the present study did not provide an ideal test of the prediction. A stronger measure of person-environment fit might involve comparing inmates' preferences and expectations regarding prison life with the administration's ideas regarding how highly regimented and routinized prison life should be. Perhaps future research can clarify

the role of this concept in a prison setting.

In conclusion, the present study has generally supported attribution theory. Strong evidence for the existence of an actor-observer bias in explanations for criminal behaviour was found. Staff who made stable attributions were found to have high expectations for recidivism. Previous imprisonment was shown to relate to stable attributions, inmates who perceived their crimes as serious tended to give multiple explanations, and those who had acted with accomplices tended to make external attributions. The existence of loneliness and depression was found to be associated with poor inmate coping. The findings have both theoretical and practical importance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS AND CONSENT FORM

Appendix A

Dear _____,

I am doing a study as partial fulfillment of requirements for my university degree, and have randomly drawn the names of 100 inmates at Stony Mountain to interview. You are one of the individuals whose name was drawn. My research looks at what factors inmates feel led up to their criminal behaviour, and also examines how you believe you are coping in prison and how you are feeling. This study has been approved by the Solicitor General Research and Program Evaluation Committee, although I am not an employee of the penitentiary.

Participants will be interviewed and asked to fill out several questionnaires. This should take approximately two hours. In the past people have found these questionnaires interesting and helpful. The information you provide will be used for scholarly research only -- no case reports will be released. Participation in this study is voluntary.

I would appreciate your help and cooperation, and am willing to answer any questions you may have about the study. A brief summary of results will be sent to all participants in the fall.

Sincerely,

Consent Form

I agree to participate in Kathy Saulnier's 1979 survey of Stony Mountain residents.

(Name)

(Co-Signed)

(Date)

APPENDIX B

CRIMINAL ATTRIBUTION SCALE

Appendix B

Criminal Attribution Scale

Listed below are two statements about several different situations.

We would like you to pick from each pair the one which you feel is MOST TRUE. Naturally, these descriptions are very short, and every situation is unique. But, we would like you to indicate what is most likely or frequently the case in situations such as these.

1. A. Some people blow up because their friends make fun of them.
 B. Some people blow up because they don't have much control
 of themselves.

2. A. Most rapes happen because the woman really wants it.
 B. Most rapists have an ugly and mean streak in them.

3. A. If a guy hits his boss, it was probably because the guy has
 a bad temper.
 B. If a guy hits his boss, it was probably because the boss was
 riding him and was asking for it.

4. A. There's probably something wrong with most of the people who
 commit murders.
 B. Most people who commit murders didn't mean to kill the other
 person, it was really an accident.

5.
 - A. Most women who become prostitutes do it because they don't have any other way to make a living.
 - B. Most women who become prostitutes do it because they don't care about what they're doing.

6.
 - A. Most shoplifters probably really need what they steal but haven't the money to buy it.
 - B. Most shoplifters steal for kicks.

7.
 - A. People usually get high at parties because that's what you're supposed to do at parties.
 - B. People usually get high at parties because it makes them feel good.

8.
 - A. A person who writes bad cheques usually does it to buy things they want but don't want to work for.
 - B. A person who writes bad cheques usually does it because they need the money to buy dope.

APPENDIX C

LEVENSON'S LOCUS OF CONTROL MEASURE

Appendix C

Locus of Control Measure

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Whether or not I get to be a leader depends mostly on my ability.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
2. To a great extent my life is controlled by accidental happenings.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
3. I feel like what happens in my life is mostly determined by powerful others.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
4. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on how good a driver I am.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
5. When I make plans, I am almost certain to make them work.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
6. Often there is no chance of protecting my personal interest from bad luck happenings.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
7. When I get what I want, it's usually because I'm lucky.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
8. Although I might have good ability, I will not be given leadership responsibility without appealing to those in positions of authority.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
9. How many friends I have depends on how nice a person I am.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
10. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
11. My life is chiefly controlled by powerful others.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
12. Whether or not I get into a car accident is mostly a matter of luck.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
13. People like myself have very little chance of protecting our personal interests when they conflict with those of strong pressure groups.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. It's not always wise for me to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
15. Getting what I want requires pleasing those above me.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
16. Whether or not I get to be a leader depends on whether I'm lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
17. If important people were to decide they didn't like me, I probably wouldn't make many friends.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
18. I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
19. I am usually able to protect my personal interests.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
20. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on the other driver.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
21. When I get what I want, it's usually because I worked hard for it.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
22. In order to have my plans work, I make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over me.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
23. My life is determined by my own actions.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
24. It's chiefly a matter of fate whether or not I have a few friends or many friends.	-3	-2	-1	1	2	3

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND INMATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix D

Interview Schedule and Inmate Questionnaire

Background Information Sheet

Age:

Race:

Last Grade finished in school, or GED:

Religion (if any):

Prison groups of which you are a member (e.g., AA, Jaycees, MIB):

Where are you from?

Crime (most serious if several):

Person _____ or

Property _____

Sentence:

Time already served:

Was the crime done alone?

Before you were in prison, how many of your friends had been involved
in a similar crime?

Information from files

Prior record:

Number of times disciplined:

Sentence:

Time Served:

Crime:

Age:

People's behaviour can reflect a number of different things. Sometimes what we do reflects our personality and habits; other times it reflects our circumstances and situation, the influence of friends, or even just chance events. When you think about your crime, what would you say were the main factors that led up to it?

Did any of the following factors play a part in the crime? Check off the ones that did:

Drugs _____

Alcohol _____

A need for money _____

The victim asked for it _____

Influence of my friends _____

Problems at home _____

Immaturity _____

Grew up/lived in a bad neighbourhood _____

Lack of control _____

Parents didn't treat me right _____

Mental problems _____

Aimless _____

Nobody would give me a job _____

Drunk at the time _____

Overall, think about the causes of the crime. Did it occur mainly because of something about you (such as your personality or habits), or was it due to something about the situation or another person or persons?

1

2

3

4

5

something about me

something about the other person or persons

Did the crime occur because of something that changes easily (such as luck, fate, your mood), or because of something pretty unchanging (such

as long-term lack of a job, or other unchanging qualities of a person or situation)?

1	2	3	4	5
something that changes				something unchanging

How much control did you have over the main things that led up to the crime?

1	2	3	4	5
had no control at all				had complete control

How much do the causes of this crime affect other areas of your life?

1	2	3	4	5
caused this event only				caused many events

How likely do you feel that a similar crime will occur in your life?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all likely to happen again				certain to happen again

How upsetting was being charged with the crime for you?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all upsetting				extremely upsetting

When you were charged with the crime, how did you feel?

	1	2	3	4	5
	not at all			extremely	
GUILTY	1	2	3	4	5
ASHAMED	1	2	3	4	5
SURPRISED	1	2	3	4	5
MAD	1	2	3	4	5
ASTONISHED	1	2	3	4	5
REVENGEFUL	1	2	3	4	5
FURIOUS	1	2	3	4	5
INCOMPETENT	1	2	3	4	5
RESIGNED	1	2	3	4	5
APATHETIC	1	2	3	4	5
INADEQUATE	1	2	3	4	5

How serious was your crime?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all serious				very serious

How well do you feel you are getting along with your fellow prisoners?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all well				very well

Do you feel you are making any progress on any problems you might have?

By this I mean problem that may have contributed to your criminal behaviour.

1	2	3	4	5
no progress				a great deal of progress

How well do you think the prison officials (LUDOs, your parole officer) think you are coping?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all				very well
well				

How well have you been able to maintain relationships with your outside friends and family while in prison?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all				very well
well				

Overall, how well do you feel you are coping in prison?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all				very well
well				

Given the way things are going now, when do you think you will get out on parole? Do you think you will get out early, at the "normal" time, or later than average?

Early _____ Normal _____ Late _____

Check the activities you are presently involved with:

newspaper _____ church _____ AA _____

music _____ sports _____

(continued next page)

Number of outside friends _____

Number of outside relatives _____

Activities (cont'd)

Rehabilitation Awareness Project _____

Manitoba Indian Brotherhood _____

Others (please list) _____

Where are you presently working?

How many friends would you say you have in Stony Mountain?

Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days--
would you say you're very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy these
days?

very happy () pretty happy () not too happy ()

Loneliness Scale-Survey Version

Now I am going to read you four statements concerning your feelings.

Please tell me how often you feel the way described in each statement.

For each, tell me if you feel the way described never, rarely, sometimes or often.

1. The first statement is: I feel in tune with the people around me.

Do you feel that way never, rarely, sometimes or often?

(4) Never

(3) Rarely

(2) Sometimes

(1) Often

2. The second statement is: People are around me but not with me. Do

you feel that way never, rarely, sometimes or often?

(1) Never

(2) Rarely

(3) Sometimes

(4) Often

3. The third statement is: I can find companionship when I want it. Do

you feel that way never, rarely, sometimes or often?

(4) Never

(3) Rarely

(2) Sometimes

(1) Often

4. The fourth statement is: No-one really knows me well. Do you feel

that way never, rarely, sometimes or often?

- (1) Never
- (2) Rarely
- (3) Sometimes
- (4) Often

APPENDIX E

BECK DEPRESSION INVENTORY

Appendix E

Beck Depression Inventory

Circle the statement which best describes your current feelings.

1. I do not feel sad.
 2. I feel blue or sad.
 3. I am blue or sad all the time and I can't snap out of it.
 4. I am so sad or unhappy that it is quite painful.
 5. I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it.
-
1. I am not particularly pessimistic or discouraged about the future.
 2. I feel discouraged about the future.
 3. I feel I have nothing to look forward to.
 4. I feel I won't ever get over my troubles.
 5. I feel that the future is hopeless and that things cannot improve.
-
1. I do not feel like a failure.
 2. I feel I have failed more than the average person.
 3. I feel I have accomplished very little that is worthwhile or that means anything.
 4. As I look back on my life all I can see is a lot of failures.
 5. I feel I am a complete failure as a person.
-
1. I am not particularly dissatisfied.
 2. I feel bored most of the time.
 3. I don't enjoy things the way I used to.
 4. I don't get satisfaction out of anything any more.
 5. I am dissatisfied with everything.
-
1. I don't feel particularly guilty.
 2. I feel bad or unworthy a good part of the time.
 3. I feel quite guilty.
 4. I feel bad or unworthy practically all the time now.
 5. I feel as though I am very bad or worthless.
-
1. I don't feel I am being punished.
 2. I have a feeling that something bad may happen to me.
 3. I feel I am being punished or will be punished.
 4. I feel I deserve to be punished.
 5. I want to be punished.
-
1. I don't feel disappointed in myself.
 2. I am disappointed in myself.
 3. I don't like myself.
 4. I am disgusted with myself.
 5. I hate myself.

1. I don't feel I am any worse than anyone else.
 2. I am critical of myself for my weaknesses or mistakes.
 3. I blame myself for my faults.
 4. I blame myself for everything bad that happens.
-
1. I don't have any thoughts of harming myself.
 2. I have thoughts of harming myself but I would not carry them out.
 3. I feel I would be better off dead.
 4. I feel my family would be better off if I were dead.
 5. I have definite plans about committing suicide.
 6. I would kill myself if I could.
-
1. I don't cry any more than usual.
 2. I cry more now than I used to.
 3. I cry all the time now. I can't stop it.
 4. I used to be able to cry but now I can't cry at all even though I want to.
-
1. I am no more irritated now than I ever am.
 2. I get annoyed or irritated more easily than I used to.
 3. I feel irritated all the time.
 4. I don't get irritated at all at the things that used to irritate me.
-
1. I have not lost interest in other people.
 2. I am less interested in other people now than I used to be.
 3. I have lost most of my interest in other people and have little feeling for them.
 4. I have lost all my interest in other people and don't care about them at all.
-
1. I make decisions about as well as ever.
 2. I try to put off making decisions.
 3. I have great difficulty in making decisions.
 4. I can't make any decisions at all any more.
-
1. I don't feel I look any worse than I used to.
 2. I am worried that I am looking old or unattractive.
 3. I feel that there are permanent changes in my appearance and they make me look unattractive.
 4. I feel that I am ugly or repulsive-looking.
-
1. I can work about as well as before.
 2. It takes extra effort to get started at doing something.
 3. I don't work as well as I used to.
 4. I have to push myself very hard to do something.
 5. I can't do any work at all.
-
1. I can sleep as well as usual.
 2. I wake up more tired in the morning than I used to.
 3. I wake up 1 - 2 hours earlier than usual and find it hard to get back to sleep.
 4. I wake up early every day and can't get more than 5 hours sleep.

1. I don't get any more tired than usual.
2. I get tired more easily than I used to.
3. I get tired from doing anything.
4. I get too tired to do anything.

1. My appetite is no worse than usual.
2. My appetite is not as good as it used to be.
3. My appetite is much worse now.
4. I have no appetite at all any more.

1. I haven't lost much weight, if any, lately.
2. I have lost more than 5 pounds.
3. I have lost more than 10 pounds.
4. I have lost more than 15 pounds.

1. I am no more concerned about my health than usual.
2. I am concerned about aches and pains or upset stomach or constipation.
3. I am so concerned with how I feel or what I feel that it's hard to think of much else.
4. I am completely absorbed in what I feel.

1. I have not noticed any recent change in my interest in sex.
2. I am less interested in sex than I used to be.
3. I am much less interested in sex now.
4. I have lost interest in sex completely.

APPENDIX F

PENITENTIARY STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix F

Penitentiary Staff Questionnaire

Overall, think about the causes of this inmate's crime. Did it occur mainly because of something about him (such as his personality or habits) or was it due to something about the situation or another person?

1	2	3	4	5
Something about him				Something about the situation or other persons

Did the crime occur because of something that changes easily (such as luck, fate, person's mood)--or because of something pretty unchanging (such as ability, or unchanging qualities of a person or situation)?

1	2	3	4	5
Something that changes				Something unchanging

How likely do you feel that a similar crime will occur in the inmate's life?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all likely to happen again				certain to happen again

How well do you feel this inmate is getting along with fellow prisoners?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all well				very well

Do you feel that he is making any progress on any problems he might have?

By this I mean problems that may have contributed to his criminal behaviour.

1	2	3	4	5
No progress				a great deal of progress

Overall, how well do you feel this inmate is coping in prison?

1 2 3 4 5

not at
all well

very well

APPENDIX G

CODING INSTRUCTIONS AND SAMPLE STORIES

Appendix G

Coding Instructions

Please code the overall story. Decide if you think the overall explanation given is predominantly internal or external. Use the following scale:

Location Scale Value Labels:

1	2	3	4	5
Internal	Mostly Internal	Mutual or Uncertain	Mostly External	External

An internal attribution is one in which the location of the cause is in the person whose behavioural outcome is being explained. Causes such as the person's ability, personality, effort, motivations, mood, or physical characteristics are internal in location. External locations are causes outside of the person--causes located in other people, in luck, or in social norms or pressures. Mutual attributions are shared causes between the person and other factors such as ability-situation interactions or compatible personality characteristics. Since both mutual and uncertain attributions lie between internal and external attributions, the same code is used for both.

Coding for Stability: Scale Value Labels

1	2	3	4	5
Stable		Uncertain		Unstable

Stable causes are causes which are not expected to vary over time and are relevant to the criterion, while unstable causes fluctuate or are not relevant to the criterion. In cases where stability is

uncertain, use the code for uncertain (3). The criterion situation is "How likely do you feel the individual would engage in the same behaviour if the same situation arose again?" Thus, the criterion situation differs for each person's crime.

Examples

1. The response "I don't believe selling drugs is wrong, I think it's up to the people involved to decide for themselves", would be coded as internal and stable, because the individual is expressing his personal belief (internal) and this is not expected to fluctuate greatly.

2. The response "I did it because everybody was on my back--and the guy asked for it too. He was flashing his money, sitting downtown flashing it", would be coded as external because the individual sees the causes of his crime as located outside himself, and coded as uncertain on the stability dimension because it is not clear whether he perceives these factors to be stable or unstable.

As a general rule, responses such as "it was booze", or "alcohol just does it to me" are coded as external, while a statement such as "I have a problem with drinking" would be coded as internal.

Sample Stories

Manslaughter

I owed \$ 8000 to other people and they were pressuring me--I had no choice, if I didn't do it they would do something to me. I couldn't go to my parents, and the bank would laugh. If I went to Portugal, or Brazil, they'd find me--these are big people, it's an organization, I had to do it. I was gambling and the owner of the apartment block asked me if I'd do the job--he gave me two weeks to think about it. I was to be paid \$ 15,000 for it, and Jim \$ 1500. He showed me the block, what had to be done. I got the gas, went to the basement. The block was supposed to be empty, people were supposed to be told an inspector was coming, but there was an old man there--he was drunk--if I knew he was there I would have saved him. I went to the basement, lit it, and the door locked behind me (I think the guy that hired me did it--once I was burned he would have had no evidence). When the explosion came the door opened, I was all burning, skin was hanging from my fingers, I tried to go home, people called the ambulance. Jim, the watchman, we used his car, got 2 years. I got 12. The owner of the block got life. I had trouble here, I knew I would--in prison they don't like you to testify against somebody. They call me a rat. Twice I went to protection--they ran me. I won't owe the \$ 8000 when I get out--once you're in jail they forgive you--they told my father I am punished enough.

The preceding story was coded as external, unstable by both raters.

Wounding

Alcohol and jealousy.

This was coded "3" by the raters on the location dimension, indicating

"mutual or uncertain" and "3" on the stability dimension.

Trafficking

I like marihuana and LSD, a little bit, I love cocaine, and it's cheaper to buy in quantity, wholesale, than little by little. Plus I wouldn't have to contact the people in the drug scene so often, just every two months instead of every other week. As long as I'm doing it by myself and I don't involve other people, I think it's OK. Plus I don't consider those drugs dangerous, I don't drink. I felt I was using drugs in a positive way that didn't interfere with my work (musician) or relationships with others--not sitting in my house getting stoned all day--I was using it like a martini. I can understand how drugs could be detrimental to some people. I would call my case "drug use" rather than "drug abuse". I was not expecting to be busted because I wasn't into big business. The RCMP knocked on my door and asked to buy cocaine, I said no, then they got out a search warrant.

This story was coded as "internal" and "unstable".

Rape

--there was booze involved, drugs involved, we were following the ringleader, or sometimes I would be the ringleader. I did it because I'm small and I wanted to prove I'm still powerful and didn't "fuck around".

This story was coded as "internal" and "stable" by the two raters.

APPENDIX H

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE SUMMARY TABLE

RELATIONSHIP OF INMATE RATINGS OF INTERNALITY AND STABILITY

TO INMATE COPING COMPOSITE

Appendix H

Analysis of Variance Summary Table
Relationship of Inmate Ratings of Internality and Stability
to Inmate Coping Composite

Source	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Internality (A)	1	5.21	.49	.49
Stability (B)	1	4.02	.38	.54
A x B	1	1.35	.13	.72
Residual	56	10.54		

Mean Scores on Inmate Coping Composite

		Inmate Rating	
		External	Internal
Inmate Rating	Stable	$\bar{x} = 11.44$	$\bar{x} = 10.59$
		S.D. = 3.6	S.D. = 3.1
	Unstable	$\bar{x} = 10.68$	$\bar{x} = 10.50$
		S.D. = 2.6	S.D. = 4.1

APPENDIX I

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE SUMMARY TABLE
RELATIONSHIP OF INMATE RATINGS OF INTERNALITY AND STABILITY
TO "COPING/FELLOWS" STAFF COMPOSITE

Appendix I

Analysis of Variance Summary Table
 Relationship of Inmate Ratings of Internality and Stability
 to "Coping/Fellows" Staff Composite

Source	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P</u>
Internality (A)	1	5.37	1.45	.23
Stability (B)	1	.97	.26	.61
A x B	1	3.38	.91	.34
Residual	56	3.70		

Mean Scores on "Coping/Fellows" Staff Composite

		Inmate Rating	
		External	Internal
Inmate Rating	Stable	$\bar{x} = 7.39$	$\bar{x} = 7.12$
		S.D. = 1.9	S.D. = 2.3
	Unstable	$\bar{x} = 8.0$	$\bar{x} = 6.67$
		S.D. = 1.4	S.D. = 2.3