Understanding and Reducing Prison Violence

Understanding and Reducing Prison Violence considers both the individual and prison characteristics associated with violence perpetration and violent victimization among both prison inmates and staff.

Prison violence is not a random process; rates of violence vary across prisons and the odds of perpetrating violence or experiencing violent victimization vary across inmates and staff. A comprehensive understanding of the causes of prison violence therefore requires consideration of both individual and prison characteristics.

Building on a large dataset comprising 5,500 inmates and 1,800 officers across 45 prisons located in two of the states in the United States (Ohio and Kentucky), this book showcases one of the largest and most comprehensive studies of prisons carried out to date. It considers both the implications of the study for theories of prison violence and the implications of the study for preventing violence in prisons. It will be of interest to academics, practitioners, and policy makers alike.

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Understanding and Reducing Prison Violence
An Integrated Social Control–Opportunity Perspective

Benjamin Steiner
and John Wooldredge
For Emily and John
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Preface

Ben Steiner, the first author of this book, passed away on January 22, 2019, after a very tough fight with a rare form of brain cancer. He was diagnosed with the disease a full year before he passed, and yet he remained determined to complete this project. Ben’s dedication to high quality work characterized his entire career beginning in graduate school, and it is reflected in the large body of scholarship he has left us in a relatively short period of time.

This book on individual-level violence in prison constitutes our final work on a project that began in the late 2000s. The project was broad in scope and designed to examine micro- and macro-level effects on the perceptions and behaviors of both prisoners and correctional officers within and across all state prisons in Ohio and Kentucky. Ben and I carried out the project on very limited funds (roughly $30,000 for 46 prisons), and it is has been the most interesting, rewarding, and fun project of my career. We collaborated on many articles devoted to different aspects of the project, and this book reflects a framework for understanding in-prison violence that emerged over time from different pieces of these articles. It is the sum total of what we learned throughout the project and, as such, presents completely new analyses derived from these lessons. Ben very much looked forward to writing a book from the project that might serve as a catalyst to more empirical studies of prison violence, and would be theoretically driven while providing useful information to policy makers generated from scientifically rigorous procedures. I believe we successfully accomplished this goal.

Ben was a superb academic and a wonderful person, and I am very grateful to have been his friend and to have watched him develop as a scholar. He was exceptional in his intellect, curiosity, work ethic, problem solving, and the support he offered to colleagues and students. Our work together epitomized what I always believed a research collaboration should be.

The kind of research Ben engaged in dealt with humanitarian approaches to crime control. He accomplished this by focusing on how to make prisons safer places for both inmates and staff, identifying inequities in the use of solitary confinement, reducing extra-legal disparities in the treatment of offenders, and improving prison officers’ behaviors and reducing offenders’ cynicism of legal authority. His work is relevant to both theory and policy development, and
particularly so for policy given the implications for reducing crime among the highest risk offenders.

Aside from all of this, Ben was a good friend to me. He has a wonderful legacy in his family, his friends, and in his scholarship, all products of how much he cared for those close to him and for the welfare of others. Ben was a great scholar and an even better human being.

John Wooldredge
This study was supported, in part, by grants from the National Institute of Justice (Award #2007-IJCX-0010) and the National Science Foundation (Award #SES-0715515). The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice or the National Science Foundation. The authors also wish to thank Guy Harris, along with Brian Martin and Gayle Bickle, with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, and Ruth Edwards and Tammy Morgan, with the Kentucky Department of Corrections, for their assistance with the collection of the data for this study.
Prisons are institutions where individuals convicted of crimes are forcibly confined and subjected to the supervision and authority of prison staff. The number of persons imprisoned in the United States increased considerably between 1970 and 2000, and prisons operating in the United States now confine over 1.5 million persons (Carson, 2018). The number of prison officers and available bed capacity did not increase at the same rate as the inmate population (compare Stephan, 1997 to Stephan, 2008), and so most prisons in the United States are understaffed and operate over their intended capacities (Stephan, 2008). Placing so many offenders in close proximity to one another under the supervision of limited prison staff maximizes the convergence in time and space of persons more vulnerable to violent victimization and those more likely to commit violence given the opportunity (Edgar, O’Donnell, & Martin, 2003; Wooldredge, 1998; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2014).

The study described herein is about individual-on-individual violence in prison. Prison violence more broadly includes intrapersonal (e.g., self-harm), interpersonal (e.g., offending, victimization), and collective violence (e.g., riots). Our focus for this study is interpersonal violence perpetrated by inmates and experienced by inmates and/or staff—the violent events that take place within the everyday framework of a prison’s social organization (Bottoms, 1999).

Prisons can be violent places. Data collected from the Census of Adult State and Federal Correctional Facilities in the United States indicates that the average within-prison rate of assaults on inmates housed in U.S. prisons was 16.25 assaults per 1,000 inmates in 2005 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010). In contrast, the arrest rate for assaults among adults in the U.S. general population was 6.54 in 2005 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006). Based on self-report data from the 2004 Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 12.5 percent of all surveyed prisoners physically assaulted another inmate during their incarceration, 2.8 percent physically assaulted a staff member, and 15.0 percent were intentionally injured by another person during their incarceration (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007). Data from the 2008 National Former Prisoner Survey revealed that approximately 7.5 percent of former state inmates were sexually victimized during their most recent imprisonment (Beck & Johnson, 2012), while data from the 2011–2012 National Inmate Survey (NIS) showed that approximately 4 percent

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of inmates were sexually victimized during a 12-month period (Beck et al., 2013). In comparison, findings from the corresponding National Crime Victimization Surveys showed that less than 2 percent of the U.S. population age 12 and over experienced a physical assault during the previous year (Catalano, 2005), and approximately 1 percent of the general population were sexually assaulted during this same period (Rand, 2009; Truman et al., 2013).

Despite the tenuous nature of some of the comparisons discussed above (i.e., some estimates reflect the occurrence of events over different periods), the rates of violent offending and violent victimization among inmates appear to be higher in U.S. prisons than in the general population. This situation is not unique to inmates. Prison officers experience higher rates of workplace violence relative to those working in most other occupations (Harrell, 2011), and prison officers rank among the highest occupational groups for nonfatal injury rates and days absent from work due to those injuries (Konda et al., 2012). However, researchers have found that the likelihood of perpetrating violence and/or experiencing violent victimization is not consistently high among all inmates or prison staff. Studies of prison inmates and staff perceptions also consistently reveal that inmates generally feel safe most of the time and most officers feel safe while at work (e.g., Bottoms, 1999; Edgar et al. 2003; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2017). Rates of violence also differ across prisons (e.g., Beck et al., 2013; Camp et al., 2003; Steiner, 2009; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2008, 2017; Wolff et al., 2007; Wooldredge, 1998; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2014). Considered together, these observations suggest that prison violence is not a random process. Some inmates perpetrate violence frequently or experience violent victimization repeatedly, while others are never involved in a violent event (as either an offender or a victim). Prison staff exhibit similar variation in the frequency with which they are involved in violent events. Violence is widespread in some prisons but rarely occurs in others. Differences between individuals and the facilities in which they live or work contribute to variation in the odds of perpetrating violence and experiencing violent victimization in prison, and an understanding of the sources of this variation is important for several reasons.

First, institutional safety is a high priority for prison administrators, and yet prison violence threatens the safety and order of a prison (DiIulio, 1987; Gendreau et al., 1997; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2009b; Toch et al., 1989). Violent incidents not only cause harm to the inmates and/or staff involved, they can also disrupt the daily routines in prison and further limit the services and amenities that officials can provide to other inmates (DiIulio, 1987). Second, prison officials are legally responsible for protecting the confined (Park, 2000), and officials are evaluated in part by the level of violence and other disturbances in their institution (Camp et al., 2003; DiIulio, 1987; Lombardo, 1989). Further underscoring this point is the volume of civil liability for inmate-on-inmate assaults, not just in the United States but also in other industrialized countries. The environments of prisons necessarily create some very unique opportunities for violence, such as officers provoking fights between inmates in adjacent cells (e.g., Pinkston v. Madry, 2006), placing violent habitual offenders in open
dormitories (e.g., *Pierson v. Hartley*, 2004), failing to protect inmates when they were witnesses in other cases involving offenders housed in the same facility (e.g., *Rangolan v. County of Nassau*, 2004), permitting transsexual inmates to interact with sexual predators (*Greene v. Bowles*, 2004), and placing inmates in close proximity to others who consistently threaten them (*Borello v. Allison*, 2006). From a practical standpoint, research on prison violence is essential for uncovering the most effective means of violence prevention in prison in order to reduce harm to both inmates and staff, and to reduce incumbent costs to the state.

Finally, prison officials have a moral responsibility to protect both the confined and the public (i.e., it is the right thing to do). Scholars have documented the direct and collateral consequences of incarceration (e.g., Clear, 2007; Travis & Western, 2014), but exposure to prison violence has additional consequences for those who live and work in prison, as well as for the public. For example, inmates who perpetrate violence are more likely to suffer victimization in prison (Boxer et al., 2009; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2014), and those who are victimized are more likely to experience psychological problems such as PTSD, depression, anxiety, hostility, and aggression both during their incarceration and after release (Boxer et al., 2009; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Hochstetler et al., 2004; Listwan et al., 2010; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2006; Wolff & Shi, 2011; Wooldredge, 1999; Zweig et al., 2015). Violent victimization has also been associated with greater stress and burnout among prison staff (e.g., Schaufeli & Peters, 2000; Spinaris et al., 2012; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2015b). Further, inmates who perpetrate violence or suffer victimization in prison are more likely to offend after they are released (e.g., Cochran, 2013; Cochran et al., 2014; Listwan et al., 2010, 2013). Prison officials have an ethical responsibility to ensure that their fellow staff, those in their care, and the public are not harmed, and uncovering the sources of prison violence would aid in the development of strategies designed to reduce harm stemming from these events. The reduction of prison violence could also go a long way toward increasing the legitimacy of prisons in the eyes of inmates, staff, and society (Sparks et al., 1996).

The study described in this book is about understanding the sources of prison violence and why violence is more or less common among individuals confined in the same prison as well as why levels of violence differ across prisons. As noted, we focus specifically on interpersonal violence—violence perpetrated by inmates and experienced by inmates and staff. The study was carried out in 46 prisons across two of the United States (Ohio and Kentucky), and data were collected from inmates, officers, and prison administrators.

**Explaining prison violence**

Researchers have long been interested in the study of prisons, inmates, and prison staff (e.g., Clemmer, 1940; Reimer, 1937; Sykes, 1958), which, when coupled with the priority that prison administrators place on promoting order and safety in their institutions, have generated numerous studies of the causes and correlates of prison violence. Scholars have typically relied on three perspectives and
the interactions between them when framing potential predictors of violence. Deprivation theory suggests that inmate behaviors are manifestations of how inmates adapt and cope with the “pains” inflicted by the prison environment, whether through participation in a social system that helps to reduce these deprivations (Clemmer, 1940; Sykes, 1958), or through individual-level choices that help to facilitate need satisfaction (Goodstein et al., 1984; Goodstein & Wright, 1989). Drawing from this perspective, scholars have emphasized the relevance of environmental features of prisons (e.g., population size, security levels) for understanding inmate violence (e.g., Cao et al., 1997; Lahm, 2008; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2008; Thomas, 1977).

Aside from deprivation theory, importation theory holds that prisons are not completely closed systems and that inmate behaviors are shaped primarily by individuals’ pre-institution characteristics, beliefs, attitudes, and experiences (Irwin & Cressey, 1962; Irwin, 1980). Scholars have often framed the link between pre-incarceration individual-level characteristics of inmates (e.g., age, race) and prison violence within importation theory (e.g., Cao et al., 1997; Goetting & Howsen, 1986; Mears et al., 2013; Harer & Steffensmeier, 1996). Others have also considered the interactions between the deprivation and importation perspectives, recognizing that the impact of environmental factors may be conditioned by the personal attributes of prisoners (e.g., Mears et al., 2013; Wooldredge et al., 2001).

A third perspective is actually a set of perspectives focusing on prison management, such as administrative control or inmate balance theory. These explanations de-emphasize the impact of prison environments and inmates, suggesting that differences in levels of violence across prisons are primarily the result of differences in how prisons are managed (Camp et al., 2003; Colvin, 1992; DiIulio, 1987; Useem & Kimball, 1989; Useem & Reisig, 1999). Researchers who have assessed the empirical validity of management perspectives have found that indicators of managerial practices (e.g., use of disciplinary housing or facility programming) are related to levels of violence across prisons (e.g., Camp et al., 2003; Huebner, 2003; Steiner, 2009; Useem & Reisig, 1999). More recent discussions of legitimate authority and the exercise of power by prison officers also fall within this perspective, even if not formally stated as such (e.g., Crewe & Laws, 2018; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2018).

Empirical studies have provided support for each of these “traditional” explanations of prison violence; however, researchers who have examined the relevance of individual pre-incarceration characteristics, environmental characteristics of prisons, and management practices in the same empirical model have found that variables reflecting each of these three domains are relevant to an understanding of prison violence, not to mention interactions between at least two of the three domains (e.g., Camp et al., 2003; Cao et al., 1997; Huebner, 2003; Jiang & Winfree, 2006; Lahm, 2008; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2015; Steiner, 2009; Wooldredge et al., 2001; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2014). Comprehensive reviews of the evidence pertaining to prison violence have also found that individual characteristics, prison characteristics, and management practices are all
linked to inmate violence (Crewe & Laws, 2018; Steiner et al., 2014, 2017), suggesting that each of the three theories of prison violence are inadequate as standalone explanations of the phenomenon. As we discuss in Chapter 2, this is because none of the existing theories of inmate behavior can account for variation in institutional violence at both the inmate and facility levels of analyses, while also incorporating all of the relevant sources of violence based on related empirical studies (Crewe & Laws, 2018; Steiner et al., 2014). A conceptual framework inclusive of concepts depicting individual characteristics, environmental characteristics of prisons, and management practices has yet to emerge (Byrne et al., 2008).

**A multilevel social control–opportunity perspective**

To the end of providing a more comprehensive framework for understanding prison violence, we present a social control–opportunity theory of prison violence that is inclusive of individual characteristics, environmental characteristics of prisons, and management practices (including perceived legitimacy of prison authority and the exercise of power by custodial staff). The perspective also offers a multilevel explanation of violence by incorporating both individual- and prison-level influences on the odds of violent offending and victimization. A multilevel social control–opportunity perspective recognizes that variation in individuals’ characteristics and routines, along with the contexts to which they are exposed, affect opportunities for violence independently as well as in interaction with each other (Felson, 1986, 1987; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Wilcox et al., 2003). Concepts that are central to this application of the theory include individuals’ lifestyles and daily routines, guardianship, personal/self-control, individuals’ social bonds, and target suitability. Individual, environmental, and managerial factors are embedded in these concepts as they shape inmates’ odds of perpetrating violence as well as inmate and staff vulnerability to violent victimization.

An individual’s daily activities operate indirectly on their risk of violent victimization by shaping their exposure to situations conducive to victimization (Hindelang et al., 1978). Some activities or routines reduce the amount of guardianship over individuals, increasing their susceptibility to victimization (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Sparks, 1981). Consistent with Schreck (1999), some of these activities might also involve criminal offending (whether violent or nonviolent), thus provoking potential assailants. Involvement in more structured activities during incarceration, on the other hand, may limit a prison inmate’s opportunity for violence perpetration and, in turn, violent victimization (Steiner & Wooldredge, 2009a; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2014). Regarding correctional officers, their routines and activities on the job (e.g., shift assignment) might also make them more or less vulnerable to victimization.

In addition to routines affecting guardianship at the individual level (and, in turn, affecting the odds of perpetrating violence or experiencing violent victimization), ecological units such as prisons vary in guardianship at the macro level (Cohen & Felson, 1979). In prisons, tighter formal controls over inmate populations directly correspond with guardianship (Wooldredge & Steiner, 2014).
Some prisons provide less control over the inmate population relative to others, which could increase opportunities for violence. Differences in the controls placed on individual inmates may correspond to differences in the restraints on their odds of perpetrating violence, even in the presence of suitable targets (Felson, 1986, 1995; Felson & Gottfredson, 1984).

Personal/self-control reflects the ability of an individual to refrain from the use of violence for need satisfaction or the ability to avoid situations conducive to violence (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Janowitz, 1975; Reiss, 1951). Schreck (1999) extended Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) general theory of criminal behavior to an understanding of victimization risk. Gottfredson and Hirschi argued that individuals with low self-control are more likely to engage in crime because they tend to be impulsive, self-centered, short-sighted, thrill seeking, physically inclined, risk-taking, and belligerent as opposed to considering the future consequences of their behaviors. Schreck (1999) hypothesized that these factors might also explain why some individuals are more likely to be victimized, if lower levels of self-control coincide with lifestyle choices that increase an individual’s vulnerability to victimization.

Schreck (1999) argued that individuals with low self-control are less likely to have long-term foresight of their actions and attendant consequences. They are more likely to engage in risky or antagonistic behaviors (e.g., violence) and place themselves in situations that lead to an increased risk of victimization. Therefore, low self-control influences lifestyle choices, which in turn, may create situations that increase one’s vulnerability to victimization. Applied to an inmate’s risk of victimization, those with lower levels of self-control may be more likely to engage in violence or risky behavior and/or interact with like-minded prisoners, which, in turn, may increase their risk of violent victimization. Similarly, an officer with less self-control might take more risks on the job (e.g., intervening in problem situations without assistance from other officers), which would increase their odds of victimization.

The degree to which an individual is “bonded” to conventional society may also reduce willingness to engage in violence, based on commitment to conventional goals, involvement/investment in conventional activities, attachment to conventional others, and belief in the legitimacy of conventional rules (Hirschi, 1969). Individuals with stronger bonds, as reflected in these elements, have more to lose by engaging in criminal activities and being arrested (Felson, 1986; Hirschi, 1969). Individuals with stronger bonds might also be less likely to suffer victimization, either because they have more to lose by engaging in risky behaviors that increase their vulnerability to victimization or because they are less exposed to risky situations by nature of interacting within a network of conventional others (Felson, 1986, 1995; Felson & Gottfredson, 1984; Schreck, 1999). It follows that prison inmates with stronger bonds to conventional society would have lower odds of engaging in violence, and that both inmates and officers with stronger bonds would be less vulnerable to violent victimization.

Also relevant is an individual’s suitability as a potential target of violence. Offenders may select potential victims based on their allure or value to offenders.
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Some individuals are also more vulnerable to victimization because they possess attributes that convey greater susceptibility to victimization or because they are less capable of preventing victimization (Finkelhor & Asdigan, 1996; Garofalo, 1986; Sparks, 1981). In contrast, as noted above, some individuals may engage in behaviors or possess characteristics that antagonize others, increasing their risk of victimization (Finkelhor & Asdigan, 1996; Schreck, 1999; Sparks, 1981). The close confines of a prison necessarily forces interaction between individuals with very different characteristics and backgrounds, whether between inmates or between inmates and staff, thereby generating opportunities for violent encounters between individuals who differ in their airs of vulnerability and antagonism. The environments of some prisons also generate greater vulnerability for victimization among inmates or staff, or greater potential for individuals with characteristics that promote violence to interact with one another. For example, environments where officers rely more on coercion to gain inmate compliance with rules may experience more staff assaults if the use of coercion necessarily antagonizes inmates subjected to verbal or even physical abuse by staff.

The multilevel social control–opportunity perspective is inclusive of the individual- and prison-level factors empirically linked to prison violence in extant studies. The perspective is capable of explaining both offending and victimization, and at the individual (inmate) and aggregate (facility) levels. It has typically been applied to individuals and ecological units in the general population, but a few tests of portions of this perspective have been conducted with samples of prisoners and staff (e.g., Edgar & O’Donnell, 1998; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2009a, 2009b, 2017; Wooldredge, 1994, 1998; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2013, 2014). An understanding of this perspective contributes to a more reasonable explanation of why certain individual and prison characteristics may affect prison violence, which is important for informing the development of responses aimed at preventing violence in prison, not to mention evaluating the impact of those responses.

Here, we apply this perspective to data collected from over 5,500 inmates and over 1,800 officers within 46 prisons in Ohio and Kentucky. We examine the sources of both violent offending and violent victimization among prison inmates, and we also assess the individual- and prison-level influences on officer victimization. The bi-level empirical models of prison violence presented herein should be useful in pinpointing the strongest effects on violence at both the individual and prisons levels so as to inform prison officials how they might assess the magnitude of the problem in their own institutions and derive more practical methods for reducing the problem.

Project background

All analyses presented are original analyses of data compiled in the late 2000s and early 2010s from Ohio and Kentucky prisons. These data have been examined previously in a number of publications (Steiner & Wooldredge, 2014a, 2014b, 2017; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2014b; Wooldredge, 2009a, 2009b, 2014a, 2014b; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2013, 2014).
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2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2017, 2018; Wooldredge and Steiner, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c), each of which contributed in some way to our subsequent consideration of the broad framework of in-prison violence presented here. As such, this book serves to (a) present an integrated, multilevel theory of in-prison violence that is theoretically consistent and potentially useful for informing violence prevention in prison, (b) demonstrate how the framework was ultimately developed from an integration of extant findings on prison violence (including our own), and (c) consolidate all applicable findings from these data while also providing more comprehensive analyses that move beyond earlier analyses in order to capture the complete framework. Regarding the last point, we have reproduced our most relevant findings to date related to individual-level violence while also providing a host of new results, all of which help to underscore the theoretical and practical relevance of a multilevel social control–opportunity perspective on in-prison violence.

Our review of research on inmate violence in Chapter 2 necessarily includes applicable literature reviews, but it is important to recognize that the pools of studies compiled for some of those reviews included several of our own publications from the data examined here. This could potentially stack the deck in favor of our framework, presented in Chapter 3, when considering certain rarely examined concepts that we just happened to examine in one or two studies. Therefore, readers are cautioned to temper all observations related to phenomena that have been rarely examined (e.g., prison architecture) with the possibility that those observations may have been unduly influenced by one of our own studies given the paucity of research on those specific phenomena.

It is also important to note that, even though we have never applied the full multilevel framework presented here, we have introduced elements of the framework in previous publications. Specifically, our analyses of victimization in prisons for men (Wooldredge & Steiner, 2013, 2014) and women (Wooldredge & Steiner, 2016c) were grounded in lifestyle-routine activities theory using the same data. We have also discussed applications of micro and/or macro-level control theories using data sets aside from our own, including the Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities in conjunction with the Census of Adult State and Federal Correctional Facilities in the U.S. (Steiner & Wooldredge, 2009a, 2009b; Wooldredge & Steiner, 2015).

Overview of chapters

In this book, we present the findings from our examination of prison violence among inmates and staff in 46 prisons in Ohio and Kentucky. In Chapter 2, we describe the traditional theoretical perspectives on prison violence (e.g., deprivation, importation, administrative control). We also discuss the empirical evidence pertaining to the causes and correlates of prison violence, and then assess whether the extant evidence supports the traditional explanations of prison violence.
Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive presentation of our integrated social control–opportunity perspective that, along with the empirical evidence discussed in Chapter 2, informed the analyses described here. The perspective is primarily based on theoretical and empirical research conducted on general population samples (e.g., Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson, 1986; Finkelhor & Asdigian, 1996; Garofalo, 1986; Hindelang et al., 1978; Hirschi, 1969; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sparks, 1981; Wilcox et al., 2003).

Chapter 4 includes a description of the study sites and the methods used to collect all data pertinent to our analysis of prison violence. We discuss the sampling strategy for the inmate and officer samples, along with participation rates for each sample. We describe each sample and the measures examined in the study. Finally, we outline the analytical strategies used to analyze the data.

Chapter 5 presents the results of our analyses. We discuss the significant and nonsignificant predictors of (1) violent offending by inmates, (2) violent victimization of inmates by other inmates, and (3) inmate-on-officer victimization. We also discuss the magnitude of significant effects on each outcome in order to identify the strongest effects at both the individual and prison levels. Chapter 6 then focuses on the implications of these results for the integrated social control–opportunity perspective.

Chapter 7 follows the theoretical implications with a discussion of policy implications and how our findings might inform strategies for preventing prison violence. This discussion is organized around current recommendations for reducing prison violence provided by various academic and government sources as well as suggestions provided by staff and administrators at the 46 prisons we visited over the course of the entire project. Finally, Chapter 8 focuses on moral issues linked to the mere existence of prison violence, and we return to discussions of applicable civil cases such as those mentioned earlier. The chapter ends with a discussion of study limitations and recommended directions for future studies on in-prison violence.
Notes

1 We do not address collective violence in prison because prison riots have declined significantly since the 1980s in both the United States and other Western European countries (Useem, 2018), perhaps a consequence of the inmate rights movement (Jacobs, 1980) and improvements in prison management over the past several decades (DiIulio, 1987). On the other hand, there is no hard evidence that rates of individual-level violence have actually decreased or increased over time. Within the pool of incidents involving individual-level violence, we do not discuss staff-on-inmate violence because the causes of violence by staff are distinct from the precipitators of violence by inmates. Inmate-on-inmate sexual violence is also not discussed for similar reasons and because of the rarity of these events relative to other forms of violence in prison. Finally, inmate self-harm is not examined because a focus on mental health demands access to psychological assessments, and such access by researchers is prohibited.

1 Non-English speaking inmates were identified by their citizenship status. All inmates designated as illegal immigrants were excluded from the sampling frames. Exclusion of these inmates did not eliminate all non-English speaking inmates from the sampling frames, and so a handful of these inmates who were selected for the samples were treated as refusals.

2 Some inmates were unavailable on the survey days because they had been released or transferred \( (N = 125) \), posed a safety risk \( (N = 42) \), were on a visit \( (N = 44) \), or were not on their compounds (e.g., in court) \( (N = 86) \). As the study progressed, the number of unavailable inmates decreased because we obtained additional information regarding the housing locations of the inmates during the week prior to the study. This information allowed us to remove from the sampling frames all inmates who, at that time, were not at the facility (e.g., absent with leave), were scheduled to be released, or were recently placed in segregation.

3 It should also be noted that the factor prison officer legitimacy was derived in exactly the same fashion as for the full sample (alpha reliability = 0.75), where a CFA was conducted to test the idea of a single factor encompassing the same four survey items from time 1 followed by the creation of a single factor via PCA (which was treated as an observed variable for the longitudinal analysis).

4 An argument could be made to use group mean-centering with these types of models because some compositional effects could be spurious with unmeasured facility effects. The estimates were very similar using both group mean- and grand mean-centering, so we chose the latter to provide more rigorous tests of the level-2 effects examined.

5 Models were derived with Laplace estimation using HLM 7.0 (Raudenbush, Bryk, & Congdon, 2011), which produces coefficients very similar to maximum likelihood estimation while also enabling chi-square tests of model fit (Raudenbush et al., 2011). The value of chi-square for model fit is the difference in the Deviance statistic between two models. We compared the fit of each level-1 model relative to the corresponding null (unconditional) model, and each full model (with both level-1 and level-2 predictors) relative to the corresponding level-1 model.

1 A full assessment of our findings involves consideration of both theoretical and practical (policy) implications, the latter focusing on realistic strategies for reducing violent crime and victimization in prison. These policy implications are presented in Chapter 7.
References


Borello v. Allison, 446 F.3d 742, 7th Cir. (2006).


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