

Old School(ed) Masculinities: Classed and gendered trajectories to 'revolving door' imprisonment

Dr David Maguire.
School of Geography
& Environment.
University Of Oxford
dave.maguire@hotmail.co.uk

Prisoners as undereducated/ underemployed **Men**

- 42% of adult prisoners were permanently excluded from school (Coates 2016)
- Most prisoners last attended school aged 14 (Kennedy 2013)
- 52% of male offenders have no qualifications (MoJ 2005)
- Over two thirds of 1,435 newly sentenced (in 2005 and 2006) prisoners were unemployed weeks before custody (SPCR)
- Most prisoners leave with no identified employment or training (Coates 2016)

In England and Wales the prison population is over 90% Men

The Study

Learning to Serve Time:

Troubling spaces of working class masculinity in the U.K.

- Qualitative study based in HMP Hull (local prison), East Yorkshire
- Exploration of the classed and gendered trajectories that lead to ‘revolving door’ incarceration for a group of men from working class backgrounds.

Place: Routes to incarceration

Kingston Upon Hull:

- 70's decline of strong industrial legacy ('cod wars')
- Census: consistently in top 10 cities for highest rates of unemployment
- 2009 bottom of *Centre for Cities* multiple deprivation index (out of 63, 2nd most socially deprived)
- One of the countries worst performing LEA
- 2010 *Centre for Cities* – highest youth unemployment
- benefit claimants for Jobseeker's Allowance more than twice the national average (especially among the young)
- 2012 hardest city in England to find a job with up to 53 chasing every vacancy (BBC/Hull Daily Mail)
- largest expanse of council housing in Europe - in the form of Bransholme and the North Hull Estate
- 2003 voted worse place to live (Idler website)

late capitalist dystopia of poverty, worklessness and deprivation' (Featherstone, 2013)

Voted: UK City of Culture 2017

Routes to Incarceration: Community

- 'Estate culture'
- Street masculinities – abandoned or avoided adult supervision
- Masculinities constructed, accepted or rejected in the (usually older) all male peer group or siblings
- Almost third taken into care
- Criminal transitions?

Masculinities and Schooling

- **Failing Boys**
 - Not all boys
 - ‘Poverty of expectation and aspiration’
- **Failing Schools**
 - Worst performing LEA’s
- **Rich interdisciplinary scholarship masculinities and schooling**
 - Counter school culture (having a laff) (Willis)
 - Battering against schools authority (Connell)
 - Fighting, Fucking and Football (Mac an Ghaii)
- **Imported (street) protest masculinities**

Routes to Incarceration: 'Education'

- Most excluded from mainstream school
- Alternative education
- Boarding school for 'Bad Lads'
- Curriculum supported existing masculinity

School To Work Transitions

- **Decline in traditional masculine industry**
 - Feminisation and increased credentialism
 - Rise of ‘poor work’
 - ‘Doing docility and deference’
- **Struggle with workplace and housing transitions to adulthood**
- **What about those invested or ‘trapped’ in street based protest masculinities?**
 - Transitions disrupted /fragmented –early criminal careers and incarceration
 - Most engaged in some low skilled work/mainly cash in hand
 - Unsustainable
- **Contributed to own work place exclusion**

Adolescence to Adult Transitions ‘inside’

- **Time Served: Coming of age transitions**
 - Some were serving up to twentieth term
 - Formative years inside
 - Institutional markers of manhood
- **Prison Learning/Training**
 - Impoverished prison regimes
 - Basic reading and writing as necessity
 - Poor transferable value in contemporary labour markets

Imagined Futures

- Live up to their masculine ideals
- Role models – their father's generation as breadwinners
- No idea, plans or preparation for how to manage in the changing local economies
- Only have the social capital valid for their estates /prison

Conclusion

- Pre prison learning sites better prepared respondents for serving time
- Adolescence to adult transitions in the carceral space trapped men in more extreme protest and prison masculinities
- Highly deprived neighborhoods, failing schools, impoverished prison regimes offered few alternative avenues to masculinity
- How can education in CJS provide alternative masculine capital?