

**BOOT CAMPS:
ISSUES FOR CANADA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is only in the last 18 years that boot camps have become an integral part of the criminal justice system. In recent years, the push for alternatives to incarceration has, in large part, been in response to rapidly increasing prison populations and costs of imprisonment in Canada and the United States.

As the first boot camps were being developed in Georgia and Oklahoma in the early 1980's, widespread development of sanctions were associated with three factors. First, rehabilitation lost credibility as a basis for sentencing, second, the rehabilitative rationale for sentencing was supplanted by "just desserts" concern that punishment would be proportional with the crime, and, third, law and order proponents linked public safety to harsher sentences and campaigned to implement the latter.

The primary treatment tool in boot camps is teaching, using the military style regime. Studies have shown a lower re-offence rate among boot camp graduates. This success is attributed to rehabilitative programming and quality after-care. While all camps share common features, there are more differences between programs than similarities. Areas in which programs differ include: camp goals, camp location, number of participants, average number of days served, voluntary entry, voluntary dropout, offence history, gender, race and age of clients.

Four predominant boot camp goals are to: (1) create a less expensive alternative to prison, (2) reduce recidivism and promote successful reintegration of the offender into the community (3) deter crime and promote community relations, and (4) improve control and management techniques. The two least cited goals for boot camps are punishment and vocational education. Boot camp goals can be classified into three major areas. System level goals are goals such as reducing the cost of imprisonment and reduce prison overcrowding. Individual level goals involve changes in the offenders who participate in boot camp programs and public relations goals include improving the public image of corrections.

The number of participants is the area of greatest variability between boot camp programs. There can be as little as 360 beds available for the fiscal year or as much as 3000. Boot camp prisons impose a harsh and demanding regime on offenders. The average number of days served within the boot camp is generally 90 to 180 days. Offenders either volunteer or are required to complete a short-term stay at the boot camp. In the majority of states, entrance into boot camps is voluntary. Usually offenders opt into the more intense short-term program instead of longer prison sentences. Judges and corrections officials, however, make the final decision about whether an offender is accepted into a boot camp program despite whether the offender volunteers. Most programs are limited to only first time felony offenders. The offender may have received community supervision in the past but would still be eligible for the program. Over half of the programs allow violent offenders to participate. Some programs are intended for only young offenders, but some programs have set age limits as high as 40 for admission.

Since their creation in 1983, boot camps have developed and changed considerably. Originally all programs strictly emphasized the military atmosphere, physical training and hard labour aspects. More recently there has been an incorporation of education, counselling, or vocational training during the time offenders are incarcerated. Once offenders have completed their terms at boot camp, they are

released under intensive community supervision. Most states have implemented post-release programs which include work programs, employment counselling, drug counselling and daily therapeutic community meetings to assist in the offender's re-integration into society. Aftercare programs have been initiated in order to build on the behavioural, social, attitudinal and educational gains that boot camps hope to produce. The techniques, theoretical approaches and information displayed within the boot camps has been passed on to aftercare facilities for boot camp graduates. Thirteen nationwide programs have developed aftercare models specifically for boot camps.

Most evaluations of boot camps have examined the issue of cost savings. Evaluations of both Georgia and Mississippi boot camps have shown that program costs are comparable to prison costs. However, boot camp costs in New York and Oklahoma exceed prison costs. A study conducted in Alabama in 1989-90 showed that the cost of housing 153 inmates for 90 days in a boot camp was \$550,800. The cost to house the same number of inmates in prison for the same period of time was \$2,227,680.

Offender rehabilitation has been measured using several variables. Comparisons reveal that there is no statistically significant impact of boot camps on reducing criminal behaviour. An Alabama study compared the rates of technical violations and new offences committed between three groups; boot camp graduates, incarcerated offenders and probationers. In fact, boot camp graduates showed slightly higher rates of "new offences" than the probation group.

Currently, there are several Canadian provincial governments who are considering the use of boot camps. The driving force behind the boot camp alternative is different from the United States. In Alberta, there is a common perception that offenders are "getting off easy." As a result of public outcry for more punitive measures for criminals, the use of shock incarceration is seen as introducing these punitive measures. There are several factors that frustrate the use of boot camps in Alberta and make their use unacceptable. First, Canadian legislation does not currently allow for significantly shorter sentences based on the successful completion of any program. Rather prison sentences in Canada are automatically reduced by one-third. This one-third is served in the community under statutory release. Second, forced participation in the program would be far less likely to succeed in rehabilitating the offender. Motivation is a big factor that allows boot camps to instill change in their participants. Without the option of participating and without the shorter sentence of participating, it is unlikely that offenders will be willing to contribute positively to the experience. Third, punishment alone does not work as a motivating force for changing offenders' behaviour, so without successful relapse prevention, Alberta programs would surely fail. Fourth, given Alberta's fiscal situation, it is unlikely that boot camps will be attractive.

One of the concerns surrounding boot camps is that there is mounting evidence that the eligibility criteria built into the design of these programs are often ignored by judges, who tend to use them for low-risk offenders who would not in fact be sent to prison. Only half of the offenders sentenced to a boot camp are estimated to be diverted from prison; the other half are diverted from probation. This practise is known as "net widening". The area of greatest concern and controversy over boot camps relates to the use of the military style. Most journalistic accounts of boot camps have portrayed an image of a relatively dehumanizing experience that is usually marked by hard, meaningless labour.

In Canada, a number of conditions would be necessary if boot camps were to be successful. First, all

participants would have to be diverted from prison, not probation. Second, there must be enough participants to ensure that there would be a significant decrease in the prison population. Third, most of the participants would have to successfully complete the program. Fourth, sentences would have to be reduced in exchange for boot camp participation. Finally, the program would have to have deterrent or rehabilitative value.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the last decade, growing incarceration rates in combination with public demands to reduce government expenditures and introduce more punitive criminal sanctions have forced governments across North America to search for alternatives to incarceration. One such alternative has been the adoption of shock incarceration boot camps that ground themselves in paramilitary techniques. The United States has witnessed remarkable growth in the use of boot camps which has stimulated both praise and criticism. This paper is an examination of boot camp design, structure and utility. Some fundamental concerns will be raised and the implications for Alberta will be considered.

BOOT CAMPS IN THE UNITED STATES

In the early 1980s, the states of Georgia and Oklahoma began to explore the possibility of introducing rigorous military techniques into corrections. The goal was to provide an environment that would maximize deterrence while simultaneously reducing costs. In 1983, the first boot camp programs began operating in Georgia and Oklahoma. Since then, boot camps have flourished. "According to the 1995 Corrections Year Book, there are 75 boot camps in the United States. In general, boot camps are managed in three basic styles. The first and original management style focuses on military drilling and strict discipline. The second style focuses on rehabilitation and less on physical activity; and the third style adds a stronger educational component" (Camp & Camp, 1995). These camps can hold 9,300 inmates; the number of boot camp beds increased 25% between 1993 and 1994 (Burns & Vito, 1995, p. 63). The widespread development of sanctions such as boot camps in the U.S. during the 1980s and 1990s is associated with three related factors. First, rehabilitation lost credibility as a basis for sentencing, second, the rehabilitative rationale for sentencing was supplanted by "just desserts" concern that punishment should be proportional with the crime, and third, law and order proponents linked public safety to harsher sentences and campaigned on promises to implement the latter (Tonry, 1996, pp.100-101).

Boot camps aim to have the same impact as military training in developing positive attitudes, respect for authority and physical conditioning. The popular image of boot camps is that of a drill sergeant imposing strict, and even cruel, discipline, hard work and authoritarian control (Morash & Rucker, 1990). The primary "treatment tool" is teaching, using military-style boot camp techniques. Studies have shown a lower re-offence rate among boot camp "graduates" than among comparison groups and have found an association between reduced recidivism and factors such as rehabilitative programming and better quality after-care, rather than between recidivism and physical exercise and military discipline (MacKenzie, 1995, p. 152). The differences between boot camps and regular prisons are evident in the following account of a typical boot camp:

Upon arrival at the boot camp prison, male inmates have their heads shaved (females may be permitted short haircuts) and are informed of the strict program rules. The 10 to 16 hour day begins with pre-drawn reveille, a march to an exercise yard for one or two hours of physical training and drill, march to breakfast, march to work sites where

they participate in hard physical labour, a return march to the compound where they participate in more exercise and drill. Dinner is followed by evening programs that include counselling, life skills training, academic education, or drug education and treatment. Inmates generally earn privileges and responsibility. Those who successfully complete the program attend an elaborate graduation ceremony with visitors and family invited to attend. Awards are sometimes presented to acknowledge progress made during the program. (Mackenzie, 1993, pp. 21-28)

While all camps share common features, there are more differences between programs than similarities. Areas in which programs differ include: camp goals, camp location, number of participants, average number of days served, voluntary entry, voluntary dropout and the offence history, gender, race and age of clients. In addition, the number of hours devoted to physical training, work, education, counselling and post-release programming may also vary. Further, evaluations of boot camp programs have generated diverse findings.

Boot Camp Goals

The goals of boot camps in different areas vary considerably. Four predominant boot camp goals are to: (1) create a less expensive alternative to prison, (2) reduce recidivism and promote successful reintegration of the offender into the community, (3) deter crime and promote community relations, and (4) improve control and management techniques (Camp & Camp, 1995). Other important goals include drug education, work skills training, education, safer prisons and drug treatment. The two least cited goals for boot camps are punishment and vocational education.

The goals of boot camp programs can be classified into three major areas: system level goals, individual level goals and public relations goals (MacKenzie, 1990). One system level goal is to reduce prison crowding; the shorter period of incarceration for those in boot camps lends hope to a reduction in the prison population (Mackenzie & Shaw, 1990). Another way in which the prison population may be reduced is the expectation that future criminal behaviour will be reduced in those offenders who experience boot camps. A second system level goal of boot camps is to reduce the financial costs of incarceration; financial savings are anticipated because offenders are not incarcerated for as long a time (MacKenzie, 1990).

Individual level goals involve changes in the offenders who participate in boot camp programs. One individual level goal is a reduction in the negative behaviour of program participants, such as criminal activity (MacKenzie, 1990). Another individual level goal is to foster positive behaviour such as increased responsibility, maturity, self-control, communication, self-disclosure, accountability, motivation and respect for authority. Other individual level goals identified by existing boot camp programs are to provide inmates with a chance to re-evaluate their lives through working with others, learn to accept discipline, improve their self-respect and ability to control their behaviour and learn to seek realistic goals (Sechrest, 1989, p. 15).

Finally, some boot camp programs identify goals involving public relations. Examples of public relations goals include improving the public image of corrections by promoting boot camps as a politically acceptable alternative to prison that ensures public safety (MacKenzie, 1990). A study by Gauthier and Reichel (1989) found broad public support for the institution of boot camps.

Camp Location

Contrary to popular conceptions, most boot camps are actually located within existing medium- and maximum-security prisons (MacKenzie, 1992). Advocates note that this allows participants to experience the reality of prison, thereby increasing the deterrent effects of the program. Locating boot camps within prisons serves some administrative goals as well. Both the general inmate population and the boot camp participants can use the same resources and services. Furthermore, it is easier to recruit and replace staff within the prison setting.

New York is the only state that currently operates a "stand-alone" boot camp (MacKenzie, 1992). The state adapted a former wilderness camp to serve its current function. Camp advocates argue that the separate facility does not require expensive high-security equipment, although enhanced programs and staff training are required. The separate camp also allows a more economical use of existing prison bed space.

Number of Participants

The number of participants is the area of largest variability between boot camp programs. In Louisiana, there were as few as 360 boot camp beds available with 298 completions on average a year compared to New York where there were over 3,000 boot camp beds available and an average of 2,993 completions a year (MacKenzie & Piquero, 1994). These differences pose significant difficulties when comparing services across states. Failures and successes are accentuated in areas with fewer participants since population size affects statistical significance. Further, the impact of the program in achieving correctional cost reduction is minimal in areas with fewer participants. It is unlikely that 360 participants in a low-cost boot camp will affect correctional costs in states with thousands of offenders.

Average Number of Days Served

Boot camp programs share the features of a minimum-security custodial facility, although the setting is not a standard prison and the time served is relatively short (usually 90 to 180 days) (Tonry, 1996, p. 100). Sentencing restrictions are evident in the admission of some offenders into the program. Although there is some variation in the legislative techniques of these requirements, this is probably due more to variation in sentencing across states rather than to types of offenders eligible. Some states demand that the individual be sentenced to an intermediate sentence with eligibility for parole in 3 years. Others require that the offender be convicted of an offence that carries a sentence of 5, 6 or 7 years. In New York, for example, offenders must serve 180 days in a boot camp in exchange for a sentence that could be up to 10 years (Sechrest, 1989). Sentences are reduced to time served

plus the boot camp experience. In other states (ie., Texas, Florida, Michigan, Ohio), offenders need only complete a boot camp stay of 90 days in order to complete their sentence (MacKenzie, 1993). Most camps are, however, followed by a period of community supervision.

Voluntary Entry

Offenders either volunteer or are required to complete a short-term stay at the boot camp. In the majority of states, entrance to a boot camp program is voluntary. Usually, offenders opt into the more intense short-term program instead of longer prison sentences. In other areas, offenders are sentenced by judges to the shock incarceration program instead of probation. However, judges and/or corrections officials always make the final decision about whether an offender is accepted into a boot camp program despite whether the offender volunteers. Some U.S. boot camp inmates enter the program through the "back door;" that is, they are selected by correctional officials from a group of offenders sentenced by the court to serve a conventional prison term. Other programs receive inmates through the "front door;" that is, a sentence of a term in boot camp is imposed by the court (Begin, 1996). Those offenders who do not successfully complete the boot camp program are returned to prison to serve their original prison term.

Voluntary Dropout

There are generally numerous offenders who do not complete the boot camp program for various reasons. Many U.S. boot camps (Florida, Georgia, South Carolina) do not have voluntary dropout and in turn have high annual completion rates. Those camps that do have voluntary dropout (Louisiana, New York) have very low drop out rates (Louisiana = 28%, New York = 12%). A multi-site study conducted by MacKenzie (1995) showed that graduation rates are considerably lower for programs with voluntary exit compared to those without voluntary exit. For example, both Illinois and Louisiana run voluntary exit programs and have graduation rates of 59% and 57% respectively. Georgia and Oklahoma, on the other hand, run programs that do not allow for voluntary exit. Georgia and Oklahoma's graduation rates of 97% and 90% respectively are significantly higher than Illinois' and Louisiana's (MacKenzie & Piquero, 1994).

Offence History

Most programs are limited to first time felony offenders. The definition of a first time felony varies, however, since some states only classify in-state offences as first time felony offences, as opposed to offences committed in other areas. Some areas define a first time offender as a first time custody offender. The offender may have received community supervision in the past but would still be eligible for the program. Over half of the programs allow violent offenders to participate (MacKenzie, 1992).

Age

Some boot camps are intended for young offenders. Eight programs in the United States are devoted exclusively to dealing with juvenile offenders (MacKenzie, 1993). Most programs, however, are designed for young adults convicted of felonies for the first time. For example, in Florida, the typical offender is under 20 at the time of prison admission, a user of illicit drugs, of average intelligence and convicted of a first- or second-degree felony (Sechrest, 1989). In Harris County, Texas, the average offender is 19, black and convicted of a non-violent offence (Burton et al., 1993). Most states have set upper age limits for participation in boot camp programs at 25 years of age. Others have set limits as high as 40 years of age.

Gender

Thirteen states have boot camp programs designed exclusively for women (Burns et al., 1995, p. 63). However, few attempts have been made to formally study the impact of female boot camps. In 1992, the National Institute of Justice met with a panel of female offender experts who raised a number of issues for female boot camp participants. The issues raised included physical and psychological concerns, family responsibilities, selection and classification, facility design, staffing and program planning (MacKenzie, 1993). The panel agreed that further information was required before conclusions could be drawn.

Division of Time

Since their creation in 1983, boot camps have developed and changed considerably. Originally, all programs strictly emphasized the military atmosphere, physical training and hard labour aspects. More recently, there has been an incorporation of various treatment programs. In some states, including Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, New York and South Carolina, boot camps emphasize treatment, such as education, counselling, or vocational training during the time offenders are incarcerated. For example, inmates in Louisiana and New York boot camps spent 3.5 hours and more than 5 hours a day, respectively, in treatment and education programs. In contrast, inmates in Georgia spent a very short period of time per day in rehabilitative type activities (MacKenzie & Piquero, 1994). Special programs have been created in some areas to address the needs of drug offenders.

Post-release Programming

Once offenders have completed their terms at boot camp, they are released into the community under supervision. In most states, the offender is released under intensive supervision until he or she is considered a reasonably low security risk. In other states, offenders are released on regular supervision without the intensive status period. In some states, the level of supervision is determined using a risk evaluation based on the offender's circumstances and situation. Maryland, in response to post-release needs, developed transitional housing for boot camp graduates. New York instituted extensive aftercare programming for boot camp participants that includes work programs, employment counselling, drug counselling and daily therapeutic community meetings. California's San Quentin boot camp requires offenders to live at a nearby naval station for 60 days after release during which time they may find employment (Bourque, Han, Hill, 1996).

Aftercare programs have been initiated in some states in order to build on the behavioral, social, attitudinal and educational gains that boot camps hope to produce. The techniques, theoretical approaches and information displayed within the camps has been passed on to aftercare facilities for boot camp graduates. Thirteen programs (seven nationwide adult programs, three local adult programs and three juvenile programs) have developed aftercare models specifically for boot camps. These programs differ greatly with some offering intensive supervision which includes random urinalysis, curfew checks, employment and other verifications as well as home visits. Arizona's shock probation aftercare program includes: educational classes such as General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation and Adult Basic Education (ABE), typing, parenting classes, substance abuse classes, self help groups, family counselling and recreational activities. Many of these programs target boot camp graduates from across the entire state, which aids in continuity in programming (Bourque et al., 1996).

Evaluations

Several boot camp evaluations have been conducted in recent years. The findings from these studies vary considerably based on the evaluation criteria. One goal of boot camps is to reduce prison crowding through a reduction in the rate of recidivism. A study of Florida's program found that the return-to-prison rate for boot camp graduates is 5.59%, while the return-to-prison rate for offenders who serve their sentences in regular prison is 7.75% (Sechrest, 1989, p. 16). However, the difference between these two recidivism rates is not statistically significant. Evaluations of boot camp programs in Oklahoma, New York and Georgia have not found any significant differences in the recidivism rates of program graduates, offenders who served regular prison terms or offenders who had not been previously incarcerated (Criminal Justice Newsletter, 1989; MacKenzie, 1990).

Another finding from evaluations of boot camp programs is the rate of successful completion of such programs. One study suggests that only about half of the inmates selected for these programs complete them (Sechrest, 1989). A different study of a program in Louisiana said that about 43% of program participants withdraw voluntarily (MacKenzie et al., 1995, p. 331).

Most evaluations of boot camps have examined the issue of cost savings. Evaluations of both Georgia and Mississippi boot camps have shown that program costs are comparable to prison costs (Salerno, 1994, p. 153). However, boot camp costs in New York and Oklahoma exceed prison costs (Salerno, 1994, p. 153). Meanwhile, a study conducted in Alabama in 1989-90 showed that the cost of housing 153 inmates for 90 days in a boot camp was \$550,800 (Burns, 1995, p. 66). The cost to house the same number of inmates in prison for the same period of time was \$2,227,680 (Burns, 1995, p. 66). Cost savings only result if boot camp inmates would otherwise have been in regular prison for a longer period. Other studies also question the legitimacy of cost savings claims. They point out that there is a greater tendency to use boot camps as a substitute for probation than as an alternative to longer term incarceration (Criminal Justice Newsletter, 1989).

Questions about cost-savings relate to claims about reductions in prison crowding. Until it is proven that the offenders in boot camps are drawn from an otherwise prison-bound population, there will

be no conclusive evidence that boot camps are achieving their goal of reducing prison crowding. When the number of offenders who graduate each year from boot camp programs is compared to the total number of offenders in prison, it is clear that boot camp inmates make up a very small portion of the incarcerated population (MacKenzie, 1990, p. 49).

Most evaluations of "shock" programs have found that gains are usually short term unless follow-up care is available (Sechrest, 1989). Without the support of family and friends after release, and without addressing social problems such as poor education, unemployment and poverty, the effects of the boot camp experience will be short lived.

While some studies have shown the attitudes and behaviour of participants while in the boot camp program to be more positive than those of their counterparts serving prison sentences, the recidivism rates of the two groups after their release tend to converge (Begin, 1996). The few studies have found an association between reduced recidivism and factors such as rehabilitative programming and better quality of after-care, rather than between recidivism and physical exercise and military discipline (MacKenzie, 1995).

Offender rehabilitation has been measured using several variables. As noted above, a comparison of recidivism rates reveals that there is no statistically significant impact of boot camps on reducing criminal behaviour. An Alabama study compared the rates of technical violations and new offences committed between three groups; boot camp graduates, incarcerated and probationers. The evidence revealed that there were no significant differences between the groups. In fact, boot camp graduates showed slightly higher rates of "new offences" than the probation group. Other measures of offender rehabilitation have led to mixed findings. Freeman (1993) conducted an evaluation of the Travis County, Texas boot camp program known as CORE (Convicted Offender Re-entry Effort). Moral development (as measured by the Washington University Sentence Completion Test of Ego Development) was assessed initially and again following completion of the program. Freeman's findings indicate that there is no statistically significant moral development as a result of involvement in the program. These findings may, however, be attributable to a small sample size or to respondents misrepresenting themselves on the test.

In Harris County, Texas, an evaluation of the county boot camp measured attitudinal changes in the inmates following boot camp participation (Burton et al., 1994). Ratings were taken to measure attitudes and perceptions of the boot camp staff, of the alcohol and drug counselling, of the AIDS education and counselling, of the boot camp in general, of offenders' future opportunities, of offenders' interpersonal relationships with friends and family and of inmates self-control, impulsiveness and individual coping skills. In every area except AIDS education and counselling, inmates' attitudes became more positive through the course of the boot camp program. The authors concluded that boot camps have a positive influence on offenders. Further, they noted that other studies that only use recidivism as an indication of success show negative results because there is typically inadequate follow-up care.

In 1994, Keenan, Ruback and Hadley conducted an evaluation of the military atmosphere in the Georgia boot camps. Since military structure and discipline is an integral part of boot camp philosophy, the authors attempted to measure the "militariness" of the facilities. Rating scales were developed to measure five aspects of the camps: the dormitory, the dining hall, physical training, military drills and general atmosphere. Pilot testing indicated that the measures were reasonably reliable. The authors attempted to measure differences in the "militariness" of 11 different institutions. It was found that in certain aspects, particularly the dormitory and drill grounds, boot camps were far more "military" than other detention centres. Except for the use of military commands, no differences were found in the dining hall or in the general atmosphere. The study is important because it provides a quantitative method of comparing boot camps with other detention centres to determine the degree to which differences in offender recidivism are attributable to the military model.

In light of evidence derived from more than a decade, a U.S. researcher with extensive experience in evaluating boot camps has proposed a framework that boot camps should follow:

- Boot camps should target prison-bound offenders sentenced to relatively lengthy terms of incarceration.
- Participants in boot camps should be selected by correctional officials from incoming prison inmates to reduce the risk of net-widening.
- The boot camp should be able to accommodate a larger number of offenders.
- In addition to strict discipline, and rigorously enforced rules and sanctions for breaches, boot camps should include a high quality rehabilitative component to promote pro-social attitudes and behaviour and minimize in-program rates of failure.
- Rule violators who do not jeopardize public safety or the integrity of the program should be disciplined whenever feasible within the boot camp and in the after-care program rather than re-incarcerated.
- After-care should offer intensive support to facilitate re-integration into society and minimize post-release criminality. (Parent, 1995, pp. 146-147)

BOOT CAMPS FOR CANADA

Currently, there are several Canadian provincial governments who are considering the use of boot camps. The driving force behind the boot camp alternative is different from the United States. In Canada, there is a common perception that offenders are "getting off easy." Recent public outcry is forcing the government to consider more punitive measures for dealing with criminals. The use of shock incarceration is seen as introducing these more punitive measures. Few would question that the military regimen enforced in boot camps is far more arduous than prison. However, there are several factors that frustrate the use of boot camps in Canada and make their use unacceptable.

First, Canadian legislation does not currently allow for significantly shorter sentences based on the successful completion of any program. Rather, adult prison sentences in Canada are automatically reduced by one-third. This one-third is served in the community under statutory release. By law, most federal inmates must be released after serving two-thirds of their sentence. These offenders are then supervised in the community until the end of their sentence and follow conditions similar to the conditions of parole. Exceptions include offenders who the National Parole Board believes are likely to cause serious harm prior to the end of their sentence; these offenders may be detained in penitentiary until the end of their sentence, released to a halfway house or released on "one chance" statutory release. In the United States, most programs offer the appealing alternative of serving short but difficult stays in boot camp rather than long stays in prison. In Canada, however, boot camps would not be so appealing to offenders. Without the appeal of sentence reduction, there is no motivation for offenders to serve their sentences in boot camps. Participation in boot camps would necessarily be mandated.

Following from this, forced participation in the program would be far less likely to succeed in rehabilitating the offender. Motivation is a key factor that allows boot camps to instill change in their participants. Without the option of participating and without the shorter sentence benefit of participating, it is unlikely that offenders will be willing to contribute positively to the experience. Offenders will not likely be rehabilitated by involvement in a program that does not instill internal motivation.

Third, as indicated earlier, several states that currently operate programs have come to the conclusion that rehabilitative programming such as treatment is an integral part of the boot camp experience. Without a recognition that successful relapse prevention depends on successful treatment, Alberta programs would surely fail in the long run in reducing recidivism levels. Punishment alone does not work as a motivating force for changing offenders' behaviour.

Fourth, given Canada's fiscal situation, it is unlikely that boot camps will be attractive. Boot camps can be more costly to run than prisons and, therefore, are not cost-effective without significant reductions in custody sentence length. Provincial governments are currently exercising restraint in all areas of public expenditure. Given the limitations of Canadian law mentioned previously, boot camps would only increase the costs of corrections.

Despite these issues and concerns with the introduction of boot camps in Canada, Ontario opened a boot camp for young offenders in 1997. Ontario's first boot camp opened in Medonte Township in July, 1997. The program, known as Project Turnaround, employs approximately 40 staff members, including clinicians, youth workers, drill instructors and administrative staff (Company selected..., 1997). The program accommodates 32 male juvenile repeat offenders who have received a youth court disposition of open custody or probation following a custodial sentence.

Project Turnaround is a highly regimented, 16 hours a day program. The project addresses issues such as academics, life skills, literacy training and problem solving techniques but the main focus of the program is on physical fitness and hard work (Company selected..., 1997). Project Turnaround mirrors a strictly military way of life and models boot camps in the United States.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Several issues have been raised with respect to the desirability of using shock incarceration. The innovativeness of boot camps is even questionable. Mackenzie and Parent (1992) note that for decades, middle- and upper-class parents have been sending their unruly children to military school. They also note that it was not uncommon for judges to offer young men the choice between going to jail or joining the army. Strict discipline and physical labour has long held a position within the correctional framework. Historically, prisons enforced strict codes of silence and long hours of hard labour. Boot camps represent a further extension of military style social control into the criminal justice system.

Another issue is the offender's ability to voluntarily join and drop out of the shock incarceration program. Boot camp programs vary according to whether participation in the program is voluntary and whether participants have the option to drop out of the program. Some research suggests that voluntary participation is an important factor in producing positive changes in offenders (Mackenzie & Shaw, 1990). Many other studies have found a positive relationship between voluntary participation and positive program outcomes (Bastien & Adelman, 1984).

There is mounting evidence that the eligibility criteria built into the design of these programs are often ignored by judges, who tend to use them for low-risk offenders who would not in fact be sent to prison. Only half of the offenders sentenced to a boot camp are estimated to be diverted from prison; the other half are diverted from probation (Tonry, 1996). This practice is known as "net-widening." For penalties to be genuine alternatives to imprisonment and actually reduce the size of the prison population, they must target offenders who have been sentenced to regular prison terms. One analyst estimates that to save prison space, at least 80% of boot camp participants would have to be drawn from the prison-bound (Parent, 1995). Furthermore, a significant proportion of those who are sentenced to prison for failing to complete their boot camp programs were diverted into the boot camp from probation rather than incarceration. This creates new demands for prison space; if the boot camp had not existed, the offenders would probably have received a less restrictive community-based sentence. When the net is widened and the carceral sanctions are imposed for

program failure and breach of after-care conditions, prison use, crowding and criminal justice costs are augmented rather than diminished (Begin, 1996, p. 10). Many boot camp programs have contributed to net-widening by setting criteria for boot camp offenders as those believed most likely to be deterred from further criminal behaviour such as young, non-violent offenders who have never been incarcerated. As Tonry (1996, p. 111) points out:

Boot camps illustrate most vividly of all intermediate sanctions the ways in which net-widening, rigorous enforcement of conditions, and high revocation rates can produce the unintended side effect of increased costs and prison use from programmes intended to reduce both.

The area of greatest concern and controversy over boot camps relates to the use of the military style. Most journalistic accounts of boot camps have portrayed an image of a relatively dehumanizing experience that is usually marked by hard, meaningless labour (Morash & Rucker, 1990). It is extremely troubling that the public's perception of offenders sent to boot camps is that they deserve dehumanizing treatment. It is worthy to note that the military style often adopted by boot camp programs is based on an exaggerated, outdated system of military training that has been rejected by the military itself (Morash & Rucker, 1990, p. 21). Several components of this military model are problematic; traditional boot camps involve inconsistent philosophies, policies and procedures. Further, traditional boot camp training fosters a "we-versus-they" attitude and the view that trainees deserve degrading treatment. Finally, traditional boot camps promote an aggressive model of leadership and a conflict-dominated style of interaction (Morash & Rucker, 1990, pp. 210-211). In the few programs where recidivism rates were lowered, this was attributed to the quality of the boot camp's rehabilitation programming and post-program support, not to its military regime (Begin, 1996, p.11). Morash and Rucker make the following observation about the use of the military style:

The very idea of using physically and verbally abusive tactics to train people to act pro-socially is fraught with contradiction. The idea rests in the assumption that forceful control is to be valued. The other unstated assumption is that alternative methods for promoting pro-social behaviour, such as the development of empathy or a stake in conformity (e.g. through employment), are not equally valued. (1990, p. 214).

Other concerns about boot camp programs relate to the nature of the work performed. Some defend the hard work as justifiable due to its punitive and rehabilitative nature. However, the work has become more meaningless and less transferable as economic conditions and tight job markets demand that inmates not compete with outside labour markets (Morash & Rucker, 1990). Unfortunately, the job market for the unskilled labour of inmates once they are released is steadily decreasing.

DISCUSSION

In the wake of public outcry to toughen criminal sanctions, the Alberta government has revisited the concept of boot camps. Given the current public sentiment and the growing costs of incarceration, shock incarceration is a deceptively appealing alternative. The implications of such a program are unknown.

As a means to introduce more punitive measures, boot camps cannot succeed. Given the current financial crisis faced by the government, it would be fiscally unsound to introduce boot camps. Furthermore, the impact of shock incarceration in Alberta is unknown given the necessity of forced participation. While boot camps would introduce a higher degree of punishment, it is unlikely that any benefits would be reaped from such programs.

As a means to reduce correctional costs, a number of conditions would be necessary if boot camps were to be a successful solution. First, all participants would have to be diverted from prison, not probation. Second, there must be enough participants to ensure that there would be a significant decrease in the prison population. Third, most of the boot camp participants would have to successfully complete the program. Fourth, sentences would have to be reduced in exchange for boot camp participation. Finally, the program would have to have deterrent or rehabilitative value.

This final requirement is the most troublesome of the five. It is dependent on several factors, as indicated earlier. These factors include the age and background of program participants, access to rehabilitative programming, post-release programming and the degree of choice in program participation among others. The evidence with respect to boot camp graduate recidivism is unclear. As of yet, there are no studies measuring a statistically significant impact on re-offending rates. The Alberta government must balance its goals with the unclear results of existing programs.

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