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Where Do We Go From Here? Boot Camps in the Future

Doris Layton MacKenzie and Gaylene Styve Armstrong

INTRODUCTION

The rebirth of correctional boot camps in the late 1980s, in an accepting political climate, sparked extensive discussions and debates ranging from the economic feasibility of boot camp to its appropriateness for various correctional populations. In view of the resurgence, policy-makers asked a number of questions regarding the long-term viability of boot camps, and researchers explored these areas through a variety of empirical research studies. Early studies focused on the fundamental questions related to participant recidivism rates, cost-effectiveness, net widening, and impact on crowding (MacKenzie, 1991; MacKenzie & Parent, 1991; MacKenzie & Piquero, 1994; MacKenzie & Shaw, 1993). Stemming from a rudimentary understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of boot camp programs based on early research, more recent studies have considered the variation between programs, examined inmate perceptions of their environment and experiences, and examined intermediate psychological outcomes (Gover, MacKenzie, & Styve, 1999; MacKenzie, Wilson, Armstrong, & Gover, 2001; Styve, Gover, MacKenzie, & Mitchell, 2000). Yet a number of questions remain unanswered, in part because of the extensive development and evolution of boot camp programs over the course of the past two decades.

In this chapter, we will briefly synthesize the general research trends before discussing two resulting issues that researchers and policymakers should consider when planning for the future of boot camp programs. We will discuss the need for an updated accounting of the effects of new-generation boot camps on offender recidivism rates. Finally, we will discuss the concerns related to the potential physical dangers presented to boot camp inmates (including inmate deaths), which some opponents to boot camps suggest are innately posed by the boot camp's programmatic structure. These concerns have been called to the attention of the public through the media and other public realms as the result of recent incidents that have occurred in some camps.

TRENDS OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON BOOT CAMPS

Initially, the viability of boot camps as an alternative sanction was questioned. Some argued that because boot camps are residential facilities, they are much like prisons. From this perspective, the camps are not in line with the conception of an alternative sanction, which was described by Morris and Tonry (1990) as a form of punishment that can be placed on a continuum of severity between incarceration and probation. However, MacKenzie and Shaw (1993) argued that boot camps were not identical to a traditional prison term. They suggested that the camps are frequently used as an early-release option for less serious offenders, and as such, they could be considered intermediate sanctions. Many jurisdictions accepted this interpretation and considered boot camps as one of numerous intermediate sanctions available to offenders.

The earliest studies on the impact and effectiveness of boot camps began by examining individual sites, and soon moved toward more sophisticated multisite designs, some of which implemented randomization. We presented much of the empirical evidence resulting from the early research in the preceding chapters of this book. Although these studies provided some answers, they also raised a number of questions. The current philosophy and programmatic content of boot camps is the result of many successive generations of programs. Modern boot camps are only vaguely reminiscent of the programs reintroduced in the 1980s. This recent transformation of boot camp program content and philosophies has led to questions about the applicability of earlier research results to the current-day, or new-generation, boot camps.

Correctional researchers and decision makers in the political sphere have maintained an interest in the viability of the boot camps since the 1980s, along with continued public interest, which remains fueled by the media. As the programs have become more refined over the years, so has the research focusing on boot camps. Research questions seek to examine more than the surface-level worth of boot camp programs to also include more specific changes in intermediate outcomes such as antisocial attitudes (MacKenzie & Souryal, 1995), and effects on special populations such as boot camps for women (MacKenzie & Donaldson, 1996) or drug offenders

(Shaw & MacKenzie, 1992). Given that more recent, larger-scale studies revealed that the variation in boot camp program content is immense, concerns regarding the generalizability of these early results became warranted, especially when researchers attempt to make statements about the impact of programs based on single-site studies. As MacKenzie and Rosay (1996) argued, the problem is that the programs differ dramatically in goals and components. Thus, knowledge about the effectiveness of one program may be dependent upon very atypical aspects of the program or even a charismatic leader, and not necessarily related to boot camp-type characteristics of the program. Thus, although early studies on boot camps were able to inform us about boot camps at a more basic level, programmatic evolution calls for more comprehensive, and more recent, empirical research on the topic.

BEGINNINGS OF COMPREHENSIVE STUDIES ON BOOT CAMPS

The uncertainty about the impact of variation within boot camp programs in the United States on outcomes prompted Doris MacKenzie, now at the University of Maryland, and her colleagues to begin a multisite study of adult boot camps. As presented in earlier chapters, findings from this large-scale research project demonstrated no significant differences in recidivism between offenders who were sent to boot camps and offenders who either served a longer period of time in prison or served their sentence on probation. The boot camps studied differed greatly in the components of the program (e.g., drug treatment, therapy, education), aspects that might be expected to influence outcomes. Yet no differences were found in recidivism. The finding of no differences in recidivism when camps were compared to other sentences within the same jurisdiction suggests, overall, that the boot camp atmosphere did not have an impact on recidivism.

However, the camps could be used to “signal” which inmates would do better after release. As MacKenzie (1997) noted in a recent summary of boot camp evidence, “In programs where a substantial number of offenders were dismissed from the boot camp prior to completion, the recidivism rates for those who completed the program were significantly lower than rates for those who were dismissed” (p. 9-27). This does not mean that the boot camp changed some offenders, because the inmates who

succeeded in the camps most likely differed from those who failed prior to entering the camps. Thus, the boot camp only separated these two groups into those who would complete and those who would not. Additionally, those who completed had lower recidivism rates than those who were dismissed from the boot camp. Therefore, the completion of the boot camp signaled which inmates would have lower recidivism rates in the future.

Despite these results, the unique environment created by boot camps as compared to the majority of correctional programs was undeniable. As MacKenzie noted in Chapter 1 of this book, the activity and interest levels of the participants in these camps gave the impression that the camps were having some type of influence on the offenders. MacKenzie and colleagues began to probe further in measuring the actual differences in the environments that existed between boot camps and other types of programs. In 1996, MacKenzie and colleagues began another large-scale study of boot camps, this time comparing the environmental characteristics of a national sample of juvenile boot camps with more traditional juvenile correctional programs. MacKenzie and colleagues surveyed the residents within the residential facilities, as well as the staff employed within the programs and facility administrators. They found the conditions of confinement in the two environments to be perceived as distinct by both juvenile residents and facility staff (Mitchell, MacKenzie, Gover, & Styve, 2001; Styve et al., 2000). Although there was significant variation within the boot camp programs and the traditional programs, the researchers did find some consistencies across program type with respect to the environmental conditions. Interestingly, and contrary to the arguments of many opponents to the boot camp programs, the environments of the boot camps were not perceived to be negative and threatening, as opponents often argued. Instead, both the juveniles and staff reported the boot camp environment to be significantly more supportive, and safer, than traditional juvenile correctional facilities. However, one group did appear to have more problems in the boot camps; juveniles who had been abused in the past seemed to report more difficulties in the boot camps compared to their experiences in traditional facilities (MacKenzie et al., 2001). The confrontational nature of the boot camps may be particularly difficult for them.

Although facilities that operated under a boot camp structure were different from other traditional programs, researchers observed that these programs had undergone significant metamorphosis as compared to boot camp programs in existence during the previous decades. Consequently, much of the earlier research related to recidivism outcomes (e.g., MacKenzie, Brame, McDowall, & Souryal, 1995) appeared to be dated, and the need for updated recidivism research was apparent.

RECIDIVISM IN NEW-GENERATION BOOT CAMPS: THE MARYLAND EXPERIMENT

As illustrated in earlier chapters, a substantial body of prior literature indicates that offenders who are sentenced to boot camp programs do not have significantly different rates of recidivism when compared to offenders serving traditional sentences (e.g., probation or prison). However, boot camps have experienced a significant transformation from their original design into the new generation of boot camps in the 21st century. These new-generation camps devote much more time in the daily schedule to treatment and education within the military environment. Consequently, people have questioned the validity of drawing conclusions based on the earlier research about the impact of boot camps on recidivism rates. Initial evidence suggests that the new generation of boot camps may be more effective in reducing rates of recidivism as compared to both previous boot camp programs and traditional correctional facilities. However, at this point, no study of adult programs has been completed using an experimental design to evaluate either the earlier or new-generation models of boot camp programs. Some of the studies of juvenile boot camps did use random assignment. However, these studies began when the camps were first opened. These camps had implementation difficulties, and, thus, results may be different for camps that have been in operation for a number of years. Researchers have not yet thoroughly addressed whether combining treatment with the military environment of boot camps yields lower recidivism rates than alternative correctional programs that emphasize treatment (e.g., prison treatment program) within a more traditional correctional environment.

In response to this void in the boot camp literature, researchers at the University of Maryland began a study in 2002 that randomly assigns adult inmates to either an

adult boot camp in Maryland that is a well-established program with a strong treatment emphasis, or to an alternative correctional facility that also emphasizes therapeutic programming but without a military component (MacKenzie, 2001). The boot camp has been operating for more than 10 years and has a strong treatment emphasis. The research builds on prior literature, taking a two-pronged approach to assess the effectiveness of the boot camp program. First, researchers will assess the long-term impact of the boot camp program on participants' recidivism rates and compare those recidivism rates to inmates randomly assigned to the alternative correctional facility. Second, using pre- and posttest surveys, researchers will assess boot camp participants' initial levels of and changes in antisocial attitudes and values, and compare these measures to inmates assigned to the alternative correctional facility.

This study is a true randomized experiment. Each month, one group of inmates (a platoon) is deemed eligible for entry into the boot camp program. Eligibility for the experiment and, consequently, entry into the boot camp program is based on three criteria. First, the inmate must be a nonviolent offender. Second, the inmate must be sentenced for the first time to long-term adult incarceration, which means that they must not have had any prior jail stays of 60 days or more. Finally, the inmate must agree to a contract, which dictates participation in academic education, drug education/treatment, and life skills training. Although each inmate must first meet these criteria, ultimately, the final eligibility decision rests with the Parole Commission.

Once an inmate is deemed acceptable as per the criteria and Parole Commission, each inmate is then offered the opportunity to *voluntarily* participate in the boot camp program. If inmates agree to participate in the program, their sentence is reduced to a 6-month sentence from its original length. For the average offender, participation in the boot camp translates into a sentence reduction of about 18 to 24 months. Furthermore, if the inmate agrees to participate in the program, he or she is required to sign a Mutual Agreement Programming (MAP) contract that summarizes the above-stated information.

After inmates sign their MAP contracts, researchers randomly assign inmates, using simple random assignment procedures, to the boot camp or the designated

comparison facility. Before the inmate is informed of the facility to which he or she has been assigned, researchers ask the inmate to complete a 45-minute survey that assesses antisocial attitudes, cognitions, and behaviors. Six months after this intake process, researchers administer a similar survey to these same inmates before they graduate and are released into the community. By comparing the pre- and posttest surveys, researchers will be able to assess differences in change (or lack thereof) in antisocial attitudes/cognitions for inmates in the boot camp and the comparison facility. Additionally, researchers will conduct criminal record checks 12 months after inmates have been released into the community. To determine the impact of the boot camp on the recidivism rates of offenders, the rates of the boot camp participants will be compared to the recidivism rates of the control group.

Maryland's Toulson Boot Camp program, established in August 1990, is the boot camp involved in the experimental study. Toulson Boot Camp uses a military model with the typical components (see Chapter 2), but it also incorporates drug education, life skills training, and academic education. The program lasts 6 months and is divided into three different phases, each of which spans a 2-month period. The daily schedule and activities of the boot camp participants vary depending upon their phase in the program. Participants are in Phase I when they enter the camp. This phase emphasizes discipline and self-control in a highly structured daily schedule that focuses on military drill, physical training, academic education, and other therapeutic programs (e.g., Life Skills, Addiction Education/ Treatment). During the subsequent phases, Phases II and III, the daily activities have less emphasis on drill, physical training, and education, and more emphasis on work projects (e.g., carpentry, road crew).

Inmates who are not randomized into the Toulson Boot Camp program are admitted to the Metropolitan Treatment Center (MTC). The MTC is a more traditional prison facility that offers less structure than the boot camp. In this study, inmates assigned to MTC are prioritized for the therapeutic programming offered at MTC. The therapeutic programming focuses on academic education, addiction education/treatment, and life skills training similar to the therapeutic programming offered in the Toulson Boot Camp'

Table 21.1 Characteristics of Participants Randomized into the Maryland Boot Camp Study

<i>Characteristic</i> <i>N</i> = 40	<i>TBC (%)</i> <i>N</i> = 39	<i>MTC (%)</i> <i>N</i> = 39
Race		
Black	97	95
White/other	3	5
Mean age	23	23
Education level		
High school dropout	72	82
Graduate/more than HS	28	18
Marital status		
Married	0	10
Single	57	51
Employment status (at arrest)		
Full/part-time	67	61
Unemployed/irregular	33	39
Primary conviction charge		
Property	5	5
Drug	92	90
Violent	3	5
Mean length of current sentence (mos.)	44.3	42.4
Mean number of prior arrests	6.0	5.5
Mean number of prior convictions	1.7	1.4
Mean number of SR prior arrests	8.1	8.1
Mean age at first arrest	16	16
Prior incarceration	23	28
Under influence at time of arrest		
Total (drugs, alcohol, or both)	38	49
Drugs only	15	18
Alcohol only	15	8
Both drugs and alcohol	8	23
Prior drug/alcohol arrest	97	97
Drug use 12 mos. prior imprisonment		
Cocaine	5	8
Marijuana	72	65
Prior treatment	26	26
Currently dependent on drug/alcohol	11	21
Currently need treatment	24	18

As of November 2002, 79 participants had been randomly assigned to either the Toulson Boot Camp ($n = 40$) or the Metropolitan Treatment Center ($n = 39$). As indicated in Table 21.1, the typical participant is an African American male, approximately 23 years old, who is a high school dropout, single, employed more than part time and convicted of a drug charge. In the upcoming year, the researchers at the University of Maryland will assess preliminary data using self-report surveys of changes in antisocial attitudes and cognitions. Researchers will compare survey data completed during intake with the data from the survey the inmates will complete during an exit interview. Additionally, researchers will be extracting data from the participants' official

criminal records once they have been released and have resided in the community for 12 months. Given the experimental nature of this study, we expect reliable and valid results regarding changes in antisocial attitudes and cognitions as a result of the boot camp or traditional correctional facility. Furthermore, the information obtained through the follow-up on the officially documented criminal activities of the participants will be a worthy contribution to answering questions about the viability of the new-generation boot camps as an alternative sanction.

INMATE DEATHS IN CORRECTIONAL CUSTODY: DO BOOT CAMPS POSE A HIGHER DANGER TO INMATES?

Some people believe that the boot camps should be eliminated because the military atmosphere of the camps poses an inherent danger to inmates regardless of what the empirical evidence has demonstrated. From this perspective, the strict discipline and harsh standards imposed by boot camp staff are some of the primary goals of boot camps. They believe the camps focus on punishment of the inmates, and they find this especially problematic for juvenile delinquents in the camps. However, research has found the opposite to be true. Based on their survey of all existing juvenile boot camp programs, MacKenzie and Rosay (1996) found that rehabilitation and lowering recidivism were important goals, and punishment was not. Furthermore, juvenile perceptions of danger in the camps are not significantly different from the levels perceived by juveniles in traditional facilities (Styve et al., 2000).

Although punishment is not an important goal of boot camps, and, on average, inmates do not believe the camps pose an elevated risk to them, some of the traditional activities, such as the exercise components that include lengthy runs, have been hazardous, resulting in a number of boot camp inmate deaths in the past few years. These deaths have occurred despite the medical checkups inmates receive during the intake and assessment process (Gover et al., 1999). Recent deaths in boot camps led one journalist to write:

My reading of the evidence suggests that the camps' clientele are nothing more than grist for a very profitable mill. The old-style reform school, but with "training" substituted for flogging, and phony "tough love" jargon substituted for the blunt (but more honest) cruelties of the original model, is enjoying a heady revival these

days. It's a sellers market and business is booming. There's just one minor nuisance: the deaths. (Riak, 2003)

Furthermore, when sociologist R. Dean Wright of Drake University was asked to comment on the death of a boot camp inmate, he stated, "It's a situation that lends itself to abusive conditions. Any time you have someone use lock and key, the person who has the lock and key has the power to abuse, and they often do" (Blackwood, 2001).

Two recent incidents have called the boot camp methods into question. These incidents have been the unfortunate deaths of two juveniles in two different boot camps in the United States. Both deaths occurred while the youth were exercising. The first incident involved Gina Score, a young girl who was placed into a South Dakota boot camp program. According to a report in the *New York Times*, "Gina Score was placed in the camp in July 1999 after stealing a bike, skipping school and shoplifting. Two days into the program, the 5-foot-4, 226-pound girl joined other girls on a 2.7-mile required run" ("Boot Camp Death Prompts Changes," 2000). According to the publicized state investigator's report, Score collapsed during the run, frothing at the mouth; lost control of her bladder; progressively lost her ability to communicate; and eventually became completely unresponsive. The staff at the boot camp did not allow other residents to assist her, commenting that they should not make things "easy" or "comfortable" for her. Boot camp staff left Score where she fell for 3¼ hours before transporting her to the hospital. Upon her arrival at the hospital, Score's body temperature registered 108 degrees (the upper limit of the thermometer). Doctors were not able to revive her at any point and, consequently, pronounced her dead 1 hour after she was admitted into the hospital.

Shortly after Gina Score's death, counsel for the Children's Rights Division, Human Rights Watch, Michael Bochenek, submitted a letter to South Dakota Governor William Janklow detailing the above events and requesting immediate action be taken to alter South Dakota's juvenile sentencing guidelines and discipline practices. In the letter, Bochenek alleged that Rights Groups, parents of youths in this South Dakota facility, and the juveniles themselves have "charged that guards shackle youth in spread-eagled fashion after cutting their clothes off (practice known

as 'four pointing'), chain youth inside their cells ('bumpering'), and place children in isolation twenty-three hours a day for extended periods of time" (letter available at www.nospank.net/hrw2.tm). The letter goes on to describe physical abuses of authority, including other inappropriate actions such as male guards supervising the strip searches of female juvenile delinquents, as well as "grossly inadequate mental health care, glaring deficiencies in education and other substandard conditions of confinement." According to the *New York Times*, Republican South Dakota Governor Janklow, who himself was a product of the Marines and thus very familiar with the boot camp regimen, "blamed 'rogue employees' for Score's death and other problems" ("Boot Camp Death Prompts Changes," 2000). Because of the incident, two staff members were charged but later acquitted on child abuse charges in the death and other alleged problems at the camp, including making girls run in shackles until their ankles bled.

In a 1998 incident, 16-year-old Nicholas Contreras died at the privately operated Arizona Boys Ranch boot camp. According to an interview of fellow Boys Ranch resident Geoffrey Lewis by the Pinal County Sheriff's office:

Lewis stated, Nick Contreras was performing physical training (push-ups) in the amphitheatre. Mr. Lewis indicated due to Nick's lack of effort and aggressive behavior, he was being physically assisted. Mr. Lewis stated it had been forty minutes since the last hydration. So the staff took Nick to get water from his canteen. Mr. Lewis stated when staff was giving Nicholas water he did not respond. Mr. Lewis stated he had been playing like he was passing out several times during the day. Mr. Lewis stated the staff checked Nicholas' pulse and breathing and found nothing. Mr. Lewis and staff immediately administered CPR and called for assistance. Mr. Lewis stated CPR continued until Nicholas was taken with medical assistance team. (police report available for viewing at <http://www.nospank.net/azranch.htm>)

According to a subsequent police report by attending Officer LeBlanc,

The charging nurse Sue, from Northwest hospital contacted me to let me know that Mr. Contreras had died and there were signs of abuse on the body. I asked what these were and she said he had abrasions from head to toe. He had

bruising on his flanks, he had a rigid stomach and he had blood in his stomach.
(police report available for viewing at <http://www.nospank.net/azranch.htm>)

An autopsy revealed that the boy died of complications from a lung infection that were exacerbated by physical activities at the Arizona Boys Ranch. Another autopsy by a forensic pathologist showed that the boy had been “man- handled,” causing bruising, abrasions, scratches, and minor puncture wounds to the head and body. A 37-page Pinal County, Arizona Sheriff’s report released on April 17, 1998, stated that some staff members thought that Contreras was faking his breathing problems, even though he repeatedly coughed and vomited in the days before he died (Prison Privatisation Report International, 1998). As a result of the incident on April 26, 1998, two staff members were fired, four were suspended, and the program director was replaced. All 17 staff members employed at the Boys Ranch at the time were placed on Arizona’s Child Abuser Directory, which is a confidential list used to screen people for foster care and other children’s services. Prosecutors eventually dropped all charges initially filed against six boot camp staff members.

Critical incidents in boot camps, such as the Gina Score and Nicholas Contreras cases, are not specific to programs designed for juvenile delinquents. Similar events have occurred in privately operated boot camps in which parents are able to voluntarily send their disruptive teen for a few weeks of boot camp training. These camps are outside of the criminal justice system realm. The programs are designed with the same military emphasis as the juvenile correctional boot camps, but they tend to focus more on the militaristic components than therapeutic treatment, reflective of earlier “Scared Straight” programs. Often, these privately operated boot camps are not accredited and are subject to little or no regulation.

These privately operated boot camp programs have also experienced tragic deaths of their residents. In 2001, a 14-year-old boy, Anthony Haynes, died in an Arizona desert boot camp after collapsing in the 111-degree heat. Haynes was sent to the camp by his mother after he slashed her tires and was caught shoplifting. Newspaper reports about the camp after Haynes’s death reported that the daily regimen included forced marches; wearing black uniforms in triple-digit temperatures; in-your-face discipline; and a daily diet limited to an apple, a carrot, and a bowl of

beans. According to reports based on a search warrant affidavit filed in July 2001, "On the day Haynes died, he reportedly was hallucinating and refusing water before camp supervisors took him to a nearby motel and left him in a tub with the shower running. They returned to find the boy face down in the water and that he had vomited mud," which boot camp staff had forced him to eat earlier in the day (Markham, 2002, p. 14).

Charles Long II, the head of the Arizona boot camp program, was subsequently arrested on charges of second-degree murder, aggravated assault, and eight counts of child abuse. A second staff member, Raymond Burr Anderson, was also arrested on child abuse charges for allegedly spanking, stomping, beating, and whipping more than 14 children. The case is set for a trial on November 18, 2003.

When disasters such as these cases occur in boot camp programs, opponents of the programs point to the risks of the boot camps, including the structure and the potential for abuse of authority by untrained or undertrained staff. Regarding Gina Score's death in South Dakota, Jerry Wells, director of the Koch Crime Institute, pointed to the staff as the cause of the death, suggesting the camp had "untrained staff." Wells stated, "The surprise to me was that it was a surprise, because it was a recipe for disaster" ("Boot Camp Death Prompts Changes," 2000). Because of these types of incidents, it is often no surprise that when people learn about boot camp programs, they experience a type of negative "gut reaction" that forms the basis of their opinions about the programs. Media presentations of these incidents have helped to develop emotive responses to programs, such that it would seem boot camp programs are a dangerous alternative sanction. However, before final judgments are made, fatal incidents such as these must be placed into the context of all injuries and deaths, including suicides, that occur in other juvenile and adult correctional facilities across the country. What are the actual rates of deaths and/or severe injuries in boot camps as compared to other facilities? To truly determine the extent of the dangerousness of boot camps, we need to consider injuries and deaths in all types of correctional facilities, including traditional programs. The frequency of deaths in the boot camps must be compared to the frequency of deaths in traditional institutions.

Inmate deaths in correctional custody result from a variety of causes. Suicide is the most frequent cause of death in U.S. jails. In 2000, a rate of 90 to 230 deaths per

100,000 inmates was documented as a suicide in jail or prison, which is 16 times the rate for the general population (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002). Most of the people who commit suicide in jail have been arrested for nonviolent crimes. Ninety percent of suicides in jails occur as the result of hanging, and 50% of suicide victims in jail or prison are intoxicated with drugs or alcohol at the time of their death. The number of inmate deaths is such a concern that beginning in 2000, the Bureau of Justice Statistics began the Deaths in Custody survey. The survey collects a quarterly count of inmate deaths in each of the nation's 1,394 state prisons and 3,095 local jails. It includes the following background data on each deceased inmate: gender; age; race/ethnicity; legal status; offense types; length of stay in custody; the date, time, location, and cause of each death; and data on medical treatment provided for fatal illnesses/diseases.

These high rates of inmate deaths (including suicides) are not specific to the United States. A recent study, published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, found that 283 men died in custody—137 in federal institutions, 88 in provincial prisons, and 58 in police cells— between 1990 and 1999 in Canada (Wobeser, Datema, Bechard, & Ford, 2002). This translates to a death rate among inmates of 420.1 per 100,000 in federal institutions and 211.5 per 100,000 in provincial institutions—much higher than the country's rate of 187.5 deaths per 100,000 Canadian men aged 24 to 49 in 1996. Wobeser et al. found that suicide (including that from strangulation and drug overdose) was, at 34%, the most common cause of death. Cardiovascular problems (including from drug use) at 22% and illicit drug use at 17% were the second and third most frequent causes. Six per- cent of deaths were homicides, and another 6% died from cancer. Other causes included death from diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and respiratory problems. In an interview regarding these results, Ford commented, "Most trouble- some is the high suicide rate, which suggests a failure of the system. Fatal overdoses, as an example, were 20 to 50 times more common among the prison population than among the general male population" ("Inmates Have Much Higher Death Rate," n.d.).

How do the death rates in correctional boot camps compare to the rates in traditional prisons and juvenile facilities? We do not know. We were unable to locate

the data we would need to make this comparison. Certainly, if the death and injury rates in boot camps are much higher than in traditional facilities, those data would support the critics' arguments against boot camps. From their perspective, the camps are a problem and should be closed down. On the other hand, if the death and injury rates are similar or lower in the boot camps, then different conclusions could be drawn about the camps.

The deaths we discussed in this chapter are tragic. Are they due to the boot camp model—a model that is inherently abusive? Or, are these deaths a result of poorly trained or abusive staff members? We do not know the answer to these questions. Certainly, the research we have done does not demonstrate that the boot camps we have studied always fare worse than other facilities when we ask inmates and staff about their experiences. Nor do recidivism rates or attitude changes suggest that the boot camp results in more criminal attitudes and behavior.

Our results may not apply to the camps where the deaths occurred. The boot camps that have permitted us to conduct research in their facilities may be much better managed and operated than boot camps that would not want the scrutiny of researchers. We have to have cooperation from administrators if we are going to conduct research in a facility. Poorly managed boot camps with untrained staff might hesitate to permit researchers to enter their facilities to conduct research.

The majority of the administrators we have interviewed are well aware that boot camp staff require close oversight. This is particularly true of new staff members who are being initiated into the program. According to administrators, some people who volunteer for work in boot camps have problems related to power. They want to have power over others and to demonstrate that they have this power. This presents a problem for the other staff and inmates because such power-hungry individuals are continually trying to show their control over others. They are not necessarily focused on how to help inmates change in positive ways.

In comparison to traditional correctional facilities, we might expect more injuries in boot camps because inmates are required to participate in rigorous physical activity. Certainly, this physical activity carries with it the danger of some injuries even if staff are well trained to appropriately recognize problems. However, many inmates in the

camps are proud of their physical development and general health that results from appropriate physical training. We have talked to some inmates who were overweight at the start of boot camps and reported that they lost weight, and others who were underweight and reported that they gained weight. Many have told us that they became much more physically fit. We have to ask what the alternative to this physical exercise might be. Which is better for these young people—to have a daily exercise program, or to sit watching TV during a large part of the day? Certainly, the staff must be trained appropriately if they are going to oversee the physical training. Age, weight, and many other characteristics must be considered in order to develop an individually appropriate training schedule.

Some jurisdictions apparently thought that they could begin one of the boot camps on their own, without the necessary training for staff, drill instructors, administrators, and medical personnel. From this perspective, the boot camps are dangerous. Rigorous physical activity and summary punishments carry some inherent danger in situations where correctional employees are not appropriately trained. But without the necessary data available on the rate of injuries and deaths in boot camps as compared to other types of programs, we must hesitate to draw any conclusions regarding these aspects of the program and instead encourage researchers and policymakers to pursue this area with vigor.

In conclusion, we have presented a great deal of policy-relevant research in this book. For jurisdictions considering opening or, conversely, closing boot camps, we believe that such research should be used to help decide whether correctional boot camps will meet the desired goals. For students and researchers, the book presents an example of a research program designed to look at various goals of the boot camps and to develop methods for examining whether the camps meet the stated goals. As happened in the past, we anticipate that interest in boot camps will ebb and flow over time; it is our hope that if this happens, this book will be valuable for future developers of boot camp-type correctional programs.

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