

**A Portrait of Boundary Violations: Former Female Employees of Corrections Who
Have Established a Relationship With an Inmate**

by

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Dissertation directed by Assistant Professor Sylvia Martinez

Abstract

The correctional profession struggles to prevent boundary violating behavior by correctional employees with inmates. Examples of boundary violations that have occurred in correctional institutions include aiding an inmate in an escape, providing weapons to inmates, and engaging in sexual contact with an inmate. Any type of boundary violating behavior between an inmate and an employee has the potential of threatening the stability of the institution as well as creating a public safety risk. This study examined the process that permits a female correctional employee to develop a relationship with a male inmate. The qualitative approach of portraiture was employed to examine this process by focusing on the experiences of four former employees. The use of boundary theory, social identity theory, and power theory guided the examination of the data received from the participants towards the development of universal themes. These themes provided much needed information to begin to fill the literature gap that exists in this arena, as well as to provide information for correctional professionals who struggle with this issue.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the love of my life: my husband Dave. Dave has been my greatest supporter over the past 34 years. He has always pushed me to reach the next goal, whatever it was. He knew that completing this program meant that I would be taking time away from him, but he graciously sacrificed that time to help me as I worked towards this degree.

This dissertation is also dedicated my two daughters, Melissa and Amanda, without whom I would not be the person that I am today. They have both provided endless encouragement for me as I worked my way through this program. Their belief in me never wavered, and the young women that they have become made me realize that with love and commitment, anything is possible.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Human behavior that crosses a normative line is often referred to as a boundary violation. This term can be used to describe behavior in personal relationships and in professional settings. Unfortunately, boundary violations in many different professional and institutional settings are relatively common and the leadership of these agencies often struggle with internal monitoring and sanctions to prevent such behavior. The news media have reported stories about boundary violations in many different professional settings. The *New York Times* reported a story by Theodoric Meyer on June 1, 2012 that described a boundary violation between a student and teacher. The *New York Times* also published a story written by Jon Hurdle on May 22, 2012 that presented follow up information about a priest involved in sex abuse of parishioners or children and the Washington *Spokesman-Review* ran a story by Taryn Brodwater on June 1, 2007, describing a therapist's boundary violation.

The correctional systems have also struggled with boundary violations. Stories of correctional employees who have been fired for having sex with an inmate or of correctional employees who fell in love with an inmate and helped the inmate escape from a correctional facility have been widely publicized. These stories are very damaging to the public image of corrections; but these stories need to be heard, if for no other reason than to motivate correctional leaders to make systemic changes that could prevent future violations.

Purpose of the Study

This problem is a significant leadership and policy issue within the field of modern corrections in the United States and very little research has been completed in this area to help guide policy or practice. This study provides information that may lead to meaningful systemic change in the correctional systems. The framework of boundary theory, social identity theory, and power theory were used to evaluate the process that former female correctional employees navigated which moved them from rule-abiding members of the corrections team to crossing a boundary and developing a personal relationship with an inmate. The information is intended to provide correctional leaders vital information to assist in policy formation and to develop a more informed leadership response. This information may also assist professionals in other disciplines who struggle with these types of boundary violations.

The boundary violations that occur in correctional facilities involve a wide range of behaviors but the violations that seem to get the most public attention are ones that involve sexual contact between inmates and correctional employees. Sexual contacts between correctional employees and inmates have included both male and female employees with male and female inmates, including same sex incidents. The employees who are involved are not just the correctional officer, but also include correctional employees in food service operations, building maintenance, inmate program providers, clinical providers, and administrators in correctional facilities (Guerino & Beck, 2011). Although sexual abuse of inmates by employees is a serious issue, this type of behavior is merely one stage on a progression of boundary violations. Each time a sexual boundary violation between an employee and an inmate is discovered in an institutional setting,

there is often a whole list of boundary violations that occurred prior to the actual sex act (Blackburn, Fowler, Mullings, & Marquart, 2011; White, 1993). Cheeseman and Worley (2008) found that the majority of all boundary violations in correctional facilities did not include sex. These violations have included sharing personal items or letters with inmates, supplying inmates with weapons, and even providing inmates with information about confidential facility security procedures. Violations that do not involve sexual activity are virtually impossible to track because data are not centrally collected and jurisdictions label this behavior differently. As a result, the very limited research that has been done in this area is normally limited to boundary violations that include sexual misconduct (Blackburn et al., 2011).

All boundary violations, even those that do not include sexual activity, create safety and security risks (Blackburn et al., 2011). Correctional administrators from around the U.S. recount incidents where an employee has “crossed the line” and threatened the safety of the institution and the public. Incidents that have led to escapes, contraband, or violence have occurred in the Michigan Department of Corrections (P. Caruso, personal communication, September 15, 2012), the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (J. Lancaster, personal communication, September 27, 2012) and the Missouri Department of Corrections (T. Steele, personal communication, October 17, 2012). Robert Cantwell, the former Inspector General for the Colorado Department of Corrections described many types of issues that resulted from boundary violations in Colorado, such as a female employee who delivered a gun and ammunition to an inmate, a plot between a correctional officer and an inmate to have her husband killed, a variety of attempts to smuggle drugs into the facility, and more than one instance of cell phones

smuggled into the correctional facilities to be used for a variety of illegal purposes (R. Cantwell, personal communication, December 18, 2012).

A few of the high profile events that have endangered public safety in the United States have been widely reported. An August 10, 2005, article in the *New York Times* by Chelsea Samuel described an incident that occurred on August 9, 2005. The shooting death of Tennessee Correctional Officer Wayne Morgan was a direct result of a relationship that was formed between a male inmate and a female correctional nurse. This employee left the Tennessee Department of Corrections and eventually married the inmate. She then tried to free her husband, George Hyatte, from a court transport trip. She supplied the firearm that was used to kill Officer Morgan and wound another officer. The escapee and the former employee were apprehended one day later. In another incident that was reported on November 12, 2007, in the *Kansas Journal World* by Scott Rothschild, a follow up to an incident that occurred on October 28, 2007 was published. Two high security inmates housed in the El Dorado Correctional Facility in Kansas were aided in an escape by a former female correctional officer. After an exchange of gun fire between the escapees and the police, the inmates were re-captured in New Mexico four days later.

These types of incidents are easily seen as dangerous because they have a direct impact on the public, but other boundary violations may seem less harmful. When a correctional employee falls in love with an inmate, some may equate this to an office romance. What often is not understood is the range of possible consequences related to this relationship within the correctional environment. The correctional environment makes every act more intense and is often magnified (Schafer, 1997). This intensity

changes the impact of many day to day actions that would not be an issue in free society. Many seemingly normal interactions between employees and clients could have dramatic and dangerous repercussions inside a correctional facility. For example, sharing a food item with someone in most work environments would normally not violate any rules, but even if it did, the negative implications of that act would be minimal. Sharing a food item with an inmate can create serious repercussions inside a correctional facility; such as creating jealousy or rivalry between inmate groups which may result in violence. As a result of this intense environment, all boundary violations place correctional employees and inmates at some form of risk in an institution. Therefore, public safety is at risk.

Boundary issues are not new to the correctional systems and for years professionals have worked to clarify boundaries between inmates and employees (Witte, 1957). The promulgation of policy and training has been a very common response (Faulkner & Regehr, 2011; White, 1993). Lempert (2012) examined the pre-service training for volunteers of a mentoring program at one institution and provided this information from one of the participants of the orientation training:

Once I crossed the threshold [of the prison] the transformation occurred. I was no longer in the free world. I was among prisoners and, according to my orientation officer, I was never to let my guard down, never to reveal any personal information about myself, never to give the prisoners anything that they could later use to bargain amongst themselves, and I was never to interact with any of them. The restrictions were too many to list and I was sure that I would fail. (p. 38)

The training left this mentor feeling as if she could not follow all the rules and therefore was doomed to fail. The policies and rules that correctional employees and volunteers are expected to follow are often seen as rigid and unrealistic. To tell a person that they cannot interact socially with the inmates seems to negate any reason for working or volunteering in a correctional facility. Interaction between correctional employees and inmates is one of the primary expectations. These employees are expected to provide a positive role model to inmates by acting and relating in ways that demonstrate high ethical standards (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2011-b; Jacobs & Retsky, 1975; Pollock, 2004; Van Patten, 2012).

The idea that there is an “impermeable barrier” that all correctional employees must maintain between themselves and an inmate is often communicated in training classes (Lempert et al., 2012, p. 40). However, exactly where this barrier is located is a matter of debate by correctional staff at all levels of the system. The behaviors that are accepted and expected between employees and inmates at a high security, 23 hour lock down facility, are very different from the behaviors that are accepted and expected at a minimum security correctional facility. The reliance upon inmates to complete vital functions for the institution, such as food service, is dramatically different within these settings, so the interactions between employees and inmates are necessarily different. The security level is not the only factor that creates differences in interactions with inmates. Correctional facilities that share the same classification in the same correctional system can have very different environments and cultures (Owen, Wells, Pollock, Muscat, & Torres, 2008; Pollock, 2004). The differences are the result of the leadership at that particular institution or the history of that institution. The Buena Vista

Correctional Facility (BVCF) in Colorado was opened in 1892 as the reformatory for the state (Schwartz, 2001). The reformatory was an independent institution, separate from the rest of the Colorado prison system and it remained separate until 1978 when it became part of the Department of Corrections. The reformatory was originally designed to house young inmates who were good candidates for rehabilitation and it maintained that mission for several years after it became part of the Department of Corrections. A former BVCF warden and regional director, Warren Diesslin explained that the mindset for staff at BVCF was very rehabilitation oriented and the expectation for interactions with inmates was very different from what was expected at most the other Department of Corrections facilities. As a direct result of that history, the types of interactions between staff and inmates continue to be very different than in other institutions, even though it is no longer the reformatory (W. Diesslin, personal communication, December 31, 2012). These differences are not usually acknowledged in training or in policy so employees may enter the correctional environments expecting that all inmates are treated in the same manner. New employees may be confused by how different the facility is when compared to the training that they received.

Policies of correctional systems in the United States have evolved regarding treatment of inmates and employees. In Colorado there has been a steady progression of rules, training, and laws to address boundary violating issues between employees and inmates. A very succinct statement about ethical and moral behavior was used to cover conduct prior to 1993 (see Appendix A). At that point, the leadership of the Colorado Department of Corrections found that this policy was too ambiguous as a guide for employees when determining what behavior was expected. This ambiguity was

highlighted when more than one employee corrective or disciplinary action was overturned by the State Personnel Board.

Therefore, a set of rules were promulgated to address issues that were identified in these appeal decisions. A committee was formed that looked at past employee issues, including boundary violations. These issues were used as the basis to craft a written rule prohibiting each particular behavior. The product of this group resulted in the first staff code of conduct that listed approximately 25 new rules. This document was then modified each time an employee made a serious mistake not covered in the code. The current document now includes 56 rules (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2011a, see Appendix B). Former Executive Director for the Colorado Department of Corrections, Ari Zavaras, signed many of the revisions to the code of conduct that increased the specific rules which helped to address problems identified in employee appeals. However, this policy became more a list of specific rules to obey and but did not provide staff with a good value-based approach to doing the job (A. Zavaras, personal communication, December 17, 2012).

While the Department of Corrections' policies were being examined and revised, the Colorado General Assembly was working to address the issue of sexual behavior between employees and inmates. The Colorado General Assembly enacted a law in 2000 that criminalized sexual contact with inmates from virtually everyone the inmate can come in contact with while in a correctional facility, even volunteers (Sexual Conduct in a Correctional Institution, 2012). This law also allowed for the offending employee to be designated as a sex offender and be required to register as such (Colorado Sex Offender Registration Act, 2012). Each time the rules and laws were changed, the training for

employees was also changed. Joan Shoemaker, Deputy Director of Prisons for Colorado, believes that the training provided to new employees did the most to help guide staff towards proper conduct (J. Shoemaker, personal communication, January 1, 2013).

A true measurement of the numbers of these incidents is difficult to capture in part because the topic is considered taboo (Cheeseman & Worley, 2008; Marquart, Barnhill, & Balshaw-Biddle, 2001) and the definition of what exactly constitutes a boundary violation is not clear (Worley, 2006). Additionally, inappropriate interactions between employees and inmates may not be detected until an employee leaves employment and then tries to connect with the inmate on the phone, through letters, or visits. Incidents continued to be reported in part due to the heightened awareness of employees who were more closely watching other employees. At the same time, the total number of employees increased in response to the increase of inmates in the Colorado system. In Colorado the number of inmates increased from 2,300 in 1980 to 16,833 in 2000 (Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics Online, 2010). During this same time period the number of employees for the Colorado Department of Corrections increased from 3052 in 1980 to 5821 in 2000 (Colorado General Assembly, 1980, 2000). At any rate, retired Colorado Warden Gary Watkins recounted that the incidents continued to increase and “nothing we did seemed to help” (G. Watkins, personal communication, December 21, 2012).

Each policy and training session informed staff that any sexual behavior with inmates would be subject to criminal prosecution. However, many employees who committed what was now a crime, were never prosecuted (D. Burbank, personal communication, January 5, 2013). Even though a law was on the books that allowed the

district attorney to criminally pursue employees who engaged in sex with inmates, there was nothing that demanded that a district attorney actually press charges. Baro (1997) found that in the state of Hawaii, many district attorneys saw the behavior as consensual and not worth their time. In Colorado there are 22 judicial districts, each with its own elected district attorney, and correctional facilities are located in nine different districts (Colorado Constitution, Article VI, Section 10 (2), 2012). As a result, these cases may be handled differently based on the different priorities of each district attorney. John Suthers, Colorado's Attorney General and former executive director for the Colorado Department of Corrections, believes that most of Colorado's district attorneys understand how this behavior between inmates and correctional employees undermines public safety and he believes that they view these cases seriously (J. Suthers, personal communication, February 4, 2013). However, Thom LeDoux, District Attorney for the 11th Judicial District, stressed that each case is reviewed on a case by case basis and many times the employee involved is not seen as a perpetrator or a sexual predator. Although the law may see these female employees as the perpetrator, he believes that the actions of the employee are more often the result of manipulation by inmates (T. LeDoux, personal communication, February 21, 2013). The majority of all Colorado prisons are within the 11th Judicial District, including the Canon City facilities.

Rules, laws, and education exist to repeatedly inform correctional employees and volunteers about the consequences of boundary violating behavior. So why do these incidents continue to occur? Some correctional professionals believe these violations are the result of hiring the wrong persons—the Bad Apple Theory (Tschan, 2007). After all, these employees were carefully recruited, screened, hired, and trained, yet still violated

rules. This type of thinking implies that the individual knowingly violated clearly established rules and that was the end of the issue. The individual was the problem.

Another line of reasoning, although rarely actually admitted by current correctional professionals, is that the problem did not start until corrections systems started letting women work in male correctional facilities and males work in female correctional facilities. A retired Colorado warden, Randy Henderson, acknowledged that this is a comfortable fallback position for those professionals who have never believed that cross gender supervision should have been allowed, especially in the housing units. However, the reality is that even in Colorado, incidents of same-sex boundary violations have occurred long before cross-gender supervision was implemented (R. Henderson, personal communication, October 7, 2012).

Although male as well as female employees have been involved in boundary violations, women may not be as well prepared as male employees to combat manipulations from inmates. In general, women have been socialized not to set clear boundaries and to put the needs of others first (Schafer, 1997). Women may also be more frightened by the environment in male correctional facilities. Fear and a need for protection could be variables in the processes that move a female correctional worker into an inappropriate relationship with an inmate. Inmates are very willing to be the defender of a particular employee, but often there is a price for this protection (Maghan, 1994; Worley, Marquart, & Mullings, 2003).

The organizational response to these violations has been limited to attributing the incidents to individual failure, either because of cross-gender supervision or because the wrong person was hired (Schafer, 1997). Occasionally, a correctional administrator

believes that the employees were not adequately trained, but it stops there. There seems to be no recognition that perhaps the organization's culture, leadership, or structure has played a significant role in this process (Thomas-Peter & Garrett, 2000).

The culture of the correctional workplace has been well documented as a very strict and powerful force. Weakness or vulnerability is not part of the image of correctional officers, and neither is it a rewarded behavior (Carlson, Anson, & Thomas, 2003; Zaitzow, 1998). A common component of the correctional training programs is to inform employees that if they start to feel a connection to an inmate that could lead to pursuing a relationship, they should tell their supervisor. However, neither Patricia Caruso, Former director of the Michigan Department of Corrections, nor Mary Smith, retired regional director for the Colorado Department of Corrections, could recall a single incident when an employee contacted a supervisor for this reason (P. Caruso, personal communication, January 7, 2013; M. Smith, personal communication, January 4, 2013). The culture discourages such a revelation as a sign of weakness or a sign that the individual is not cut out for this work. The culture of corrections is not that different from the culture of other institutional settings. Employees in a forensic environment were also found to be reluctant to talk to coworkers or supervisors about this issue because they feared they would be ostracized or that it would affect their future career options, such as promotion (Thomas-Peter & Garrett, 2000).

The people who hold high level leadership positions within corrections rarely discuss boundary issues, except to say that boundary violating behavior is forbidden. Leaders do not normally share stories with subordinate employees about instances when they have made boundary mistakes or felt tempted to develop a close relationship with an

inmate. To share in such a fashion would be to admit to weakness and in the corrections culture this type of disclosure would be met with disdain and judgment. Silence on the subject communicates a message to subordinate employees that they are probably the only persons who feel conflicted about their role or that they are not cut out for this work (S. Smelser, personal communication, October 11, 2012). Female leaders in corrections not only remain silent on this issue and fail to share their vulnerable and human side; they also frequently proclaim that the negative actions of other women hurt all women in this field (Faulkner & Regehr, 2011). This message acts as a serious barrier to any employee, especially women, trying to talk to a supervisor about their feelings towards a particular inmate.

The structure of correctional facilities also influences boundary definition and maintenance. Often employees are assigned to posts where they do not see another employee during their entire work shift and their only contact with other human beings is with inmates (Gilmartin & Davis, 1986). Katy Cathcart, a former training lieutenant, acknowledged that even though much of the training program for new employees focuses on building teamwork between employees very little actually prepares new employees for a world where their job duties depend upon cooperation with the inmates or where they may be working in an environment without another employee nearby (K. Cathcart, personal communication, January 6, 2013). The fact that correctional employees must depend upon inmates to get their job duties completed is not what is usually discussed or even acknowledged by employees (Sykes, 1958) and this suggestion of a culture of reciprocity is contradictory to the perceived power of the correctional officer (Wicks, 1980).

Problem Statement

The number of boundary violations between correctional employees and inmates is cause for considerable concern by correctional managers (Alexander, 2011). The strong correctional culture and structure makes it difficult to understand why employees become involved in boundary violating behavior. Are the inmates just that good at splitting staff away from coworkers and targeting them? Is the boundary violating process under control of the inmates? Can this process be explained that simply? What is the role of the employee, and the organization? Is this merely a matter of hiring the wrong people? Boundary violating behavior is a very complex problem and this study examines one part of this issue: How does a female employee become involved with a male inmate within a correctional facility, and what is the impact of that involvement upon the female employee and her life? The contextual influences, perceived power, and motivations will be examined through the use of the portraiture research method. This research approach will facilitate the collection of data from former female employees that were involved in relationships with inmates so that this issue can be more fully understood.

Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

- (a) What is the process that a female employee goes through from the point of pursuing a career in corrections to the point of establishing a personal relationship with an inmate, including preparation for corrections work and a description of the environment in which they worked?

- (b) What type of personal involvement with the inmate occurred, including type of contact, length of contact, and actions taken to achieve this contact?
- (c) How did the relationship with the male inmate influence the former employee's life after the violation occurred?

This study will be limited to examining boundary violations between female employees and male inmates. Relationships that have developed between employees and inmates of the same sex or between male employees and female inmates will not be included. While there certainly may be similarities between all of these relationships, the differences between them may be overlooked if all types of relationships were included in this study. One major difference between these relationships is the perception of just who is the victim. When a female correctional employee is discovered to have developed a relationship with a male inmate, the female is often viewed as the victim of manipulation and not the perpetrator, even though the law and policy clearly designates her as the perpetrator. This type of victim status is rarely ascribed to men that have developed a relationship with female inmates (Arvil et al., 1989). This study will focus specifically on the dynamics of the relationship between a female correctional employee and a male inmate to illuminate this specific process.

Recent data collected by Guerino and Beck (2011) have also drawn attention to the issue of inappropriate relationships between female employees and male inmates. Guerino and Beck (2011) provided a summary of data collected from Adult Correctional Authorities, for the years 2007-2008. This report examined the number of inmates that were the sexually victimized, either by other inmates or by staff. They found that 46% of

all substantiated incidents of sexual victimization involved staff with inmates and of that number, 61% involved female employees. Given these data, this study is timely and may help to explain these statistics.

Theoretical Framework

This study will be guided by three theories to illuminate the process that these former female employees had undergone to become involved with male inmates. The first, boundary theory, has been described by Gutheil and Gabbard (1998). The second, social identity theory, has been examined by Goffman (1959) and Ashforth and Mael (1989). Power theory, the third theory, has been developed by French (1956) and Wingood and DiClemente (2000). The combination of these theories will provide a framework to evaluate and understand the information gathered through a qualitative portraiture process.

Boundary Theory

Boundary theory explains and defines boundary crossings and violations, the segmentation of roles, and transitions between roles. The term boundary was defined by Gutheil (2005) as “the edge of appropriate professional conduct” (p. 89). This edge is defined differently by different professions, as the context is of paramount importance when defining any type of boundary issue because the differences between clients and environments are significant. The idea that impermeable boundaries (Lempert et al., 2012) exist or are even definable is negated by this reliance upon the context. Zerubavel (1991) described a boundary as a mental fence that helps to simplify and make sense of the environment. Typical boundaries are used to divide the roles of home, work, and

community commitments. These boundaries are necessary in any profession to guide professional conduct and to create a sense of safety within the environment.

A boundary crossing is defined as an act that is outside of the scope of normally accepted behavior, and the act does no harm. A boundary violation, conversely, is outside the normally accepted behaviors and does result in harm or exploitation (Gutheil & Gabbard, 1998). Whether a particular boundary is a crossing or a violation, again, is context dependent (Sandler & Godley, 2004). Harm may be to an individual patient/inmate, an organization, coworkers, or to the public (Regehr & Glancy, 1995). Denial can be used by individuals trying to neutralize their actions by denying an injury or denial that there is a victim (Sykes & Matza, 1957). This type of neutralization can lead individuals to believe that they are not harming anyone, so much so that they can then ignore their own values and the reactions of coworkers who disapprove of the behavior.

Transitions between boundaries are a normal part of everyday life. A transition between two boundaries refers to how individuals move between the different roles in their lives. Boundaries that share a geographic location make this transition easier, such as the roles of mother and wife. However, when the structural, geographic, or social distance is large, the movement between the roles is more difficult. Any movement between the roles that are separated by distance requires specific acts to accomplish the transition (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000). This type of transition is very deliberate and intentional. The role of a correctional employee has many of the features of great distance: structurally, geographically, and socially. The structural distances can be defined by the physical barriers that must be crossed simply in order to enter and leave

the correctional facility. Correctional facilities are built to make the perimeter difficult to breach in order to ensure that inmates do not escape, but these same barriers can also make it difficult for employees to enter and leave (Henderson, Rauch, & Phillips, 1997). The geographic distances between the role of correctional employees and other roles in their lives are often significant as well. A variety of economic and political factors have resulted in many correctional facilities being built in rural areas of the United States, which means that employees often commute from neighboring cities or towns (Hallinan, 2001). The type of environment inside a correctional facility is also socially very different from most other workplaces. The attitude, demeanor, and equipment that one must possess to work in this environment requires that conscious acts occur to move from the corrections employee role to any other role, such as the role of parenting. The social and emotional “core” features that are part of being a correctional employee create a boundary that makes transitioning between work and home very difficult, even if the geographic distance is not that great (Ashforth et al., 2000; Wills, 2013). Core features in corrections have been identified as a lack of trust, a perpetual state of hyper-vigilance, and a skewed worldview (Gilmartin, 2002; Spinaris, 2008).

The roles that individuals manage daily have been described as being on a continuum, with differing levels of segmentation between each. These roles can be highly segmented from each other and have a very low degree of permeability. This segmentation may be due to geographic distance or to the scope of the role. The flexibility of the boundaries is also dependent upon the context. Some working parents are able to take an ill child to their workplace. In such a situation, the flexibility and permeability of the role of parent and employee would be labeled as very high. In other

instances, an occupation will not even allow a parent to receive phone calls, text messages, or emails from children. This type of occupation would be labeled as highly impermeable. The development of rules to keep work and home separate may be a result of agency rules or a function of the individual trying to balance the demands of both worlds (Nippert-Eng, 1996; Zerubavel, 1996). Some agencies have adopted a strict set of rules and policies that try to separate employees while at work from the outside world. For instance, within correctional facilities, personal phone calls are usually discouraged and possession of electronic devices, such as cell phones, are often prohibited (Fitzgerald, 2010).

The degree of segmentation may also be constructed based on individual preferences. If individuals are allowed to contact a child during work hours but do not feel they can or should transition between roles in this fashion, the segmentation is of their choosing, not a rule fostered by the employer. Many correctional employees have adopted their own rules to separate their worlds, such as never talking about work at home. This type of rule could be a result of the need to separate the employee's personal life from the negative and sometimes dangerous aspects of corrections work (Spinaris, Denhof, & Kellaway, 2012).

Roles that are not segmented a great deal or are blurred make transitioning between the roles easy, but they also lead to role confusion. Ashforth et al. (2000) concluded that the greater the differences between roles of an individual and the greater the inflexibility, the more difficult are the transitions, but role confusion is less likely. The inflexible role of the correctional employee often makes fulfilling the other roles in

an individual life more difficult and the gear shifting that is required for women that work in a male dominated profession is often not fully understood (Wills, 2013).

The boundaries that exist between roles a person chooses in life are directly related to the identity that person assumes in each of the different spheres. The concept of identity may be able to explain why people act in specific ways, including the way correctional employees interact with inmates. The definition of “us” and “them” is a powerful part of the group’s identity. How individuals view their occupation influences their willingness to behave in ways that are seen as appropriate by the group (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008).

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory defines social identity as “oneness with a group of persons” (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 20). This acceptance of a social identity leads one to engage in “activities that are congruent with that identity, [and to provide] support for the institutions that embody that identity” (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 20). The correctional identity is further defined by the individual’s work unit within the institution. The boundaries that are erected between inmates and employees are part of the social identity of the workgroup.

New correctional employees may be very eager and willing to accept the culture as it is presented to them. They may unquestionably follow the rules with a blind allegiance. This blind allegiance may not continue throughout their career, and their identification with their work group might change. Specific instances in one’s life make individuals reevaluate their beliefs and the people with whom they have connected and identified. They may begin to identify more with their coworkers than with the

organization as a whole. Something as routine as a performance evaluation from a supervisor could be a point in a career where employees re-evaluate their career choices (Ashforth et al., 2008). Although these moments of reflection might be positive and affirming, it is also possible that individuals may begin to question their career choices. In organizations where employees do not feel supported, or where they are burdened with excessive rules and supervision, they may begin to question their loyalty to the organization (Bateman & Organ, 1983). Correctional employees may become disillusioned with the work they are doing or start to feel that the work they are doing is not valued. Regehr, Johannis, Dimitropoulos, Bartram and Hope (2003) offer this explanation: “You spend the first 5 years telling everyone you’re a cop and the next 25 denying it” (p. 391). This type of realization can lead to a situation where the employee actually starts to move away from the values of the organization (Ashforth et al., 2008).

When this type of change occurs, the norms, values, and actions of the organization become suspect, to the point that the rules no longer seem to be relevant (Weber, 2003). The identity of correctional employee might shift to a different identity where the employee has redefined the “us” and “them.” One possible shift is that the “us” is now defined as the correctional employee and his or her inmates. The isolation in which correctional employees often work and the immersion in the world of the inmates, make this a very likely transition. The shift in identity from an alignment with other employees to an alignment with inmates is a critical shift towards identifying inmates as the reference group (Gilmartin & Davis, 1986) and possibly towards developing an inappropriate relationship with an inmate.

Power Theory

Power theory has been the subject of many different studies and many typologies have been presented to define different types of power (Johnson, 2012). The typology developed by French (1956) offers the following categories to describe the basis of power: referent power, expert power, reward power, coercive power, and legitimate power. The power of a correctional employee has often been described as an absolute and unwavering legitimate power. However, for a female correctional employee, that power may be less unwavering and absolute than it appears. The power of inmates has not been thoroughly examined and inmates may judge the power that individual employees possess differently. Some correctional employees may be seen possessing power that is both legitimate and coercive. However, the female correctional employee may be judged differently, and in some instances, they can be seen as less powerful than individual inmates. The decisions made by female correctional employees are based on their own view of the power that they possess or the power that they believe inmates possess. Given the differences in power, based on gender, the perception of female correctional employees may be very different from that of male employees (Smith, 2012).

The influences that exist in free society regarding the role and expectations of women carry over into the world of work, including the workplace inside correctional facilities. This influence could affect control of resources based on worth or perceived status (Wingood & DiClemente, 2000). Resources inside a correctional facility are tangible, such as non-lethal weapons and restraints, but they can also include intangible resources such as dependable back up (the ability to depend upon other staff being there to help immediately). The imbalance of control or power between males and females that

exists in free society can also affect gender roles inside correctional facilities. Male coworkers may be part of the push that moves a female towards an inmate and away from the coworkers.

Significance of the Study

This study will use the framework of boundary theory, social identity theory, and power theory to describe the process that leads a female employee to move from the role of correctional employee to that of friend or lover of an inmate. Based on a review of the available literature, it appears that this type of study has not been completed and the published literature in this area is sparse, in part, because boundary violating behavior is an area that is considered “taboo” among correctional professionals (Marquart et al., 2001). Virtually the only discussions that are held regarding this behavior are to criticize the individuals who have committed this violation (Tschan, 2007). Alexander (2011) studied the issue of romantic relationships between employees and inmates by surveying employees at a large jail. The survey asked participants to rank the reasons that an employee might become involved with an inmate. The survey included inmate manipulation and characteristics that were attributable to the employee that developed such a relationship. No organizational factors were presented for consideration.

The research that has been published in this area has often included a call for a study of just this sort. Worley and Cheeseman (2006) suggested that it would be “most beneficial to interview former staff members who have become personally involved with an inmate” (p. 221). The study will begin to fill the literature gap that exists in correctional leadership and policy research.

Definition of Terms

Portraiture is a form of qualitative inquiry that springs from ethnography research. Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) define this approach as: “a method of qualitative research that blurs the boundaries of aesthetics and empiricism in an effort to capture the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life” (p. xv). The strength in the portraiture research approach lies in the ability to illuminate the voice of the participants and the context within which these relationships were developed. The emotions of each participant, as well as their perception of the connections that they had with other people, were part of the data that was explored. This method guided the exploration of the paths that participants navigated and the decisions they made that led them into a relationship with an inmate. This same exploration provided a method to describe the impact that these relationships had upon the lives of each participant.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the paucity of literature that directly addresses the research questions a broader range of literature is examined in this literature review, including the following areas: the environment inside a correctional facility; organizational components; organizational response; boundary violations in mental health treatment settings; boundary violations in correctional facilities; consequences of boundary violations; strategies to address boundary violations; values and characteristics of employees; women in corrections; love and attraction in the workplace; and women in love with inmates.

The Environment Inside a Correctional Facility

Sykes (1958) was one of the first researchers to describe the modern correctional environment in *The Society of Captives*. This book detailed a system that included instances of force and violence; however, the more common atmosphere in most US correctional facilities was described as one governed by cooperation and reciprocity. The sheer numbers of employees when compared to the numbers of inmates makes it obvious that the employees cannot use force to ensure that every necessary inmate action is completed. Additionally, correctional employees must work with inmates to accomplish many of their job responsibilities such as preparing meals, providing laundry service and routine maintenance functions on many buildings (Pollock, 2004). This type of reciprocity forms the backdrop of any discussion of boundaries in correctional facilities and of boundary violations. The contradiction between being the ultimate authority and

the need to interact with inmates provides opportunities for potential boundary violations (Calhoun & Coleman, 2002). There is no clearly defined line that all employees have applied to their relationships with all inmates. The particular institution, agency, and even the particular inmate dictate exactly where that line is drawn.

The fact that the correctional institutions create an environment where the consequences of choices and actions are often significant makes this boundary drawing behavior very important. The correctional employee struggles to maintain power in this dynamic environment that depends on reciprocity. This dependence allows inmates to gain control in seemingly small and insignificant ways thereby allowing the inmates to gain power (Pollock, 2004). The inmates are often needed to assist with specific tasks, such as housekeeping, maintenance, laundry, or food preparation. They may also be called upon to assist with helping fellow inmates adjust to life inside a correctional facility. The employees walk a “tight rope” in navigating this boundary line and maintaining this power balance between inmates and corrections employees. Hamilton (1995) described the “Seesaw Model” as way to conceptualize the balancing act that is needed to provide both care and control. The correctional employees are expected to balance on the pivot point of the seesaw to ensure that they do not lean too far one way or the other. They are expected to maintain strict boundaries between themselves and inmates, while at the same time they are expected to role model appropriate interaction skills and social connections that may help increase an inmate’s social adjustment (Haney, 1993; Pollock, 2004). Maintaining the balance on the pivot point can be tricky.

The term “slippery slope” has been applied to the issue of boundary maintenance in correctional facilities (Spinaris, 2008). Many correctional employees spend more time

with inmates than with any other people in their lives. In many correctional institutions employees often work alone and they rarely see another employee during the entire work shift. In fact, most employees will spend more total time in a correctional facility as employees than the time that most inmates will serve (Faith, 1993). This may lead to relationships with inmates that are similar to relationships with other coworkers. In jurisdictions where overtime or “double” shifts are common the majority of human contact that a corrections employee experiences may be with inmates in a correctional facility. A female inmate described the work schedule of correctional officers in this manner: “The ACO’s [adult correctional officers] work . . . 16 hours a day . . . they go home, they eat, they sleep, and then get up and come right back to work. So, the only place where they actually have human contact is here with the inmates” (Calhoun & Coleman, 2002, p. 112). This type of schedule can lead to relationship building where employees may begin to see the inmates as their friends, and officers may find themselves telling inmates things they have not even told their significant others (Jacobs & Retsky, 1975).

Even though this type of situation is common, most of the training to orient new employees to the correctional environment is aimed at situations where employees are not working alone (Lempert et al., 2012). There is a popular notion that correctional employees will always work side by side and be there to support one another. The reality is that many correctional employees are assigned to posts where they work alone; so they have to develop some type of working relationships with the inmates, even at the highest levels of security, just to get the job done (Pollock, 2004). It is in this type of workplace

that correctional employees are informed that they should never develop relationships with inmates.

Many organizations have some type of code of conduct for their employees (Webley & Werner, 2008). In correctional organizations these codes usually prohibit specific types of relationships with inmates such as relationships that are social, financial, sexual, or physical. The Colorado Department of Corrections and the Federal Bureau of Prisons also prohibit employees from forming emotional relationships with inmates but there is no definition of the term “emotional” in either policy (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2011a, Federal Bureau of Prisons, 1999). Being invested in the success of another person, or being available to provide emotional support or encouragement to another person could be construed as having an emotional relationship; yet both of these actions may be a necessary part of role modeling for inmates. Correctional employees are left to figure out where these boundaries are supposed to be placed regarding what is appropriate and what is not.

The dynamic relationship between the correctional employee and the inmate can best be described as a continuum. The amount that the correctional employee depends upon the inmate to complete specific duties differs based upon the facility, security level, shift, and assignment. This level of dependency is a two-way street. The inmates also depend upon the correctional employees to maintain an environment that is safe and that allows the inmates to conduct themselves confidently in the institution (Hepburn & Knepper, 1993). Therefore, a static boundary does not and cannot exist for all inmates and employees in all situations. This ambiguity may lead to boundary “blurring” for both the employees and the inmates (Blackburn et al., 2011), and this type of blurring can lead

to employees becoming emotionally involved with inmates or becoming too “friendly” with inmates. This friendship can be maintained as just a friendship or it may morph into something more. Much of the literature in this area makes the assumption that all inmates are after something (Allen & Bosta, 1981; Maghan, 1994). Although this may be true, the “something” could just be a comfortable existence in the institutions or the need for a connection.

Most of the research into boundary violations in correctional facilities examines the process when the relationship continues past friendship into more serious violations (Cheeseman & Worley, 2008; Worley et al., 2003). Allen and Bosta (1981) described this process as a conscious and planned effort by inmates that often begin with some form of intelligence gathering. Inmates do not have to resort to complex methods to obtain information about employees, they just have to observe and listen. Correctional employees are not that different from employees in other organizations in that they often form social relationships with co-workers. These relationships include sharing details of their lives, asking for assistance or advice, or even just talking about what they have done and what they want to do. The inmates watch and listen to what the employees say to one another and to how they say it. A critical difference between the inmates and coworkers is that the inmates do not have a separate life outside of the correctional facility. They can often devote 24 hours a day to listening and learning about the employees (Allen & Bosta, 1981).

When relationships between employees are not positive, or when employees treat each other in disrespectful ways, the inmates also listen and observe. Inmates observe when co-workers are talking negatively or spreading rumors about other employees, or

sexually harassing, or bullying each other (Faulkner & Regehr, 2011). Allen and Bosta (1981) contended that these types of observations and interactions are what inmates can use to begin to build a relationship with employees. Inmates take advantage of these situations and try to make more out of an issue in order to drive a wedge between an employee and the rest of the staff. This is often accomplished skillfully and easily, in part due to the negativity of the overall environment (Spinaris et al., 2012). Inmates can use what they have seen and heard to build a reality that is believable to the employee they have targeted and the negativity of the environment makes the inmate's version seem believable. Employees can begin to see parallels between themselves and the inmates and these similarities can lessen the social distance between the world of the staff member and that of the inmate (Calhoun & Coleman, 2002). The inmate can then move into taboo areas, such as talking about sex, as a test of the employee's willingness to enforce a boundary (Maghan, 1994). If inmates succeed in crossing this boundary they will often try to push the employee further.

Fear is another frequent catapult for a relationship with an inmate. If an inmate can approach an employee who is uncomfortable in the environment, he might be able to convince the employee that the environment is dangerous and that coworkers are not to be trusted. The inmate then lets the employee know that he is there to protect her not only from the inmates, but also from other employees (Maghan, 1994; Smith, 2003). This can give comfort to an employee who now feels she has an ally. The inmate has succeeded in having the employee "switch sides." The employee is not turning to coworkers for protection or support, but to an inmate.

Organizational Components

Agency policies, state laws, and even federal law have made it clear that having a sexual relationship with an inmate is prohibited. Other rules and laws make it clear that forming personal relationships with inmates is prohibited. So why is virtually every correctional agency still struggling with this issue? The research on organizational systems and norm-breaking behavior is important to developing an understanding of the complexity of this issue.

White (1993) examined the issue of sexual exploitation of clients from a systems perspective. White presented a strong argument that the organization must be committed to real change and not just superficial efforts, such as another training course or minor policy change. The behavior does not occur in isolation from the rest of the work environment, so the organization must be willing to deal with the issue of sexual exploitation not only from the individual level but also the organizational level. The organizational culture shapes conditions that communicate the tolerance level for sexual exploitation of clients. Organizations at highest risk are those that are going through periods of change or turbulence, organizations where harassment of employees is tolerated, and those described as a “closed systems.” White described a closed system as “a state in the life of an organization marked by increasing numbers of staff meeting most, if not all, of their personal, professional, social, and sexual needs inside the boundaries of the organization” (p. 190). White further described the types of events that might move an organization towards closure. One such indicator is the “progressive isolation of the organization . . . from the outside professional and social world” (p. 190).

The actions of individuals in organizations have been studied in many different professions (Puffer, 1987). Levinson (1965) concluded that people find identity and affiliation from their organization and this helps them to cope with the struggles of life. The networks formed in the workplace tend to help people feel connected to the work that they do. These connections can result in advantages to individuals, such as promotion or increase in pay (Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne, & Kraimer, 2001). The level of support that the individual feels from the organization is linked to performance and can be tied directly to work outcomes and other organizational behaviors (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004). If the perceived level of support is high, work performance increases. If the perceived level of support is low, employees may feel a lack of fairness in the manner in which the organization makes decisions or treats employees (De Schrijver, Delbeke, Maesschalck, & Pleysier, 2010).

In traditional government agencies, the organizational chart often looks like boxes attached to other boxes with lines in a hierarchical or pyramid shape. Within these boxes are people or work groups that work closely together. Mohrman and Cohen (1994) examined these types of organizations and found that the “box” approach to an organization segments the people and tasks from one another. While the people in the box are working together towards their unit’s goals, there is a lack of commitment to the goals of the entire organization. Organizations in general mimic or model themselves after other similar organizations (Kelley, 1992). Consequently, most correctional systems in the United States function similarly and their organizational structures look alike. The boxes might be arranged a little differently, but they often lead to

segmentation. This segmentation is more pronounced when large sections of the workforce are not included in decision making or development of group norms. When groups within an organization are polarized their differences are exaggerated (Kanter, 1977), and employees who feel less powerful might find themselves constrained by rules or norms that they are not invested in and did not help to create (Acker, 2006).

Additionally, the number of people who comply with the rules or expected norms, and the power of the people who choose to break the rules (Kulakowski, 2009), influences whether the rules will be complied with by others (Hill, Maruyama, & Viceisza, 2012).

The theory of leader-member exchange (LMX) also applies to the correctional workforce. LMX contends that the relationship between the employee and the supervisor is one of give and take. Each party offers something that it sees as valuable, such as compliance to rules that are thought to be fair in exchange for fair treatment from the supervisors (Dansereau Jr, Graen, & Haga, 1975). When stressors are added to an environment, this further destabilizes the exchange and can lead to a perceived lack of fairness or organizational support (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). Stressors in corrections that have been identified by Lambert, Cluse-Tolar, and Hogan (2007), include danger of the job, lack of job variety, role stress, and lack of job involvement. Micieli (2008) found that stress is created by dealing with inmates and negative confrontations, and Pollock (2004) described a high level of medical and social problems related to the stress of being a correctional employee. Williams, Giuffre, and Dellinger (1999) found that employees engage in sexual banter and touching as a coping mechanism to combat the stress of the environment.

The amount of discretion individuals can exercise in their work can affect their willingness to follow agency rules. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) found that individuals feel less valued in large organizations when formalized policies offer little flexibility. Many correctional systems have volumes of rules to govern virtually every eventuality. Many of these rules are a direct result of the massive litigation that has been aimed at correctional facilities since the Supreme Court decision in 1964 of *Cooper v. Pate*. In that case, the court held that inmates confined in a correctional facility could bring lawsuits against correctional authorities under Section 1983 of the federal Civil Rights Act (*Cooper v. Pate* 378 US 546). This decision unleashed a torrent of civil rights litigation against the correctional systems in the United States (Calhoun, 1977). As a direct result of this decision, many correctional systems were involved in litigation, and many systems were ultimately judged as unconstitutional under the Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution regarding cruel and unusual punishment. By the early 1990s as many as thirty states in the United States were under court orders or consent decrees because of the conditions of confinement (Keating, 1992). Colorado was one such system. *Ramos v. Lamm* was the landmark civil rights case that resulted in the Colorado system being placed under a federal court's control. This oversight continued until the mid-nineties when the state was found to be substantially compliant with the concerns addressed by the court (*Ramos v. D. Lamm*, 1981). The amount of litigation has since diminished, thanks in part to the Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1996 (PLRA) (Human Rights Watch, 2009). PLRA substantially changed the type of litigation that an inmate is allowed to file, as well as the litigation process for inmates. However, the court intervention had a lasting effect on the correctional systems by creating an expectation

that everything would be put into policy and by increasing the mechanisms for internal oversight and supervision. This increased bureaucratization removed the power to make policy from the institutions and placed that power in the central offices (Crouch & Marquart, 1989). This same move to increase oversight and standardization led many agencies to seek accreditation from the American Correctional Association (ACA). The ACA standards for adult correctional institutions require specific policies and procedures to be in place to acquire and maintain accreditation. Of the 530 standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 44 require specific policies to address specific areas. Many of the remaining 486 standards rely on additional written procedures to show compliance. To achieve accreditation, a facility must meet 100% of the 61 mandatory standards and 90% of the 469 non-mandatory standards. In order to gain approval for accreditation, outside auditors review the documentation, tour the facility and talk to employees, interested outside groups, and inmates. This process is usually completed in less than three days, so the auditors rely heavily upon the documents provided for their review (American Correctional Association, 2003).

Williams and Lillibridge (1992) found the amount of flexibility in how the job is performed affects the individual employee's level of confidence. When flexibility is high, employees feel more confident and perform better. Thus, the effect of the massive sets of regulations in corrections may be detrimental to improving organizational outcomes and a belief in the goals of the organization.

Organizational Response

Although little research is available on the institutional response to boundary violations in correctional facilities, even sexual abuse in custody, Tschan (2007) did

describe the reaction of one forensic agency to allegations of sexual abuse. The reaction was compared to how a family might deal with an allegation of incest. Denial and thinking that this type of thing happens in other institutions, but not here, is common. If the abuse is substantiated, the “bad apple” theory is used to justify firing the person and moving on. The abuse is seen as a failure of the individual. Schafer (1997) described the same response in another psychiatric setting. The problem was seen as isolated to that employee and client and not any type of organizational failure.

Boundary Violations in Mental Health Treatment Settings

Research in the area of boundary violations has also been conducted in mental health institutions which share some similarities with correctional facilities. For example, some of the clients treated in mental health institutions are housed in locked forensic units, are considered dangerous, and have a history of criminal behavior. In treatment settings boundary violating behavior is often considered the result of countertransference. This concept was developed by Freud in 1910 and has been further developed by many therapists and researchers since that time (Freud, 1959). Countertransference is often considered to be an undesirable behavior that arises from personal conflicts within the therapist. These conflicts result from the time spent with a patient and are by definition meeting the needs of the therapist and not the patient (Hayes, 2004). The definition has been “broadened considerably to include any therapist feelings or attitudes toward the client” (Peabody & Gelso, 1982, p. 240). A therapist acts out of a hope of rescuing or helping the client, but the therapist may violate a boundary in the process (Gutheil, 2005). Therapists have been trained to identify and deal with issues of countertransference, but when the feelings evoked are erotic or sexual, the therapist is

often hesitant to identify these feelings or seek assistance from colleagues (Arvil et al., 1989). When a therapist is afraid of the client or the setting, there is an increased need for self-awareness to prevent countertransference (Twemlow, 2001). The forensic and corrections environments can elicit this type of fear. Gordon and Kirtchuk (2008) examined the role of countertransference in the forensic environment and they concluded that therapists are not encouraged to talk openly about their emotional reactions to patients in these environments. In fact, they identified such an action as that akin to professional suicide.

Research has been conducted to track the numbers of instances when a therapist has violated a boundary and had a sexual relationship with a patient. Thomas-Peter and Garret (2000) used a variety of different sources and concluded that between 3% and 10% of therapists have had sexual relationships with their patients. Thomas-Peter and Garrett (2000) described female employees as the predominant perpetrators in forensic environments. They surmised that these females might be caught up in the need to rescue a patient and restore an individual to health. These same females may feel empowered by their position so they feel less intimidated by males in custody than they might feel when interacting with males in free society. Employees who are likely to engage in this behavior are those who exploit a relationship or opportunity and those who are in a position to be “longing for nurturance” (Thomas-Peter & Garrett, 2000, p. 144). Gutheil (2005) and Norris and Gutheil and Strasburger (2007) described therapists who became involved with patients as those who have recently suffered a life crisis, such as career transitions, illness, and loneliness. Gabbard and Lester (1995) identified four types of people who may violate the boundary between therapist and patient: employees with

psychotic disorders, employees who are predatory, employees who are lovesick, and employees who are masochistic. Schoener (1995) also described some therapists who violated boundaries as having psychotic disorders that included symptoms of mania, borderline disorders, impulse control problems, neurosis, and sociopathic tendencies.

Boundary Violations in Correctional Facilities

Correctional employees are now working within systems that try to dictate every action through policy. Yet, the reality is that policy cannot successfully regulate all actions and track all behavior. The full scope of actions taken by employees who have crossed the line is not known due, in part, to the sheer volume of the interactions between people. Also, the rewards that the inmates seek vary from minor, such as sharing an item from an employee's lunch, all the way to criminal actions such as bringing in weapons (Allen & Bosta, 1981; Cornelius, 2001). In some instances the employee is coaxed into compliance with the promise of personal gain, such as payment for introduction of a specific type of contraband (Blackburn et al., 2011). Often, in the inmates view, the "what" is not important. Sometimes the inmates are just after the ability to control the employee.

Sexual Boundaries

Boundary violations that include sexual contact between employees and clients of many different professions have been the subject of media attention, court involvement and research (Kadner, 1994; Sheets, 2001). Sexual activity between correctional employees and inmates is definitely the boundary violation that has received the most attention in corrections. This attention has been a direct result of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA). The basis for many of the laws and PREA legislation

revolves around the power imbalance that provides an environment for abuse in correctional facilities (Crossmaker, 1991). Although PREA primarily targeted the issue of inmate-to-inmate sexual activity, employee and inmate activity is included in the act. PREA defines any sexual activity between an inmate and an employee as an assault against the inmate. One primary goal of PREA is to improve data collection so that the full scope of the problem could be identified (Dumond, 2003). The data that have been gathered as a result of PREA show that the incidence of employee on inmate assault is higher than originally believed (Beck & Johnson, 2012; Blackburn et al., 2011; Dirks, 2004; Wolff, Blitz, Shi, Bachman, & Siegel, 2006). These data include self-reports from inmates as well as reports from correctional systems and indicate that the majority of sexual relationships between employees and inmates is perpetrated by female employees (Guerino & Beck, 2011).

Type of Employees Who Violate Boundaries

Researchers who have examined perpetration of inmate sexual assault by employees have searched for clues regarding the type of employee who is likely to cross this professional boundary. Marquart et al. (2001) found that correctional employees who were likely to cross a boundary often had personal problems or were having issues with a significant relationship. Faulkner and Regehr (2011) also identified problems in a personal relationship as a big risk factor for committing a boundary violation for forensic workers. Worley and Cheeseman (2006) described the types of correctional employees who were likely to engage in inappropriate relationships with inmates as those who were “plagued with personal problems” (p. 205), such as employees who were involved in an abusive relationship. Other types of employees who have been identified are those

affiliated with gangs, those with weakened community bonds, those with wild social lives, those who felt lonely or isolated, those with financial problems, and those who experienced job problems or felt underpaid, overworked, or otherwise unfairly treated (Worley, 2006). Cheeseman and Worley (2008) researched this issue from the point of view of the inmates who had been involved in boundary violations with employees. These inmates revealed that employees were likely to be targeted if they acted as if they were afraid of inmates.

Types of Inmates Who Are Involved in Boundary Violations

PREA provided incentives for all jurisdictions to enact laws that criminalized sexual activity between correctional employees and inmates. Many states have included language in their laws that specifically state that an inmate does not have the ability to consent to any sexual activity with employees (Kupers, 2012). This has created discussion in the correctional profession as well as the corrections related literature regarding the role of the inmate in inappropriate relationships. A pure reading of the law indicates that the employee is always the perpetrator and the inmate is always the victim. Although this is accurate from a legal standpoint, it does not fully describe the dynamics of the relationship. Gutheil (2005) concluded that patients who have borderline personalities often “strain the boundary envelope” (p. 92) because they are intent upon manipulating the therapist. Mental illness among inmates, including borderline personalities, is estimated to be as high as 20% in the United States (Metzner & Dvoskin, 2006).

Inmates have been identified as the instigators of sexual relationships in the work of Allen and Bosta (1981), Cornelius (2001) and Elliot and Verdeyen (2003). *The Games*

Criminals Play (Allen & Bosta, 1981) describes the role of “turner” as an inmate tries to get an employee to break a rule. Worley et al. (2003) further identified the turner as one of three types: heartbreaker, exploiter, and hell-raiser. These types were defined by the motives of the inmates. The heartbreaker defined an inmate who was seeking an emotional bond. The exploiter was after something such as contraband and finally the hell-raiser was motivated by just wanting to cause problems for the institution. The payoff for the hell-raiser may be something as simple as embarrassing the institution or gaining personal notoriety.

Consequences of Boundary Violations

The effect of boundary violations upon the perpetrating employee, the organization, the coworkers, the clients/inmates, and the public varies based on the context. Employees involved in a boundary violation can be terminated and face the threat of criminal prosecution or civil suits. These employees are often prevented from working in any other type of law enforcement environment, so their future employability is also affected adversely.

Worley, Tewksbury, and Frantzen (2010) identified negative consequences for the internal environment of a correctional facility, such as causing problems between coworkers. The creation of cliques and factions among employees has been documented as a result of these incidents. The coworkers need to make sense of the disruption in the workplace so taking sides and defending either the employee or defending the institution is one way to achieve an understanding of the situation.

The likelihood that the inmates involved in a boundary violation may have a trauma response has been described by Baro (1997), but the inability to consent to sexual

behavior has also been suggested as a potential negative factor for inmates. Laws that criminalize sexual contact between employees and inmates often include language that states that the inmate is not capable of consent. Strasburger, Jorgenson, and Randles (1991) have suggested that assuming patients can never consent to sexual activity diminishes their standing and affects them negatively.

Negative consequences can also extend beyond the walls of the correctional facility. If an incident becomes public, it can taint the public's or stakeholders' impression of that institution (Arvil et al., 1989; Faulkner & Regehr, 2011; Regehr & Glancy, 1995). Additionally, public safety has been put at risk from boundary violations that have facilitated escapes, theft, sabotage, brutality, and introduction of dangerous contraband in many agencies (Pollock, 2004).

Strategies to Address Boundary Violations

Much of the available research provides recommendations and strategies to work towards the elimination of boundary violations. The most common recommendation is education of the employees and that this education should occur at the college level, pre-service training, and in-service training. This educational focus must create an environment that encourages acknowledgement of the issue, identification of warning signs, and systems to encourage consultation with others for assistance (Gutheil, 2005). However, this recommendation, reaching out to colleagues for assistance, is fraught with resistance and perceived roadblocks. Thomas-Peters and Garrett (2000) studied the issues related to the therapeutic environment and acknowledged that consulting with colleagues can be a high risk move that may affect the future employment of professionals. Many professionals do not believe that they will be helped, and they fear

they will lose support of their colleagues and even lose their job (Faulkner & Regehr, 2011). In a correctional environment, employees may not feel as if they can turn to coworkers for these same reasons (Zwirn & Owens, 2011). In general, encouraging an employee to go to a supervisor or a coworker after they have crossed a line is often not seen as a viable option.

Values and Characteristics of Employees

When a boundary violation occurs in corrections, a regulation or a rule has been violated. The need to regulate employee behavior in the workplace has been acknowledged by many professions because work-related misconduct is costly and the consequences can be severe (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). Two options exist to accomplish compliance with company rules: command/control strategies and self-regulatory strategies. The use of self-regulatory strategies builds upon the employee's values and internal motivation and is generally thought to be more effective. When employees believe that the way they are doing business is the right thing to do, they are more willing to behave in that manner (Tyler, 2005). Bureaucracies, in general, and corrections in particular, have not normally been governed with self-regulatory strategies, but instead often use the command/control options. Technology has increased the number of ways that the behavior and performance of employees can be monitored and controlled (Martin & Freeman, 2003; Panko & Beh, 2002). The use of computer monitoring devices, cameras, audio recordings, and written documentation is common in correctional institutions (Neal, 2003; Riveland, 1999). Everton, Jolton, and Mastrangelo (2007) concluded that when the work life of employees is closely monitored, their aggressiveness in the workplace increases, which can lead to rule breaking.

Researchers have studied the issue of deviance and rule breaking in the workplace including the relationship between rule breaking and personality traits (Jensen & Patel, 2011). Robinson and Bennett (1995) determined that employee deviance is often voluntary and that these same employees lacked the motivation to conform to the rules of the organization. They developed a typology of deviant workplace behavior that differentiated between seriousness and areas of impact for specific deviant acts. The specific issue, the context of the violation, and the distance from the incident affects how other employees view and judge the issue (Jones, 1991). Elements of procedural justice, appearance of fairness, and the effect of a rule violation upon the individual or the organization all play into the decision of an employee to violate a company rule. When employees feel they have a voice in how decisions are made and processes are completed, they are more likely to feel the system is just, choose to comply with the rules, and ensure coworkers comply also (Everton et al., 2007). When large segments of the workforce feel they have no voice, a disconnect between the rules and their individual values occurs (Young, 1989). Employees may break rules because they feel disengaged, angry, or entitled (Morrison, 2006).

Value alignment and similarity within an organization improves communication between employees, improves performance, and has a positive effect on relationships between supervisors and subordinates. In many organizations, people with similar characteristics are often recruited and retained (Adkins, Ravlin, & Meglino, 1996; Chatman, Polzer, Barsade, & Neale, 1998). When a problem arises that indicates that employees do not share the values of the organization, a typical response is to provide ethics training to communicate the expected behavior and attitudes. This approach to

ethics education is not usually successful. Some employees think that they know what the right and ethical choice is, and training is unnecessary (Simon, 1995). However, there are some employees who will not comply with workplace standards and will do the wrong thing when given the opportunity. Incentives, training, and even closer supervision will not always be effective in dealing with this type of employee (Moberg, 1997).

When new employees enter the correctional environment, they might not be prepared for what they find. Even if newcomers are very well informed about the type of work they have signed up for, they are often surprised by some of the formal and informal rules. This type of situation may cause newcomers to alter their goals or re-think their approach to the work in order to become accepted or integrated into the workplace (Morrison, 1993). The attitude and behaviors of the work group members will play a significant role in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of newer members (Adkins et al., 1996; Van Maanen, 1978). If the newcomer can easily accept the rules and feels like a valued part of the team, the socialization process often proceeds smoothly. However, when newcomers to corrections are not the “typical” correctional employees, congruence of values may not exist. In this case, the newcomers have to look for a way to fit in to the environment (Heilman, 1983). Chatman et al. (1998) researched this issue and found that when groups are heterogeneous, they are often less likely to be socially integrated and have more difficulty with conflict and communication. This difficulty can lead to segmentation and decreased work performance.

Women in Corrections

Correctional systems employed people who were very homogenous prior to 1970. Significant changes in the work force, intervention by the courts, affirmative action, and the growing numbers of inmates affected the homogeneous nature of the employees in the correctional systems (Britton, 2003; Jackson & Ammen, 1996). The option for women to work in male correctional facilities was a battle successfully fought in the courts over thirty years ago (Smith, 2012). Women who entered the field in the 1970s and 1980s constituted a very small proportion of the correctional employees; as a result, their status in the workplace was considered very low. In general, they did not seem to “fit” into this work and any success that individual women attained was seen as a lucky break (Heilman, 1983). Although the numbers of female staff have grown to make up almost 40% of all correctional employees (Smith, 2012), the system has not dramatically changed since those first court actions. A gendered environment still exists in most correctional systems (Britton, 2003).

Acker (1990) described gendered organizations as ones where “the advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. . . . Gender is . . . an integral part of those processes” (p. 146). The inequalities in organizations are often locked into the practices of the particular workplace. One such practice that is gendered in corrections is the expectation that the organization will reward employees for the number of hours spent at work beyond the expected schedule and for their willingness to put the organization’s needs before that of their family

(Acker, 2006). Such an expectation might be easier for men to comply with than women, especially working mothers.

Issues related to motherhood were just one set of challenges that women in corrections have had to confront. Very basic concerns such as appropriate uniforms and job assignments for pregnant officers, breast pumping procedures, leave policies for childbirth, and even basic childcare concerns were all new territory for many correctional systems (Jones, 1990; Wills, 2013). As women struggled with the correctional environment, they did so without getting a great deal of support from their male colleagues or supervisors. Research indicates that these women were subjected to gossip and sexual harassment, including unwelcomed sexual solicitation from coworkers (Carlson et al., 2003; Wills, 2013). These women also faced a higher level of sexual harassment from inmates than did their male colleagues (Britton, 1997). The subculture that existed within the institutions required a “blind” following of the rules. Many of these rules were not gender neutral and were difficult for women to comply with and accept. Therefore, many women in corrections developed individual coping strategies (Pollock, 2004) to deal with the generally negative reception they received from male employees (Gutek & Cohen, 1987). However, not all responses to the presence of female employees in male correctional facilities were negative. Some correctional staff felt that the female employees exerted a calming and a normalizing influence upon the environment (Cheeseman & Worley, 2006; Greer, 2008; Management and Training Corporation, 2008). One thing that most correctional professionals of the time did agree with was that the presence of women in a previously male-dominated world directed

attention upon the working environment of the correctional facilities (Carlson et al., 2003).

Love and Attraction in the Workplace

The issue of love and attraction in the workforce has also been the subject of scholarly research, especially since the number of women in the workforce in the United States has increased (Powell & Foley, 1998). The work of Byrne and Neuman (1992) is often referenced as one of the first comprehensive studies of this topic. The workplace relationship leads to the formation of friendships and possibly romantic relationships because it presents the opportunity for interaction. In order to form a relationship, individuals must have the ability to connect on some level. The best variable that can predict attraction is propinquity: the physical proximity and functional distance between people (Berscheid & Walster, 1978; Quinn, 1977). The workplace offers a setting where people often work very closely together with people who are very likely to have similar values and goals (Byrne & Neuman, 1992). Stress in the workplace can also lead employees to search for a connection with others who are also dealing with the effect of the same environment (Lennon, 1987). The reality is that the workplace is a very logical place to make connections with people, and these connections can lead to romantic relationships (Gutek, Morasch, & Cohen, 1983; Hazan & Shaver, 1990; Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996).

Most people know individuals who met their significant other at work (Pierce et al., 1996), and the correctional workplace is no exception. These same principles may apply to forming relationships between correctional workers and inmates. The physical proximity is definitely present, and in some instances, the inmates are the only people

with whom the correctional worker interacts with all day (Gilmartin & Davis, 1986). The need to depend upon the inmates to get the job done, as defined by Sykes (1958), may actually increase the development of relationships. Berscheid and Walster (1978) concluded that people like people who help them attain their goals. If correctional employees must depend upon inmates to get their duties completed, a relationship similar to the relationships with co-workers could develop.

Much of the research that has been conducted on workplace romance looks at the power relationships between the employees. A variety of researchers have examined the motives and differences in the level of power of the people involved in workplace romances and the effect of the romance upon the workplace. Anderson and Fisher (1991) examined this issue and found that the motive for entering into an office romance may differ based on gender. Powell and Foley (1998) examined power as a key determinant in the structure and motive for entering into an intimate relationship on the job and Mainiero (1986) contended that when there is an imbalance of power the possibility for exploitation of the less powerful participant is high. Gutek et al. (1983) proposed that sexual behavior in the workplace may actually be more about the expression of power than any other single motive.

Women in Love with Inmates

Women who develop relationships with inmates are sometimes thought to be drawn to the “bad boy.” Even though many country songs tout lyrics that proclaim this attraction, very little research has examined this possible motive for attraction. Rebellon and Manasse (2004) concluded that criminal behavior in young delinquent males actually attracts positive attention from prospective romantic partners. However, the differences

between young delinquents and inmates confined in an institution are significant and it is not clear if Rebellon's and Manasse's findings would apply to a corrections setting.

Other researchers have examined characteristics of the relationships of women who develop or maintain a relationship with an inmate. These women are often judged so negatively by society that they are thought to be sentenced merely by their association to the inmate (Blake, 1990). Many times correctional workers are suspicious of their actions and motives (Comfort, 2007). Codd (2003) described them as more similar to female inmates than to free women. When the woman involved in the relationship is a former correctional employee, she is often judged even more harshly and suspiciously. Comfort (2007) provided this example of a former clerical worker in corrections as she describes her experience when she tried to visit an inmate after she resigned from the Department of Corrections:

Of course, I was a "traitor," as they called me. . . . We did everything legal and above the law . . . I quit before I ever went back and seen him . . . but they still treat you very, very nastily. (chap 2, para 74)

Moss and Schwebel (1993) defined intimacy as "a feeling of bondedness, closeness, connectedness, passion . . . [with a] decision/commitment component" (p. 35). Many strategies to obtain this level of intimacy are employed by women who are trying to maintain a relationship with men in a correctional facility. Writing letters has been described as a way to have a date. Phone calls, visits, and sending packages have also been used to try to connect. Other women talk of synchronizing particular life events, such as watching a football game. They gain some comfort or connection by knowing that they are doing the same thing that their loved one is doing, even if they are

physically separated. Others talk about allowing their loved one into their lives more fully by sharing decision making with him, such as having him sign legal papers for a variety of transactions. Not all jurisdictions allow these types of involvement from family or visitors, so the women adjust based on what they are allowed to do, anything to stay or to get connected (Comfort, 2007). Correctional systems may apply additional restrictions for women who were formerly correctional employees. For instance, Colorado does not allow a former employee to visit an inmate until seven years have elapsed from the end of their employment (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2012c).

This review of the existing literature illustrates the extent of the research that has been conducted regarding boundary violations of female correctional employees who become involved in a relationship with a male inmate, as well as related research that may help to illuminate this process. This review will provide the basis for further inquiry into this area of research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The use of a qualitative approach to explore the boundary violations of female employees with male inmates is particularly important if the reasons for these types of violations are to be fully understood. The quantitative studies that have examined this issue have provided much needed information, but the process that leads a female correctional employee to develop a relationship with a male inmate has not been fully illuminated. The use of a qualitative approach to examine the motives, decisions, and context within which this process occurs is appropriate (Patton, 2002). Portraiture is a spinoff of the qualitative approach to inquiry, ethnography (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), which has long been valued as an approach that helps to describe and interpret meanings within a specific culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2003).

The specific methodical framework for this study was guided by the work of Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) as described in *The Art and Science of Portraiture*. Portraiture is a method of research that “capture[s] the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. xv). One of the primary strengths of this method is the ability to place the issue into a social and cultural context by documenting life stories of individuals as well as by describing organizations (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1994). Denzin (2007) described seven moments in research since 1900, and the seventh moment refers to the future, the year 2000 and beyond. Denzin contended that the researcher must be intimately involved in critical conversations that involve moral issues, including gender, class, and race. This involvement calls for an approach to data analysis that includes the development of a

relationship with the research participants in order to achieve a full understanding of complex issues (Dixson, 2005). The portraiture process depends upon the creation of just such a relationship. This relationship allows for a cyclical process that provides member checking at many stages of the process, ultimately leading to a more complete description of the issue at hand.

The portraiture process uses “voice” of both the participant and the researcher throughout the process (Dixson, Chapman, & Hill, 2005). Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) defined six different ways that voice guides the process. The researcher’s voice is evident as a witness, through interpretation, preoccupation, and autobiography. The role of witness is critical to understanding the complexity of the issue as the researcher observes the whole of the environment. The researcher then attempts to interpret the data to understand the meaning of the information and actions of the participants. The theoretical and disciplinary background of the researcher is defined as preoccupation, and finally the autobiography includes the family, cultural, and educational background of the researcher. These four aspects of voice influence the construction of the portrait. The last two types of voice include discerning the voices of others and the dialogue between the participant and the researcher. Discerning the voices of others involves listening not only to the words of the participants, but also to their voice. This voice may manifest itself in actions, movements, and clues from the environment. The dialogue then is the result of voice and relationship between the researcher and the participant. The process of portraiture moves the researcher and the participant through a struggle to find balance in levels of trust and intimacy (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

A View of the Whole: Origins and Purposes

The issue of boundary violations in correctional facilities has stymied correctional professionals for years and has not been appropriately addressed because of the complexity of the factors and players involved. Many times, the correctional employees who have developed relationships with inmates leave employment, either through resignation or termination (Baro, 1997). They are often not asked for their stories, or with the threat of criminal prosecution, they choose not to share them and thus are effectively silenced by the system (Young, 1989). In the absence of their stories, the system creates its own story. These women are ostracized for their behavior, considered traitors of the organization (Comfort, 2007).

The traditional approach to research is to find and document what needs to be changed or what is not working. The portraiture process is different in that the search begins by looking for what is good. The portraiture process does not idealize the participant's experiences, but it does provide a deeper understanding both the good and the vulnerability and weakness of the participant (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). This search for goodness helps give voice to the participants and may actually empower them. The search for goodness in an arena where previously only negative judgment existed may serve as a "beacon of understanding" (Chapman, 2005, p. 32). Looking for the strengths and the manner in which these women have overcome obstacles, personally, professionally, and in some instances legally, is part of the search for goodness. This search may also lead to empowerment of other females who have found themselves in similar situations (Chapman, 2005; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1986). The use of this method

will also help correctional professionals have a deeper understanding of this issue, so that an informed approach can begin to take shape (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005).

Perspective Taking: Discovery and Development

Throughout this study, attention was focused on discerning the voices of the participants, not merely listening to their stories (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). A thick, rich description (Geertz, 1977) was produced that will allow correctional professionals in a variety of settings to use this information to determine if the process experienced by this study's participants is similar to the process experienced by women employees in their own jurisdictions. The outsider's view can be informed by the insider's experiences and understanding. The meaning generated by this work will be a combination of the knowledge and the perspective of the participant and of the researcher (Harding, 2005).

The research questions have been designed to capture the information that is most lacking: the perspective from the individuals involved. After all, these women are "the best authorities on their own experience" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 141), but these relationships did not occur in a vacuum. The organization, coworkers, policies, and inmates were active players in the experience. The final portraits will focus on the individual relationship process, preparation for corrections work, the correctional environment, and the effect of both upon the individual's life.

Voice: Expressing a Point of View and Defining the Lens

In portraiture the voice of the researcher is constantly present. Therefore, the possibility of bias is a serious threat to the validity of the portrait process. A clear examination of my bias was critical to my being able to listen non-judgmentally to each

participant. Prior to my retirement, I worked in corrections in Colorado for 31 years. I held positions ranging from an entry level officer through prison warden. In those positions, I have experienced working as a coworker, a supervisor, and as the warden with many women who have left employment because of relationships with male inmates. In my early years, I was one of the many who looked upon these women as traitors or as outcasts of a noble profession. As I matured and my experiences were broadened, I began to question this view. I realized that the issue was much more complicated than I had previously recognized as I began to understand the impact of the correctional culture. In fact, when I met with potential participants, in public settings, I realized the culture was still affecting me, even though I am retired. In these public settings, I was very aware of the people that surrounded me and felt nervousness at the thought of being seen with a former employee who left employment because of a relationship with an inmate. I was worried about being judged by people with whom I had developed relationships. It is with this knowledge of my bias that was developed from that correctional culture, that I approached the data collection. I began the process to understand that which I have failed to understand thus far. Glesne (1992) suggested that bias, or subjectivity, must be identified, and then it can be monitored to ensure validity and trustworthiness in the findings. With this awareness of my potential bias, I was able to approach this study with a willingness to be open to the information, both that which I expected and that which might disconfirm my previously held beliefs (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). My previous knowledge about this context and issue meant that I had to be vigilant to make sure that my voice of preoccupation and my voice of autobiography did not prevent me from hearing the story of each participant.

Context: Terrain and Site

Approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, was obtained on August 2, 2012, for this study (see Appendix C). Participants included females who were formerly correctional employees within the State of Colorado. Potential participants were identified through informal communication with members of the community. No official Department of Corrections documents were used to identify any participants. Names of potential participants were easily obtained because the culture of the correctional facility extends beyond the walls of the institutions. When a relationship is discovered between a female correctional employee and an inmate, the topic is widely discussed by members of the community. From information obtained in this fashion, a search for participants whose circumstances demonstrated a wide range of variation in their relationship process was conducted. Variables that were considered when looking for variation were based on tangible outcomes of the relationship such as participants' status when they left corrections, as well as demographic differences such as relationship status and education level (Marquart et al., 2001). Twelve women were contacted about the study and based on these initial conversations, a total of four women were asked to participate in this study. The variation between participants is displayed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Participant Variation

Characteristic	Joyce	Lynn	Sarah	Kathy
Type of boundary violation (BV)	Emotional	Emotional, letters, and phone calls	Emotional and limited physical contact	Emotional, physical, and sexual contact
Relationship status at the time of the BV	Divorced	Single	Divorce in process	Divorce in process
Currently in contact with the inmate	Inmate deceased	Occasional	None	Occasional
Status when left corrections	Resigned	Resigned in lieu of termination	Resigned, under investigation	Terminated
Criminally convicted	No	Misdemeanor	No	Felony
Educational preparation for corrections work	High school diploma and prior corrections work	CJ Bachelor's degree	POST certification	Master's degree-non CJ field
Age when the BV occurred	Over 45	Under 30	Between 30-45	Between 30-45
Prior military experience	Yes	No	No	No
Facility security level where the BV occurred	Medium security	High security	Minimum security	Medium security
Years in corrections when the BV occurred	10-15 years	Under 5 years	Under 5 years	10-15 years
Job title when the BV occurred	Case manager	Correctional officer	Correctional officer	Teacher

BV = Boundary Violation

CJ = Criminal Justice

The small number of participants in this study allowed for a deeper understanding of the complexity of boundary violation behavior (Sauer, 2007). I contacted each participant to review purpose of the study and the content of the consent form, and after

at least twenty-four hours, I followed up with each person to find out if she was willing to participate (Appendix D). Only after fully informed consent was provided did data gathering commence. Figure 3.1 depicts the logic model that was used to approach the gathering of data. The development of the problem definition and scope was aided by a review of the appropriate literature and consultation with many different correctional professionals. This model also shows the iterative process between the literature review, familiarization of the context, development of the research questions, and the selection of the inquiry method.

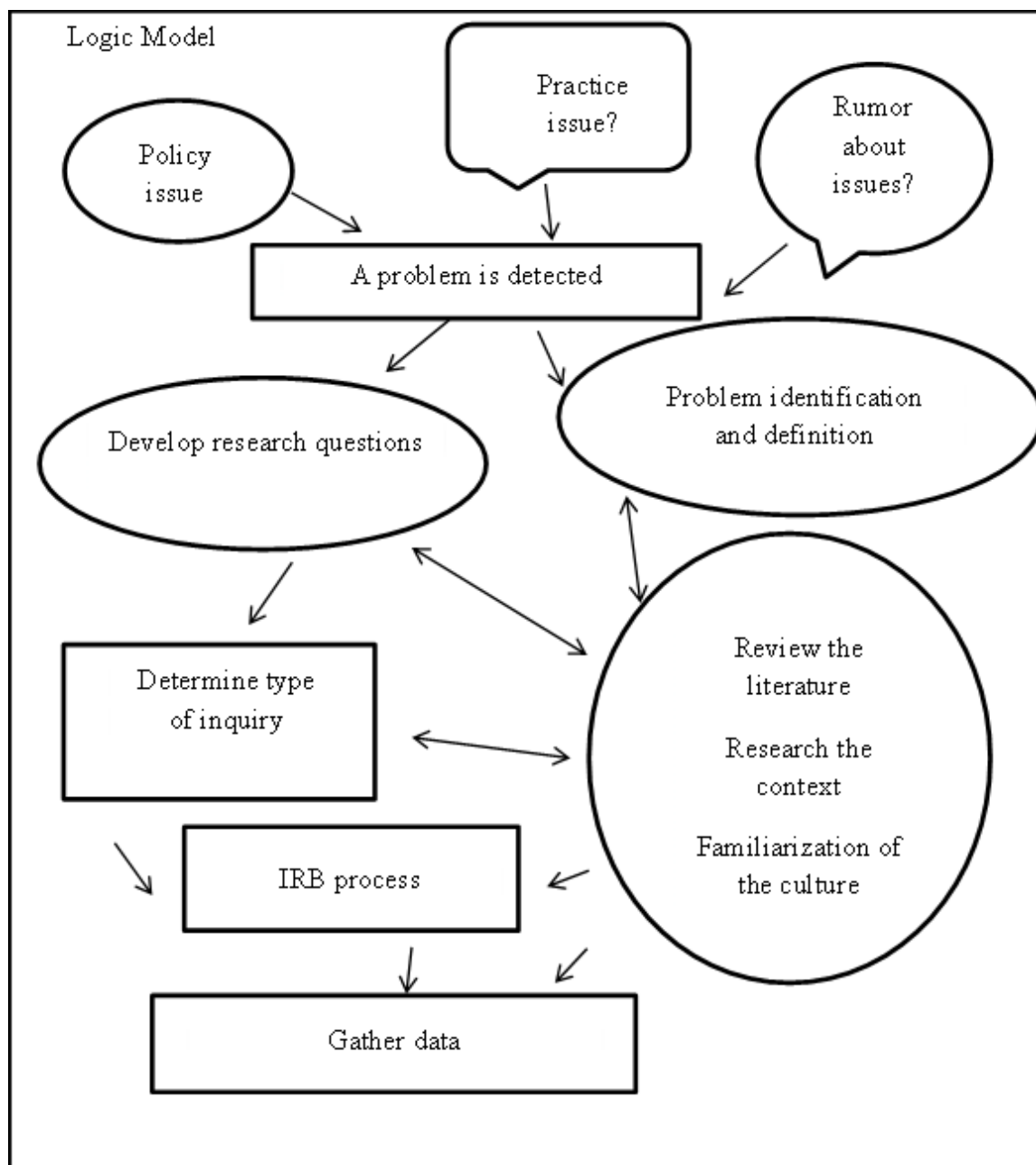


Figure 3.1 Logic Model

I conducted a series of four contact sessions with each participant. These sessions included an in-depth interview and dialogue with each participant. Participants were encouraged to share written documentation, photographs, or other items that helped to further explain their relationship process. A progression of general to specific questions

directed the process (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). During these four sessions, the following topics were discussed: the path that lead each participant to corrections; the corrections environment; the relationship process; and the effect on the participant's life (Appendix E).

These contact sessions were conducted in the participant's home or other location that allowed for privacy. The successive sessions built upon each prior session to allow the participant to share her story from different perspectives in her life. Table 3.2 depicts each research question and identifies the session that provided data for each question.

Table 3.2 Research Question Progression During Sessions With Participants

Research Question	Session
(a) What is the process that a female employee goes through from the point of pursuing a career in corrections to the point of establishing a personal relationship with an inmate, including preparation for corrections work and a description of the environment in which they worked?	Sessions 1, 2, 3
(b) What type of personal involvement with the inmate occurred, including type of contact, length of contact, and actions taken to achieve this contact?	Session 3
(c) How did the relationship with the male inmate influence the former employee's life?	Session 4

A review of the history of Colorado corrections and the culture and history of the community where these women lived and worked was also conducted prior to meeting with them. In this manner, I approached the first session with each participant prepared to become fully engaged in her story. This preparation also allowed for a greater ability to be a witness, to see the whole environment and understand the context of that setting and of that time. A digital recording device was used during all sessions to ensure that I could be fully attentive to each participant and her story. For the most part, participants

talked about events and facts that occurred in the past, so this required my full attention to ensure that I fully understood the context during the events described. Dialogue between the participants and researcher was a critical piece of this understanding. The fact that I had worked in these particular facilities and understood the way the work was structured was both an advantage and a disadvantage to this process. The ease with which the participant could share the event was positively affected by my knowledge of the context; however, my knowledge of the context had to be consciously monitored to ensure that I did not substitute my experiences for the experiences participants were describing. The development of relationship was noticeable at each successive session, as each participant was more willing to share more sensitive information.

The sessions were conducted in an unstructured fashion so that the participants were able to convey information in their own words, pace, and order. I followed up any areas that were unclear with open-ended questions to encourage participants to provide clarification, again in their own style and words (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). In order to further attend to the authentic voice of the participant, I transcribed the data personally. The participant names were masked with pseudonyms during the transcription and in all subsequent records. As I transcribed the data, I began to feel judgmental about the information that I was hearing and typing. I reflected on the difference between the manner in which I was able to be fully attentive and listen non-judgmentally when talking to each participant, but then when I began the actual transcription work, I found myself judging their actions. I took frequent breaks and pursued non-research related activities to allow myself to think through what was

happening. This approach allowed me to return to the data to listen more fully for understanding non-judgmentally.

Relationship: Navigating Intimacy

The establishment of a relationship with participants was critical for an accurate portrait to be completed. The relational connections between the participant, the context, and the researcher were important to understand and describe in the portrait (Dixon, 2005). In the search for goodness in the lives and stories of the participants, I searched for clues about what the process of developing a relationship with an inmate would have felt like through their eyes. Attention was devoted to capturing the complexity of their choices and actions as they navigated through this process.

The dynamics of the relationship and dialogue between the participant and the portraitist were monitored to ensure that trust was developed and maintained. I stayed true to the time estimates provided to each participant so as not to create a feeling of obligation or burden with each participant. This same constraint helped to ensure that the boundaries of the study focus were maintained. This boundary helped to ensure that the researcher relationship did not become something else, something more personal, while at the same time, I delved deep into the intimate (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997).

Emergent Themes: Searching for Patterns

All data were collected, transcribed, read, and re-read. If missing data were discovered, the participants were contacted to clarify or provide additional data. An open coding method began as soon as the first session was complete (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The emerging themes were discussed with the participants at each subsequent session to enable confirmation or clarification of information. This step increased validity and

ensured that the participant's voice was heard (Newton, 2005). Through this iterative process, interpretation, data collection, and data coding continued until the portrait was complete (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Some information in the portraits has been changed to mask the identity of the participant or other people who may have been described. When specific details were changed, the participants were asked to confirm that these changes did not alter the meaning of their stories. Each participant was asked to read her portrait for factual confirmation and to ensure that she felt comfortable that her identity was protected.

Any area of concern was discussed with the participant in an effort to increase validity. The audit trail depicts the methods that were employed in this study to ensure validity (see Figure 3.2). The use of researcher reflexivity, collaboration with the participants, examination of disconfirming evidence, triangulation of data, and the development of a thick, rich description were built into the process to increase validity (Bamberger, Ruch, & Mabry, 2012; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

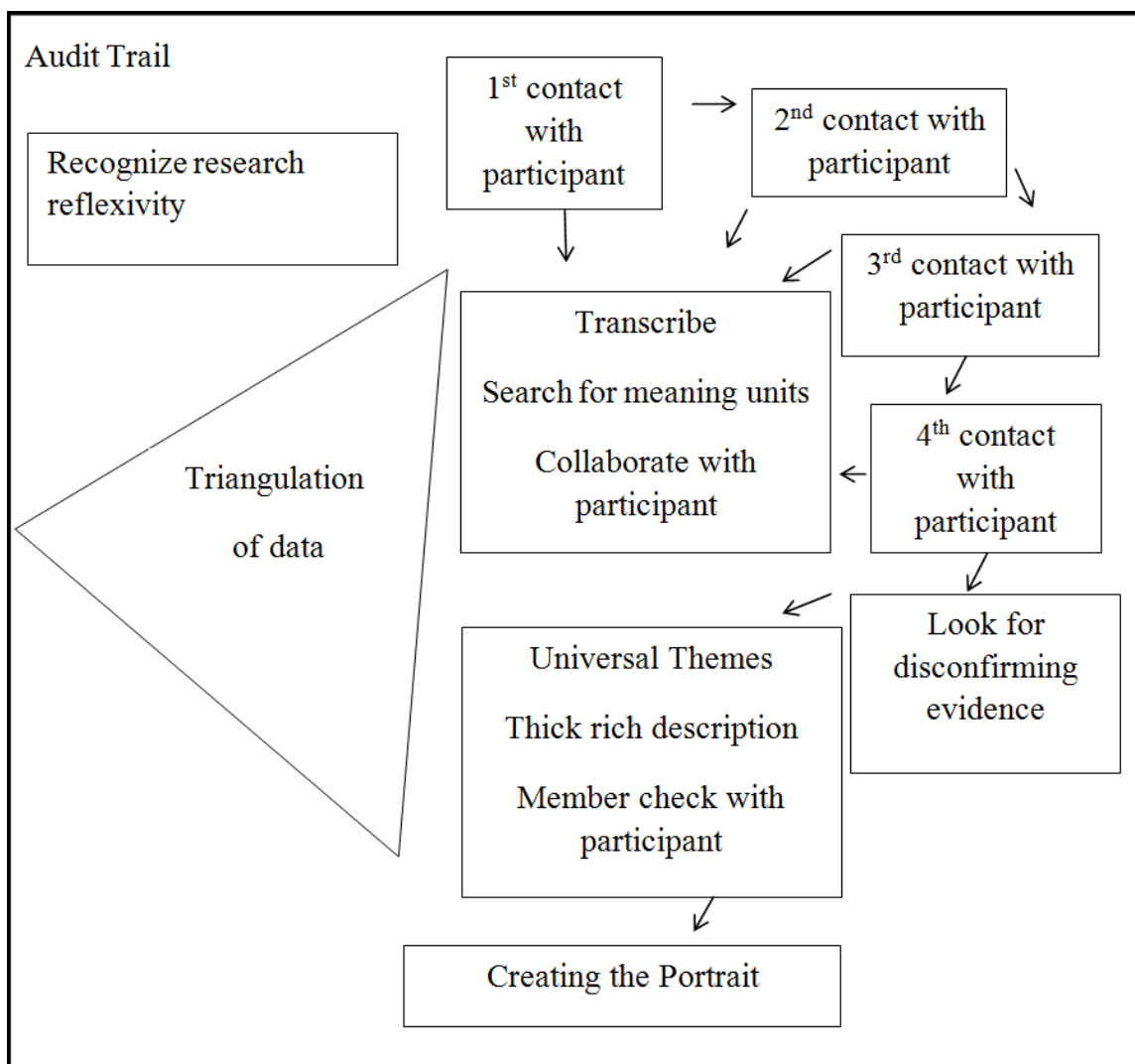


Figure 3.2 Audit Trail

Universal themes were developed by reviewing data from all participants. Care was taken to ensure that the voices of all participants were heard and analyzed. The discrepant data were also analyzed to determine how these data helped to illuminate the process (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997; Maxwell, 2005).

Aesthetic Whole: Shaping the Story and Composing the Narrative

The search for themes and discrepant data were guided by the theoretical frameworks of Boundary Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Power Theory. The

analysis of the themes and the construction of the portrait were guided by the constructs of these theories. The goal was to create a portrait that was so clear that readers could place themselves in that setting. Direct quotations from participants were used to clarify or confirm the themes in a way that “gives honor to their voices” (Hill, 2005, p. 96).

The voice of the researcher in portraiture can be very powerful and never totally removed. The final portrait is a combination of the participants’ portraits, a review of the context of each story, and the background and voice of the researcher-portraitist. The reader is “invited . . . on the journey and experience” of the inquiry (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 50).

Research Limitations

The strength of the portraiture process is that it provides an opportunity for deep understanding of the process or experiences being examined. The small sample size has been cited as a strength when a dearth of previous research exists within an area and when the participants are rarely given a voice (Calhoun & Coleman, 2002). However, this same strength may limit generalizability of this study beyond the correctional facilities in Canon City, Colorado. The prison town culture that exists within Canon City is not found in all other Colorado communities that include prisons.

CHAPTER 4

THE PORTRAITS

The portraiture research approach depends upon an understanding of the context and listening for the voice of the participants (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997). The portraits of Joyce, Lynn, Sarah and Kathy reflect the culture of corrections as well as the culture of the community. The process that these women described occurred within a prison town with a history that is intertwined with the history of Colorado corrections.

Prison Town

The center of the Colorado correctional system is located in the foothills approximately one hundred miles south of Denver, in Canon City. Canon City is home to the first prison in Colorado, the Territorial prison, and it continues to be the hub of a system of prisons that have spread throughout the state. Canon City is very much a prison town. The term prison town refers to something more than a town that happens to have a prison. This prison town is a place that has a culture and a history that is woven into the town so much so that the history of the prison is inseparable from the history of the Canon City region.

Geographically, Canon City is nestled into a basin that is buffeted on three sides by mountains that shelter the town from the harsh weather conditions that are common in Colorado. This mild climate attracts many people to retire to the area. The town is also buffeted on two sides by state correctional facilities. The oldest prison, now called the Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility, casts a formidable image on the western end of the town, and on the east side of town is the East Canon Correctional Complex. Canon City is home to most of Colorado's prisons, as well as to one of the state's premier tourist

attractions, the Royal Gorge, one of the world's highest suspension bridges. This bridge spans a magnificent canyon that is formed by the Arkansas River far below. This attraction brings over 300,000 visitors to the area each year (Royal Gorge Company, 2012).

The combination of tourists, retirees, and correctional employees creates a unique community culture which extends to the two neighboring towns of Florence and Penrose. The East Canon Prison Complex sits inside a triangle formed by these three towns, where approximately 47,000 people live (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

The Colorado Territorial Prison was opened in Canon City in 1871 (Newman & Museum of Colorado Prisons, 2008). There are many versions of the process that led to Canon City being awarded this highly coveted government institution. Sue Cochran from the Royal Gorge Regional Museum and History Center explained that anecdotal history lays out a story that the town was either going to get the capital or the prison. Another version was that the town would get the university or the prison. A local legend contends that Canon City wanted the prisons because a prison would be better attended to and they would have quieter neighbors than with either the capital or the university. No matter which version is true, the prison was apparently seen as a "win" from the beginning (S. Cochran, personal communication, September 27, 2012).

The territorial prison was operated as the only prison in Colorado until the reformatory was opened in Buena Vista in 1892. Then in 1957, two additional prison units were opened in the Canon City area (Newman & Museum of Colorado Prisons, 2008; Schwartz, 2001). Since that time, the state prison system grew to include ten different prisons in the immediate vicinity of Canon City. The prison population

expanded rapidly in the 1990s and has now decreased slightly, so the types and numbers of prisons have varied. Throughout this surge and recent decline, three prisons have been closed. Although there has been no outrage from citizen groups in Canon City against building a prison, there has been considerable concern from the community when prisons were closed. This concern was echoed in the article published in *The Gazette* by Ann Imse on January 27, 2013.

The prison was a part of Canon City before the town was ever incorporated (Vinnola, 2010). As such, resistance against a new prison is not part of the culture of the Canon City Area. The Canon City area openly supports any expansion to an existing prison or new facility, and this acceptance of the prison industry was never more fully realized than when the federal system was looking for a location for a new major prison complex. The *Canon City Daily Record* reported a follow-up story about the federal complex on April 17, 1997. This article by John Lemmons indicated that the citizens of Canon City area collected over \$100,000 to buy the parcel of land to give to the federal government so that they could put a prison complex south of Florence, a clear indication of the willingness of the Canon City/Florence/Penrose area to invite a major expansion of the corrections industry. At the highest point, the prisons located in the area housed over 7800 inmates (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2011d; Fremont County Colorado, 2012).

The prison industry in the Canon area influences the individual residents, whether or not they work at a prison. The townspeople expect to hear the 7:00 a.m. whistle every day as part of the routine of the day. They are also not startled to see emergency response teams practicing or to see the search team conducting apprehension training in a

neighborhood or in the adjoining foothills. Corrections and Canon City are difficult to separate. This acceptance is based on two major premises, history and economics, which of course are very tightly woven together. The prisons have always been in Canon City, so they are often not even noticed as residents travel in the area. This acceptance of this industry is also based upon the economic benefits of having so many correctional employees working in the area every day. The Fremont County official website has a section devoted to the Corrections Capital in Fremont County, and that site indicates that more than one half of all jobs in the area are related to the prison systems (Fremont County Colorado, 2012). Many corrections employees live in this area, and the remainder commute from neighboring cities. The employees are welcomed by businesses and other agencies, in part because even the commuting employees spend money in the Canon area. Doug Shane, the Director of the Canon City Chamber of Commerce, believes that this fact is openly acknowledged by local businesses and it is very common to see uniformed DOC employees conducting business, buying gasoline, and eating at local restaurants on a daily basis (D. Shane, personal communication, January 28, 2013). Additionally, multiple generations of correctional families are living in the Canon area. Retired correctional staff, current correctional staff, and probably future correctional staff make Canon City their home. The children of Canon City are not surprised by the fact that their friend's parents may work in the prison, any more than if they worked at the school. Jennifer Herman, Director of the Canon City Boys and Girls Club confirmed that it is not uncommon to hear a child talk about something that happened at her mother's prison. In Canon City, the first assumption would be that the

child's mother worked there and did not live there (J. Herman, personal communication, January 27, 2013).

The Colorado Department of Corrections provides a vital link for emergency planning and response for Canon City. The city and county depend upon the institution to be there for support in many types of crisis situations. Ed Norden, Fremont County Commissioner, recalls examples of when the Department of Correction's teams have been there to help: They have been used to help with the search and rescue efforts when looking for lost hikers, the local sheriff has asked for assistance to apprehend an escaped jail detainee, the labor and maintenance crews have been a key component in flash flood responses, and the inmate fire crew has been called upon for immediate response to wildfires in the area. This is a town where the first step is usually to call the prisons for help (E. Norden, personal communication, January 28, 2013).

In 1988, the Museum of Colorado Prisons opened in the building that was the original women's prison for the state. The museum includes artifacts from the prison history, including the actual gas chamber that was used to execute inmates prior to 1997. Over 12,000 people from all over the world visit this museum each year (S Cline, personal communication, December 12, 2012).

The presence of the Pueblo Community College in Canon City is a direct result of the prison industry (C. Baca, personal communication March 21, 2011). This campus started as a branch to provide corrections-related classes to potential prison employees. It now sits on the former location of the prison gardens and in the serves 650 students (P. Diawara, personal communication, Oct 24, 2012).

Correctional employees are part of the Canon City area communities. It is difficult to find an activity that occurs in town that does not include the volunteer efforts of correctional people. They are involved in local school activities, local sports leagues, youth programs, and church organizations. The daily lives of most residents are affected on some level by the existence of the prisons and the prison employees (M. Stratton, personal communication, January 27, 2013). It is in this environment that the participants of this study have lived and worked.

Prisons in Canon City include the highest security environments as well as medium security and minimum security facilities. The differences between the security levels are obvious from the outside. The perimeter may be surrounded by walls, fences, razor wire, or towers at the higher security levels, and the lower security facilities may not even have a fence that surrounds it. The environment inside each facility may also be very different for the inmates who live there, as well as those who work there. The portraits of the four participants in this study include a description of the environments where they worked. Understanding the communities where these women lived is an important part of fully understanding the process they went through as they developed a relationship with an inmate. These portraits are also a record of their view of the process that each participant traveled, including their beliefs and feelings. No attempt was made to compare their stories with any official record of the events described.

As I approached the work of understanding this process, I realized that I had to work hard to withhold judgment and just listen. The work environments that these women described were places that I had worked during my career. This familiarity made the context much easier for me to understand, it also made it more important for me to

listen intently, so that I did not substitute my experiences for theirs. This same familiarity made it easier for me to understand the nuances of the working relationships and to develop a relationship with each participant. When they described an ordinary corrections event that had occurred, I understood. During the transcription work and the construction of each portrait, I have tried to write their stories in a manner that those who have not worked inside these prisons can be transported there and also understand.

Joyce's Portrait

Across the river, near the center of downtown Canon City, I found Joyce at home and waiting for me. As I pulled in front of her house, I realized that I had visited this particular neighborhood on many occasions. I had been in at least four homes on this street, yet I didn't realize that Joyce lived here among all of these people who had been a part of my life and career. Her house was a small, older style home, but it seemed to be a perfect fit for Joyce and her dogs. I was immediately greeted by one of her three dogs. It was as if they had to give their approval for me to enter.

Joyce had just had a major medical procedure completed a few weeks prior to our first meeting, so she was not able to greet me at the door. Instead, she hollered a welcome to me from inside the house. I made my way inside with the dogs as my escort to find her getting comfortable in a wheelchair, with her leg propped up. I wondered how she got along here, by herself, after surgery. Before we could begin to talk about her time in corrections, I had to find out about each of the three dogs. It was obvious these animals were very important in her life, even the one who she just had during the day while her daughter was at work. Each dog had a different story about how it came to live with Joyce, and as we went through each story, the dogs became more comfortable with

my intrusion into their home. I had worked with Joyce as a peer, when we were both lieutenants and I was there when she left corrections work, but I realized I knew very little more about Joyce than that.

Path That Led Joyce to Corrections

Joyce began her corrections work ten years before I decided to make it my life's work. She talked of how her life took her from a small town in the southeast part of Colorado, to the military, to a marriage and divorce, and then finally to Iowa. Joyce and her seven brothers were raised in a remote, rural part of Colorado. After graduating from high school, Joyce moved to a small town in Kansas. She worked as a meat wrapper at local grocery store before she decided to join the military. Her brothers influenced her decision about which branch of the service she should consider, and even though she had a sincere fear of water and did not swim, she joined the Navy. Joyce knew that women were not allowed on ships during the 1960s, so she was not worried about water, even though it was the Navy.

Near the end of her enlistment, she married John. Very soon after her honorable discharge from the Navy, John was drafted to the Army. Joyce followed John from one duty station to the next. During this time in her life, Joyce worked as a meat wrapper and as a receptionist. When John was discharged, they settled in southern Kansas, and had their first daughter. Joyce was a storekeeper in the Navy, and she built on those skills as well as what she learned in high school to find work as a book keeper. After the birth of their first daughter, they adopted a second daughter, Tina. The adoption of Tina was facilitated by a small town doctor after he determined that he thought that Joyce's family would be a good choice. The adoption process was uncomplicated and went quickly

when compared to the process that is required today. Joyce supplemented her bookkeeper earnings by working part time as a deputy at a small sheriff's department. This was at a time when all the other deputies were male, including her husband.

When Joyce decided to pursue a divorce from John, she moved with her daughters to Iowa. She chose Iowa because she thought that it was the last place in the world John would look for her. She hadn't counted on him using his contacts at the sheriff's office to issue a BOLO [be on the lookout] for her. He found her, and they communicated by telephone until the divorce proceedings were concluded. Joyce was encouraged to go to Iowa by a friend, and when she got there she looked for employment options.

Joyce was a single, divorced mom of two girls, trying to make a living in Iowa. She had worked as a bookkeeper in many different settings, but even with these skills and a work history that showed commitment to former employers, she struggled to find a position near her new home. One friend knew of her need for a job and of her law enforcement background. He told her on more than one occasion that she would be a good correctional officer, but Joyce did not see herself in that role. Joyce replied to her friend: "You know what I am not going to do that." Her friend merely replied: "Ya, you will." This job search was going on in the early 1970s, at a time when very few women worked in any male correctional facility. The facilities that were located near her home included two male facilities and one co-ed facility. In fact, there were less than a total of twenty women working at the three facilities at the time.

The Correctional Environment

Joyce needed a job to support her daughters, so she finally gave into her friend's suggestion and applied to work at the prison. She was hired at the prison farm, but she

did not stay there long. Very quickly, the warden from the men's penitentiary recruited her to help with a special population of women who were being temporarily housed inside the men's facility. Joyce was asked to supervise the housing of four women who had been involved in a major riot at the women's facility. Joyce worked with a few other officers to supervise these women until they were moved to county jails for trial and sentencing. After the female inmates left the penitentiary, Joyce remained. Joyce had developed good working relationships with many of the people with whom she was working in the penitentiary, including many of the management staff. She was also frequently interacting with personnel from the county sheriff departments. It was not long before her competence and connections to these types of administrators resulted in her being targeted by inmates.

Joyce was called into the warden's office and told of a threat to take her hostage so that the hostage takers would be able to break out of prison. Joyce at first thought this was a joke, or not as serious as it sounded, but conversations with the warden, associate warden, and major convinced her that the threat was real. The threat was thought to be so credible that Joyce was instructed to contact a member of her family so that a plan could be ready if the inmates succeeded. Joyce called one of her brothers who worked in law enforcement in Colorado to develop a plan to care for her children and inform her family if she was in fact taken hostage or hurt. Even in the midst of something this serious, Joyce was clear with her family and even her young daughters: "If anything happens to me, I am doing what I wanted to do." Joyce's movement at work was severely curtailed and she not allowed into many of the areas where she previously worked unless she had a male officer with her. The inmates involved in this plot were eventually dealt with, their

plans were dissipated, and things returned to normal. Reflecting on this incident, Joyce believes that the inmates knew that the management staff respected her so much that they thought negotiation and escape would be possible.

Not everything in Joyce's career in Iowa went smoothly. When she took the test to become a sergeant and did very well on the test, the mostly male system reacted. She was called into the personnel office to see if she would "waive off the list." She was informed that there may be opportunities for a female sergeant in some posts, but the post that was currently available was not that type of position. They really needed a man. She suggested that they move sergeants around so that she could be placed in one of those opportunities for a female sergeant, but apparently that was received as an unreasonable request. She did not waive from her position on the list, so a few weeks later she was called on her days off to come in and discuss the issue again. Joyce informed them that she was not able to report at that time because she had her hair up in rollers. They were so desperate to get the situation resolved that they implored her to come in, even in rollers. Joyce did just that and was offered a sergeants job that was made by moving other sergeants around. When Joyce recounted this story, the mere idea of her going into the facility in rollers seemed unbelievable to us both, but she confirms that she did that to make the point that women were going to be a formidable force in corrections. With the exception of women who worked in female facilities, Joyce was the first woman in Iowa to get promoted to sergeant. All of the other women inside the facility at that time were officers or in support areas like administration and medical. Joyce remembers that she did not get any grief from any of the other sergeants or the officers. She believes that she had already established her credibility and ability, so they accepted her even as a

sergeant. Some were even proud that she stood her ground and did not let them pass her over. Joyce continued up the career ladder by achieving the rank of lieutenant. As a lieutenant, she supervised the trustee unit, administration, and the visiting program at the men's penitentiary.

Joyce was first a mother, then a correctional officer. The next step in her career progression was made because of the needs of her youngest daughter, Tina. Tina started to have difficulty with her vision. The process to determine the extent and origin of the problem took them to different types of medical providers. At one point, the issue was thought to be psychological, so Joyce put everything she had into determining the issue to resolve it. The roller coaster ride that she and her daughters were on ended when Tina was finally and conclusively diagnosed with juvenile macular degeneration. The prognosis meant that Tina would almost assuredly be blind by the time she was 17 years old. As bad as this diagnosis sounded, at least it gave Joyce a clear answer and required specific choices be made. Joyce was enjoying her career in the Iowa, so she looked first at the services and educational opportunities for blind children in that state. What she soon realized was that she was not comfortable in these choices, so she also investigated the services in Colorado. Based on that investigation, Joyce knew that the right thing for her daughter was to return to Colorado, so that she could attend a boarding school in Colorado Springs.

Colorado offered services that were better suited for Tina, and it also offered a wider circle of support for Joyce. She had many family members in the state that would be within driving distance, and she realized that she may need that kind of support as she dealt with her child's medical needs. Joyce knew that she would need to find a job to

continue to support herself and her daughters, so she moved to Canon City, Colorado.

This allowed her to be able to get Tina from Colorado Springs every weekend, and it also put her right in the middle of town where most of Colorado's prisons were located. Joyce had tried to get a job commitment from the Colorado Department of Corrections prior to resigning from her lieutenant's position in Iowa, but that did not happen. She made the move at the suggestion of her boss: "My boss down there said that you are going have to go there. You might as well go ahead and move because they are not going to hire you until you show up."

With the five years of experience that Joyce had accumulated in Iowa, she thought that she would get a job offer from Colorado quickly. She also hoped that she would be hired at the level of sergeant or lieutenant. Both of these hopes were dashed as she waited for weeks for any sign that the Colorado Department of Corrections might consider her for a position. When she was finally interviewed, she was shocked when the major said: "I have put off hiring you as long as I could." When Joyce asked for clarification on that statement the major explained: "Any woman who comes as highly recommended as you must mean trouble, and how do I know that they didn't just recommend you to get rid of you?" Joyce took this opportunity to explain the situation with her daughter which seemed to help with the discomfort the major was obviously feeling, but it did not totally change his attitude. The next step in the hiring process was handled by the personnel department, so Joyce was sent to that building. The female who was in charge of the rest of the process also did not greet Joyce with any appearance of support or encouragement:

She did not want to hire me, and I knew she didn't. She thought she had me when we had to go to the range to qualify. Remember this is 1979. Before we went out there she said, "You know you do have to qualify on the range before we can hire you." I said, "No problem, I am from the farm." So we went out there and I passed. I decided that she didn't like it that the officers were making more money than the women in the offices. She didn't think that female officers should be paid more than the office workers; after all, we were just off the farm.

The fact is that Joyce shot more accurately than everyone else on the range that day, and all the other candidates were men. Joyce felt as if she had backed the Colorado Department of Corrections into a corner so that they had no choice but to hire her. This was a dramatically different reception than what she had encountered in Iowa. Joyce realized that she should have pushed for a sergeant or lieutenant's position:

I just wish that I would have been smart enough when I came from Iowa to stand up for myself, but Colorado was farther behind as far as hiring women to start with, and I didn't know how to negotiate that. I am sure there was a way, if I had just known how.

Joyce did not attend a formalized training program when she became an employee of the Colorado Department of Corrections. The only training that was offered was on-the-job training, where a seasoned officer showed her the job. Women were being hired for a very limited number of posts and assignments in the Colorado system. Her first posts were on the night shift and then afternoon shift, working a perimeter tower. Female officers were not allowed in any posts that had direct inmate contact, with the exception of visiting. The visiting post required female officers to always be available to conduct

searches. At that time, the visitors who came into the facility to visit inmates were subject to search, including pat searches and strip searches, which had to be performed by a staff member of the same sex as the visitor. As a result, Joyce was moved off tower duty and placed in the visiting room very quickly after arriving at the facility. This post was only needed three days a week, so for the other two days of the week Joyce worked as a “gopher” in the major’s office. Joyce was not sure that this type of “gopher” status went along with the professional correctional officer status that she had worked so hard to achieve. She made the best of the situation by helping where she could and by developing good working relationships with the management staff. When a new facility was being opened the next year, the same major who had so hesitantly hired her recruited her to go with him to the new facility. Perhaps a better way to describe this move is that he told her that she was going. So Joyce went out to the new facility to run the visiting program, still at the entry rank of officer.

Joyce picked up side work as a bookkeeper to fill her day and to help with her financial commitments. It was while she was doing bookkeeping for a local store that she got a call for a promotional interview. Joyce was told that the position was a women’s correctional facility and that she needed to come for an interview. Joyce was not familiar with all of the promotional processes in Colorado at this point, so she said that she did not want to be interviewed and she didn’t think that she had applied for the job. The major who called her informed her that she really needed to come to the interview, and if she did not they would not be able to fill the position at all. Joyce asked more questions and found out that it was a significant increase in salary, and it meant that she could regain the rank of lieutenant.

At the interview, Joyce made such a good impression that she was offered the job on the spot. She assumed the duties of the shift commander for the facility on a relief schedule which was normally three afternoon shifts and two night shifts. Joyce did take advantage of what she had learned in the Colorado system and asked to be paid higher than an entry level lieutenant. Even though they really wanted her for that job, this request was denied without any consideration. Joyce loved the work that she was doing; in fact, she emphasized that she loved corrections work. This was not a job to her but a career. She was making good money to support her children, and she was doing something that mattered. She took pride in how she and her staff ran the facility and how they treated the inmates, but she knew that this relief schedule would not work for her family's needs forever.

Joyce was also trusted to begin to develop programs for the female inmates. The warden asked her to get something started, so she reached out to the local mental health center for assistance. She worked with this agency to start a parenting class that was provided at no cost to the facility. She was very excited about getting this program off the ground, but she ran into resistance from the mental health provider, who thought that Joyce had overstepped her bounds. So a meeting was held which included the warden. Each person who had concerns about the program was allowed to express his or her point of view, but in the end, the program was held and Joyce was left as the contact person. This event provided a much needed service to the inmates, but it created a pronounced rift between Joyce and some of her peers.

Joyce continued as the shift commander on the relief schedule. She knew that she had to pay her dues, but she was counting on getting to a day shift job soon, with

weekends off, because the person holding that position was planning to retire. She had been promised that the job would be hers when that time came. This promise was not kept: “They did the ‘good old boys’ thing.” The position was given to a woman who had worked in the administration area at the women’s facility and whose husband was in a management position at the men’s correctional facility. Joyce was told that this decision was made for the good of the facility, but she knew that this woman’s husband would have never stood for his wife working the relief schedule that Joyce had done. Joyce reacted: “I threw a fit; she got the day shift and weekends off and I stayed where I was at. I got mad and quit.” Joyce moved to Colorado Springs to seek employment so she would be closer to Tina. She did find a law enforcement job, providing security for the courthouses, but she took a significant cut in pay. Before she quit, she had not tried to get transferred to another facility within the Department of Corrections as a lieutenant because she thought that she may be offered a job, but only if she demoted back to an officer, and she just could not do that again. Joyce knew that quitting her job in corrections was a bad choice, at least financially, but she thought that she needed to take a stand on the injustice that was done to her. She realized one day: “I think I cut off my nose to spite my face. The pay was not as good at the courthouse as it was down there. So I called up and got back on the list; as an officer again.”

Even though Joyce had time to cool off and think more clearly about her job situation, she was still appalled when the a major from the Department of Corrections called her to offer her a correctional officer’s position, but he told her that if she wanted it she had to report the next day at 8:00 a.m. She accepted the position. That night when she reported to work at the courthouse, she had to tell her boss it would be her last shift.

He did not like the decision she made, but he knew that it was the best decision for her financially. However, if she had been able to give appropriate notice, she would have been paid for her vacation time and accumulated sick time. She felt as if she took another “hit” from the Department of Corrections.

Joyce did not move back to Canon City; instead she commuted back and forth to work with two male officers. She was again able to develop a strong working relationship with many of her peers. She took on her position at a close security facility with the same dedication she had exhibited in her previous positions. Joyce was provided physical defense training when she returned to the department. This was the only formalized training she was provided before resuming a post. She again realized that she loved the work and was right where she needed to be, so she began to try to promote within the system. She took the sergeant’s test and scored very well, so when an opening came up at her facility, she thought that she had a good chance at being seriously considered for the position. She believed this even though this all occurred in 1985, at a time when there were very few women working in the male facilities and those who were there were officers.

At the interview, Joyce figured out that there was something going on that was not right. The rumor in the facility was that a sergeant in the cell house that had the opening told the major that he would quit if there was going to be a woman in that cell house. Additionally, another major had declared: “As long as I am a major here, there will never be a woman in a cell house in this facility.” She was not offered the job. Joyce took this information as a challenge and got ready for a fight. She did learn something from her previous experiences, so she first went home and thought about her

options. After a few hours, she very boldly picked up the phone and called the Executive Director for the Department of Corrections to make an appointment. I am not sure which part of this story I found more amazing, that she called the Executive Director or that she actually got in to see him, because this type of meeting does not normally occur. Joyce showed the Director her resume and then told him what had occurred. He listened to her and seemed to really hear her. At the end of that meeting, he told her that she would hear from him within five days.

Joyce never heard directly back from the Executive Director, but she knew that he had taken action. A few days later, the warden met with her at the facility. He was obviously very upset that Joyce had gone around him and the whole chain of command at the facility, but he did not say that to her. She recalled that he said:

“Well, you wanted to be the sergeant in that cell house. I guess you will be the sergeant”. I said, “Well, there is not a lot of honor in this kind of promotion” and he replied, “You don’t have to take it.” I said, “Oh yes I do; I didn’t fight for this and get on this list to not to take it.” I took it.

Joyce did assume the rank of sergeant at that facility, and no employees quit their job because of it. In fact, she worked closely with the sergeant who had proclaimed that he would quit, and they worked well together. After a few weeks, this sergeant actually told the major: “Well, she can’t whoop every inmate in the house, but she is pretty good for back up.” Joyce replied: “That is the closest thing I could get for a compliment from you; but you can’t whoop every inmate in this [cell] house either.”

Joyce continued to be tested, but she did not feel that anyone ever retaliated against her for going to talk to the Executive Director. Again, some of her peers were

proud that she fought the system and won. Later, she did hear that the Executive Director had personally talked to management staff and made it clear that if there was any retaliation, they would not have a job.

Joyce worked in a close security facility that housed high risk inmates, so violence did occasionally occur. Joyce remembers one particular fight in the yard when the lieutenant tried to take credit for the way Joyce responded. She was monitoring the outside yard area with the lieutenant when a fight broke out. Joyce noticed that there was an unusual grouping, and non-verbal actions by the inmates in that area were not normal. She noticed this unusual behavior right before the inmates started swinging at each other. She ran to the site, but the lieutenant did not respond immediately:

I had one guy by the back of the neck and down and then the lieutenant comes and keeps the other guy away, but that guy didn't want any part of it. I said, "Get some help." Anyway, here comes security staff and they took the guys away. I went in to write my report a little while later. He asked me what I was doing and I told him that I was writing my report. He said, "I already wrote it." I said, "Ok, you are the lieutenant, so I didn't write one that night."

The next day Joyce was confronted by the major about why she did not write a report about the incident, and she explained that her lieutenant told her not to. The major directed her to write a report immediately because he had reason to believe that the report he had from the lieutenant was not accurate. The major told Joyce:

I have 300 inmates out there saying that is not how it went down, that he [the lieutenant] did everything. He ran out there, he broke up the fight. He said that the report didn't mention me at all. It says he did everything.

The fact that this lieutenant tried to take the credit for the way Joyce reacted may not have been because she was a female; it may have been to cover the fact that he did not respond as fast as a sergeant. The inmates involved told the major the way it really happened.

Joyce did not have any real trouble with the inmates during her career, but some of the inmates acted out when she first was placed in the housing unit. She remembers one inmate that “would get up on his bed and strip off all of his clothes and sit Indian style during each count.” One night another inmate asked Joyce how it was going for her, and she told him that everything was good except for this one particular inmate. After she had that conversation, she never encountered this circumstance again. Apparently the inmates helped to create an environment that they thought was suitable and respectful towards her. When Joyce came to work in the Colorado Department of Corrections, she came with experience in a correctional facility, and she was 40 years old. The way she carried herself communicated her experience, and she believes that her age also helped to engender positive behavior from the inmates.

The next step in Joyce’s career progression was a promotion back to lieutenant (for the third time). She was promoted to work to a medium security facility. Joyce was assigned to a cell house on the afternoon shift. She developed good working relationships with her subordinate staff, but she did not feel any confidence in the ability of the people above her in the chain of command. Consequently, her relationship with her supervisor and management was strained.

Joyce was promoted to a facility after it had been totally remodeled. This remodel was the result of the *Ramos v. Lamm* civil rights action that placed the Colorado

Department of Corrections under a consent decree for many years. The big open bar front cell houses were remodeled into a more modern living unit arrangement. The total number of cells was reduced by over one-half from the previous cell house population. The change in the facility for the inmates and the staff was significant because the worst inmates were sent to the new maximum security facility. The types of inmates she dealt with were those with high medical needs and those who were classified as medium security. That did not mean that they did not have any security concerns, just because they had fewer inmates with a less problematic history of institutional adjustment. Inmates who were concerned about their safety started to tell Joyce about illegal activities that were going on inside the facility, such as dope dealing and moving money through illegal means. Joyce tried to handle this issue through her chain of command, but she quickly realized that either management supported the illegal activities or they did not believe that there was really a problem.

Joyce could not believe the response that she was getting concerning what she believed to be very serious security concerns. She felt: "The administration thought I was just a little housewife from Iowa." As if this kind of reception was not bad enough, Joyce began to get information that led her to believe that some of the management and supervisory staff may have been involved in the illegal actions with the inmates. At the very least, she believed that they were getting something out of the situation, so they did not stop the illegal activity. Joyce had worked very hard to get back into a position of responsibility and authority, and the last thing she wanted was to have to stir up trouble. She tried to "go with it," but when she was approached by an inmate who threatened her family, she knew that she could not live or work like this:

The word came to me through an inmate and he said, “Have you considered your little blond hair, blue-eyed grandson floating down the Arkansas River?” I was so rattled by this that I took all my stuff home that night and I thought that I can’t do this. But then I thought, no, this is what they want. So I went back to work.

This inmate made it very clear that he was just the messenger and that he had been sent to her by staff. This was a threat from some of her coworkers, the people who she was supposed to be able to depend upon, so there were many nights that she was extra careful after she left the facility. Joyce did have the luxury of having several good officers who watched her back and helped her to be safe, but the fact that this type of corruption existed within the ranks of the facility was hard for her to fully comprehend. She knew that some corruption existed in Iowa, but she felt that it mostly involved lower ranking staff. She even understood it in the lower ranks in that state because the pay was so low, but that was not the case in Colorado. Joyce believed that Colorado correctional employees were paid very well so that there was no need to supplement their income through corruption.

Joyce did not just lay low after this threat; she tried to reach outside of the facility to the Colorado Bureau of Investigations and to the Attorney General’s office, but no one would take any action: “It was like it went in one ear and out the other.” Finally, as a very last hope, she and another officer contacted the media. The story of internal corruption inside the facility made headlines on the front page of the *Rocky Mountain News*:

Obviously, my first reaction was not to go to the newspaper. It had to be pretty bad to go to the press in those days and being a woman. That was it, I was a

woman and I think that was the biggest problem. I knew more than they wanted me to. I think that they thought that I was safe enough, in that, I was just a woman working there and I didn't have sense enough to put anything together. I just had too many informants. I knew staff were involved at least to protect the inmate's deals.

It was a story for a short time, and many "higher-ups" were worried. But as so often happens, the next bigger story came along and the public was no longer calling for any action. After the media fury subsided, Joyce was moved into a case manager position. This position was on the same shift, days off and pay, but it basically confined her to a small office: "They made me a case manager so I didn't have as much availability to the inmates. They didn't know who I was talking too, but they knew it had to be from my cell house." Joyce liked the duties as the cell house lieutenant, so she was not thrilled about being a case manager, but she was not asked if she wanted the move. Joyce believes that this move was done to control her:

They were trying to control me, the administration. I was telling on them. Well there was so much corruption going on over there, I didn't have sense enough not to say anything. I guess I have been trouble since the day I got there.

Joyce did feel a small degree of protection from the media because of her contact with them, so she knew that the facility administrators could control her movements and even the people that she had access to, but she did not feel that they could actually terminate her employment. The media did not print the names of the correctional staff, but everyone knew who the sources for the story were. She did not believe that the major and captain had any faith in her; in fact, she described their feelings toward her as a

hatred. She did feel that the warden supported her, and it was his support that she attributes to her continued employment after going to the media.

Even in this type of working climate, Joyce felt that she was a good correctional officer. She felt that she was a professional, and she defined her professional role as, “I had to stand in the gap between the inmates and the staff. I felt like I was God’s representative there. I loved corrections. I had lots of respect and that is what I gave.” As a lieutenant, Joyce was responsible to role model acceptable behavior for subordinate staff. She was always very clear with the officers who worked for her that she would not back them if they lied or did something against the rules.

On more than one occasion, she was called to respond to situations involving inmates: “There were situations where I caught my breath. One night, there was something out in the yard and I was the first one at the gate, but we handled it.” This something in the yard was a fight that involved a group of inmates. Joyce fully understood the environment in which she was working and the potential for danger, even at medium security.

Joyce had found respect from the inmates in the Colorado system, but she did not find that respect from the people that she worked for. Joyce reflected that she felt that corrections in Iowa was a good fit: “I felt like I was in the right place, in Iowa. That was essentially my niche. I never really felt that in Colorado.” There was at a time when she struggled with the temptation of returning to Iowa. She knew that her promotion opportunities in that system would be better because she remained in contact with several management employees from Iowa who had continued to try to get her to return. Joyce

had made the decision to return to Colorado for her daughter's well-being, and so she decided to stand by that decision.

Relationship Process Between Joyce and George

The relationship with George started when Joyce was moved into case management, but she had been interacting with George for a few years before she was his case manager. She first heard about George from one of her sergeants. Joyce remembers that this sergeant kept telling her:

We needed to get George back here. I thought he was talking about a staff person. So after I heard that two, three times I said, "Where is he?" The sergeant told me he was at another facility. I said "Well tell him to put in for a transfer; I will sign on this end." The sergeant said, "No, he is an inmate. When he is here there is a little more control over some of these inmates." Not too long after that, I came in from my days off and found out that this inmate had been returned to my cell house.

After all that she had heard about George from the sergeant, she wanted to meet him. The sergeant had already assigned George to the inmate crew that distributed canteen items to the cell house. This position is not given to just any inmate because the pressure to steal items and then sell them to inmates at a reduced price is always present. Therefore, inmates who are assigned to this crew are those who are thought to be able to handle that kind of pressure. When Joyce first met George, she was not that impressed. He did not say much. She recalled: "He didn't much care for blue shirts [correctional officers] and he didn't do much with inmates. He sort of did his own thing."

Joyce worked around George for the next few years in the cell house. George was also part of a special program that helped to divert young people from prison. George had a way of earning respect from many of the staff and inmates: “He was always polite and respectful to everyone, inmates, staff, anyone. In fact he was so polite and respectful and amenable, some of the inmates thought he was an ex-cop that had been sent there.”

Joyce looks back on this time and admits that she may have been attracted to him even before he was on her caseload, but it was as his case manager that she learned more about him. She read the details of his case and much of the documentation that described his life as an inmate. She knew that he was sentenced to life, but life sentences have meant many different things through the years, as sentencing laws have changed in Colorado. The governing statute for his sentence was normally thought to be a twenty-year life sentence so that most inmates who received a life sentence at that time were expected to be released after serving twenty years. Joyce could also tell by reading his file that he was eligible for a reconsideration hearing, and she thought he was a good candidate for release at that time.

Joyce was very aware of the conflict between her job and the way she was feeling about George. She went out of her way to make sure that she never acted upon these feelings. Her office had windows on two sides and was located in a spot that could be easily viewed by other staff. Joyce was very careful with her interactions with George: “I will tell you what, anytime that he came to my office, I was nervous because of my feelings. I didn’t want anyone to read anything into my face. I think that he must have felt something.” Joyce also made sure that the conversations that she had with him were business related and necessary. She did not take the opportunity as his case

manager to talk to him more often than needed: “We never talked about me quitting, we never talked about anything. Not per se., there were little innuendos and stuff, you know, but we never really talked about our feelings.” Joyce admitted that it was as if they were having a relationship, without having a relationship: “When he came to my office it always made me nervous to start with. I had a lot of respect and admiration for him.” Joyce does not think that she would have ever gotten to the point of developing feelings for George if she had not been his case manager:

I don’t think that there would have been the opportunity if I hadn’t been the case manager. There is no way I could have been involved in a verbal thing and still do my job [as a cell house lieutenant] because I would have been worried. I didn’t want anyone to look at me and think that I was looking at him differently than anyone else.

Joyce scheduled leave to have surgery done on her leg at a pivotal point in her life:

The surgery was in October and then I was on short term disability until March. Then I decided I wasn’t going back. It took me that long to decide. I didn’t go back after my leg was operated on because I didn’t want my feelings to start. I won’t say that I loved him, but I really liked him. I wanted to know him better, and I knew that I could not in that setting. Maybe I was afraid of getting into a compromising position with him.

Joyce was certain that if she was going to leave to explore the possibility of a relationship with George, she had to do it honorably. She also realized that it was a one

way decision; there was no going back to corrections work if the relationship did not work out:

I was doing this type of work for at least 15 years. I was thinking about giving into this and I knew it meant my career, either way. If I stayed and anything happened or anyone became suspicious, then my career would not only be over, it would be tainted.

Joyce did resign, and she resigned prior to anything happening between her and George. Joyce was adamant that even though she was emotionally drawn to George, the emotional boundary was the only boundary that she crossed. She did not ever talk about her feelings to George or to anyone. She never touched him:

I can honestly tell you that George and I never touched hands, never did one thing in the prison. Not ever, ever, ever. There was no way, no matter what I felt, that I was ever going to be in that position.

After the 15 years that Joyce spent working in corrections and working as a professional correctional officer, she walked away from it. She knew that there were many people who were happy that she was gone, especially her supervisor. She did not feel that she had a choice; she did not believe that she could have explained this situation to anyone who was in a position to help:

Had I been able to come to talk to you to tell you I have these feelings and I think you need to move George back to wherever, that might have solved the problem. My attraction to him was because he was there. It would not have developed if he didn't stay in my view, I guess. If had stayed working, I would have never gone to visit him. First, it was prohibited, and second, I wouldn't even have asked.

Joyce made the choice to end her career and see if a real relationship developed between her and George. Joyce believes now that this relationship was meant to be and that it was part of God's plan for her life. So with the conviction of her faith, she moved on to the next phase of her life. Joyce found out from a former coworker that the attorneys who were representing George in his reconsideration hearing were looking for a private investigator. Joyce was hired as that private investigator:

When I left the prison, I worked as a private investigator in Boulder County for two or three years. So I went to see the lawyer and I ended up working for him and another attorney. In Colorado, there is no license for PI; you just become one. I did mostly, of course, criminal investigations. Once the cases that they had me working on went away, I didn't know how to market myself to continue doing that. I did like it, and I think I was good at it. I worked on the reconsideration case for George, but he didn't get released.

As part of her work for these attorneys, she met with George in the county jail on multiple occasions.

I was the investigator and you could just come and go day and night almost to see who ever you were working with. I don't know if I went to see him more than the job required. We didn't go so often that it would create a problem, and they [the jail staff] knew the seriousness of the case we were working on. I almost always had my niece with me; maybe I did that as a way of protecting myself, emotionally. We could go in and out at will to talk with him about his case. That is when it [the relationship] really developed. I learned more about his case and realized that he wasn't all bad. It was only after he got to the county jail we

began to talk. He must have felt the same way. I remember one time that he said, “I have nothing to offer you; you know I am going to be here.” I said, “I would live in a tent with you.” It was a stupid thing to say.

According to Joyce, George was not the typical criminal: “The more I knew about the case, the better I justified what I was doing. He was not the typical criminal. If he was, I would have thought he could never change.” This was the first time George had been convicted of a crime; it was not as if he had a history of being in and out of jail during his life.

After George lost his appeal for reconsideration, Joyce did not have any other PI work to complete in the Denver area, so she returned to Canon City. Once again, she looked for a way to make a living while she continued to develop her relationship with George. She worked for a few different businesses in town until she found an opportunity to create another career. Her ability to connect and build relationships throughout her life led her to a career in real estate and property management. She reached out to a longtime friend who agreed to help her get started:

He said, “Why don’t you go to real estate school and go to work for us?” He said he would pay [for the training]. I went to Colorado Springs to the Jones Real Estate College. Since then I have been doing property management and I have my hand in the real estate business.

The flexibility of this type of work allowed Joyce the ability to make a good living and explore her relationship with George. After he was moved from the county jail, he was housed at a Denver facility. At that point the only way Joyce could connect with George was through letters: “After he went to Denver and the doors weren’t open,

you might say, we started writing.” After a few letters went back and forth, Joyce asked George to put her on his visiting list. George resisted this request: “I asked him to put me on his visiting list; he said ‘I can’t do that. You work with these people.’ Anyway, I won; he put me on his visiting list eventually.” Joyce realized that she might have been treated more poorly than other visitors because she was a former employee, but that rarely happened: “The girls up there they treated me just like any other visitor. I was never put down even though some of them knew I was a former employee.” One time, she was entering the facility and saw a former coworker:

I was walking in and he was walking out. He was all welcoming. I said, “You may not think that if you knew what I was doing here.” I told him I was coming to visit an inmate. He said who and I told him and he said “So.” I never had any problem. I was worried about that, I didn’t want to be talked about, and I didn’t want to be put down. There were still people there [Denver] that were from here [Canon City]. I never got any grief from anyone. I think it was because of my reputation as a correctional officer here for 11 years and how I handled it. And our demeanor in the visiting room was above reproach.

In the visiting room, Joyce and George finally had time to talk: “I was on his visiting list; for the first time I felt like we had some privacy to talk at the table.” This table was one of many in a big room with other visitors. Interactions may be overheard by other visitors or by staff walking by, yet this was the most reliable privacy for George and Joyce. Letters that enter or leave the facility may be read, and phone calls may be monitored. Therefore, the moments of conversation in the visiting room was where Joyce and George finally were able to talk about their relationship and their feelings.

Joyce did have a hard time detaching from the role of correctional officer in the visiting room to that of visitor:

The only thing is that for a lot of years it was hard for me to be in the visiting room and see things with other visitors that was going on and not say anything. We managed sometimes to make sure that someone knew that they should be watching somebody. It was really difficult for me because I was a good visiting room staff person too.

Joyce's letters were never rejected, and when George asked to put her on his phone list, the request was granted. Joyce realizes that this kind of treatment for former correctional employees is not always the case, but she believes that her situation was different because she handled it more professionally. Joyce knows of situations that involve other former staff and inmates which she described:

A lot of them are just lust and no sense. No common sense about what they are doing or why they are doing it. I look upon the women who work in the prison and have sex with inmates with disdain. I think there are so many, many women working in prison that should not be working there. I just think, how can you lower yourself to taking a chance of getting caught, just for a few moments of pleasure?

As Joyce was able to connect with George, she realized that she wanted more: We talked about getting together and being together after he got out because we really did feel like at his hearing he would get some play, the reconsideration hearing. It was always, if and when he got out and then he didn't get any play

there. I am the one that wanted to go ahead and get married, even though he was in prison.

At first, George did not want to get married in prison, but his resistance faded and he got excited about the marriage. It seemed that throughout their relationship, he was trying to discourage Joyce from the life that she was pursuing with him. Perhaps he wanted to protect her or perhaps he did not feel like he could give her what he thought she deserved.

Getting married to a man incarcerated in a correctional facility is not always easy. In fact the only types of marriages that are currently allowed in the Colorado Department of Corrections at this point are those done by proxy (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2011c). At the time that Joyce and George asked to be married, this policy had not been adopted, so Joyce and George set about getting the required permission to have a wedding inside the correctional facility. One of the first requests that they made was to have Joyce's minister perform the ceremony. This request was granted, but when Joyce asked her minister, he would not commit until he was able to talk to George. Her minister was allowed a clergy visit with George, and after that visit, he agreed to perform the ceremony. The couple also made a request to have flowers brought into the facility and to have another inmate and his wife stand up with them. All of these requests were granted. Joyce married George in a ceremony that felt very real:

It felt like a real wedding, I had a special dress and a beautiful corsage and he and the inmate best man had on [a boutonniere]. His [the best man's] wife had a corsage and a nice dress and the men were in their greens [inmate uniforms].

Even though the more restrictive rules for inmate weddings were not in place at the time Joyce married George, they knew better than to ask for too much. They did not ask for additional guests, so Joyce's family members did not attend the wedding. The ceremony occurred right before a regular visiting session, so after the ceremony Joyce and George were allowed to stay for that session. After the visiting session was over, Joyce returned to Denver to a party that her brother hosted in her honor. Her brother supported her decision to marry George, and she remembers that he said: "Everybody ought to have a party when you get married." She remembers a big party: "Everybody who was there helped me celebrate the marriage."

Joyce continued to visit George for the remainder of the time he was in prison: "I went to visit nearly every weekend for 16 years, whatever was left. He was at Limon, Canon City, then Burlington, then Canon City; no matter, I nearly went every weekend, sometimes for two days." Joyce's daughters and her grandson also visited George on occasion: "Tina loved him, absolutely loved being around him. He was like a father figure, I am sure. He never had any girls so he treated her special, even in the visiting room." Joyce's older daughter visited George a few times, but after she married someone who worked for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, she did not visit again: "The minute she married him and the Bureau came into play, she could never come back." In fact, the topic of Joyce's husband was rarely ever mentioned after her daughter married because the federal Bureau of Prisons expects their employees to maintain a very strict boundary between their employees and any inmates. The fact that Joyce's son-in-law felt that he could not have anything to do with George affected the relationship between Joyce and her daughter. In all the time that Joyce knew George, he never asked her for anything:

George never once in all those years asked for money on his books or anything. He never asked for telephone money. The only times I ever put money on his books was for a gift like Christmas. One time I put money on his books to buy canteen items for other inmates who didn't have anyone to help them. He always had a good job in prison. He never asked for anything and he never tried to get me to do anything. Not ever, ever. On top of that, when we got married, he had a little retirement from the Teamsters Union, because he had driven truck. He immediately applied for it. It was enough to make my car payment so I would always be able to go to see him.

Joyce did not feel any pressure to give him anything or do anything. In fact he was very understanding when she was not able to visit him: "Sometimes there would be weekends that I would not go because of family things. He was pretty understanding, never demanded that I come."

The relationship continued to grow and the love that Joyce felt she shared with George was like no other relationship in her life: "I don't know how to explain to you how he made me feel. You say your vows, [to] cherish and obey, and for the first time in my life, I felt like I was cherished by someone." Joyce also felt that George was honored to have her in his life:

I think I was kind of like a trophy sometimes. He was very proud to walk with me. I don't know if it was because of who I was and where I had been. I don't think we talked about it, but he would tell me how proud he was of me. I felt like he was so happy to see me, his eyes would light up. He always got a lilt in his walk.

Joyce kept holding on to the hope that he would be released and they could build a life together. The sentencing law that governed his sentence usually meant that inmates doing a life sentence would be released after they served 20 years. George was not released as expected:

At 20 years, they didn't let him go. They set him back some more. That is when it became a real change in his demeanor, when he got that no play at 20 years. I think he really expected release. I think it was a blow to him not to get any kind of date at 20 years.

Joyce's world and plans for her life were severely shaken when he was set back: "It was quite devastating really to know he wasn't getting out. Twenty-year life didn't mean a damn thing, twenty-year life was supposed to mean twenty years." Around that same time, George's son committed suicide. The circumstances of his son's death and the fact that he was not released after serving twenty years even though he had been a model inmate took its toll on George: "I really believe that those two things kind of collided there. That was probably the start of his mental breakdown, change, or whatever it was. I think it was certainly a mental distortion of things." Joyce remained committed to George and just kept going. At this point there did not seem to be any other real choice: "He didn't get paroled at twenty; what can you do, just keep going. I just went back and forth, every week."

George did get released from the correctional facility after 23 1/2 years, but he was only released to a community corrections center: "Just before thanksgiving that year he got out; he went to community. He went there and he was there about six months and then he was allowed to get an apartment. So we got an apartment in Denver." George

was still under some supervision constraints; it was not like being totally free, but the constraints were obviously a lot less than being confined to an institution. George was then given more freedom by being released to an intensive supervision program (ISP). ISP was not quite like being on parole, and but he had more freedom than when he was assigned to community. The longer he was on ISP, the more he pushed the limits of the freedom that he was given. Joyce was very concerned that they had made it this far and now he was beginning to resist the few rules that he still had to follow. As far as Joyce knew, this was new behavior. She had no indication that he had resisted the rules while incarcerated; in fact, her information indicated that he had been a model inmate. Joyce remembers that: "It scared me because he knew better. It worried me and we had a lot to lose."

George appeared to be doing well on the ISP status. He had an apartment and he had a good job. He was working for a building company and was apparently doing very well with his job. During his time on ISP, George started to change towards Joyce.

Perhaps these changes were the result of a medical condition and medication:

He got sick and was in the hospital and had a heart attack. The surgeon told him that he needed open heart surgery and he said no. He wouldn't do it and even went to the point of telling his family that I was lying when [I] told them what the doctor said. Finally his sister-in-law had to speak up and say, "I was there and I heard the doctor and she is not lying."

Joyce is not aware of the full extent of his medical problems because George had started to distance himself from her. This distancing could have been fueled by the fact

that Joyce did not move to Denver to live with George. Joyce recalls that she was not totally comfortable with the idea of such a move:

Something made me not quit my job and move there, even though I had an offer from a real estate gal up there, in that area. Something told me it wasn't a good idea for me to just abandon ship; no matter what I still had to pay my bills. I think that kind of irritated him that I didn't move up there.

Then, an incident occurred that resulted in a dramatic change in their relationship: He got to where he was really jealous of my family. One weekend, I was supposed to come, but it was the weekend before the first year of college for my grandson. I told him that I won't be up until later Saturday, because we are taking him to college. That really didn't set good, even though he knew ahead of time. He wasn't a very happy camper when I got there. It was shortly after that, Labor Day weekend I think, that he just said that it isn't working out; I think my expectations were too high. He was so totally set in his decision that I didn't go back up there. I told him that I won't be back until we get this resolved.

This apparent jealousy for Joyce's time was a definite change in behavior. Joyce recalls: "Up until that point, I had never seen any jealousy or controlling. It was so much out of the blue. He had never been controlling about whether I came or didn't come or if something changed." Any attempt to clarify what he wanted was apparently not open for discussion with George: "If he expected 100% of me after prison, he never expressed that or that I should have been there and I wasn't." Joyce did not go back up to see George. There was some attempt between the two of them to try to fix the issue. Some phone

calls and letters went back and forth. Joyce hoped things would change for the better but she also realized: “This wasn’t the man that I knew or married.”

Fifteen months later, Joyce was notified that George had died: “He had gone to the grocery store and started to put his groceries in the car in the back seat and dropped dead. “ Joyce made arrangements to go to Denver to handle arrangements for George, but she told George’s brother and his wife to take the necessary actions until she arrived. The brother and sister-in-law went to George’s apartment and began to find that George had made changes to his life that surprised them. George had continued to go to a church where he and Joyce had attended on occasion, but the pastor had no idea that George was married or on ISP. They also found evidence that he had been seen by multiple doctors and was taking all kinds of different heart medications. His brother knew that George had been acting differently in the past few months, but they had no idea of the reason or the extent.

Looking through the apartment and talking to the pastor revealed that George had deceived many of the people in his life. He was involved in a single’s group at the church, he had promised a niece that she would inherit all of his belongings if he died (even though he had nothing to give her), and he never told anyone about being on ISP. Joyce was also not aware that he had moved into a different apartment or that he had met the parole board again and was not released to regular parole: “They set him back another year, so I don’t know what they knew.” They also found a church newsletter that included an interview of George that described a life that was in no way the life he led:

He told them this sad story that his wife and son had been killed, twenty years ago, and how devastated he was and he wandered around aimlessly for a while

and ended up down in Mexico and he ran a motel or hotel. Except for Mexico, the rest of the story was my life, not his. I mean it was totally weird. I think it was the medication. The preacher was at the house when the parole supervisor came to get the [ISP] equipment. That is when the preacher first learned that there was duplicity in George's life.

These revelations were difficult for Joyce to fully absorb, but she never stopped loving him: "It didn't change how much I loved him or anything. What can you do, if someone is ill or don't want you. You don't just say, well I am not going to love them anymore." Joyce knew that she made a choice for the path that she took in life and she fully believes that getting married to George was: "The thing that was in God's will. I believe that the 16 years I spent with him, that I had honored that and I still loved him, but I was pretty angry with him." This level of anger that Joyce has felt since her relationship with George changed so dramatically is something that she has learned to deal with and accept. During the periods of anger, she reflects on the career that she threw away and the other choices that she made. She has worked to get back to the relationship with her oldest daughter that she once had, but even that has not been without some anger: "The Bureau put up a wall between us."

Joyce talked to me about the grief that she felt for the loss of her husband. Even though they had been apart for over a year, it was still a devastating blow to her. The whole time they were apart, Joyce hoped that things could be fixed. With his death, of course, that hope was gone. Very few members of her family realized the impact on her that his death had:

Even though they all knew, very few of my family realized just how this affected me. I never got to grieve with anyone because you know, he had been acting like a jerk and we hadn't been together, and so it should be just another occasion, I guess. I could only talk to Tina and my sister-in-law. Nobody else saw how my heart hurt, how I hurt. None of my family or friends realized just how hurt I was. I don't think that anyone understood that even though things were not the way they were supposed to be that I grieved and was wounded. I just had to suck it up and get through it.

Joyce did not have an ordinary marriage, but she cherished the good years that they had:

I really felt loved and cherished; the word cherished comes to mind. That was the longest relationship I had, and outside of the last year, it was wonderful. I think this was meant to be and therefore I have no regrets. We never got to be together, but I have no regrets that I spent 16 years running up and down the road to be with this man. I think that we were in the center of God's will when we got married. I really do, but you know people get in the way of long-term stuff. You have choices to make and when you make poor choices you have to suffer the consequences no matter what that is, and other people's lives are involved in that. I guess you can be in the center of God's will and things not go well. I would like to tell you that it was a happy ever after but it didn't quite end up that way.

I remember feeling so sad for Joyce when she told me about the loss of her husband. The grief was so apparent even five years later.

Effect on Joyce's Life

The most dramatic effect the relationship with George had on Joyce's life was the distance that it had on her relationship with her daughter. Even the loss of her career did not affect Joyce so profoundly as the distance that was the result of Joyce's marriage. When her oldest daughter married someone who worked for the Bureau of Prisons, she lost a big part of her daughter's support and companionship: "The Bureau imprints upon those guys that they can't have anything to do with anyone that has anything to do with inmates." Before her son-in-law worked for the federal system, her daughter and grandson accompanied Joyce on visits to see George, but more than that, her daughter was available to her emotionally. When the wall was erected between her relationship with her daughter and grandson and her relationship with her husband, Joyce rarely talked to her daughter about her marriage. Canon City is a relatively small town, and Joyce believes that the state system is more realistic than the federal system about the relationship their employees have with others in the community and in their family: "There is more of an acceptance in the state system. I feel like the state looks like it as 'You can't totally eliminate this kind of thing; this is a small town.'" Joyce believes that her relationship with her daughter has been repaired, but she still lost all of those years. She also was not able to turn to her daughter to lean on while she grieved for the loss of George.

Even though Joyce's marriage was not fully accepted by her family, she was able to grow a significant clientele in the real estate and property management business. She never hid the fact that her husband was incarcerated, and she does not believe it negatively affected her business. If people asked she told them:

I was very open and up front: My husband was in prison. Of course, I didn't go through the story of why he was there and that I married him after he got there, but everybody knew and it never hurt my business. If they asked questions, I answered them, but most people didn't ask too many questions.

Joyce even sold and managed property for many federal employees, but because she knew the expectation from the Bureau, she never brought up her relationship to an inmate. If they asked her, she told them, but again, she does not think that it ever affected her business.

Joyce added, " [I] didn't lose any friends because of the relationship with George." To her surprise, many of the management level employees who were accused of corruption in the article by the *Rocky Mountain News* even go out of their way to talk to her in public. Due to the nature of her work, she is often in public settings:

Those people who I thought hated me, I can see them anywhere in town and they stop and talk to me like we are old friends who worked together. I think it is because they knew I was right, and they knew they were wrong. I never did make a big deal of treating them any different but I didn't respect them anymore.

When Joyce worked in Iowa, she was very firmly and clearly part of a professional team that did honorable work. She felt valued as a part of that team. Joyce never really felt that way in Colorado:

In Iowa, I was very much valued and treated like somebody or treated as if I had good sense, and I was treated like the professional that I thought I was. When I came here [I had to] start at the bottom twice. And then of course I always remembered what the major told me the day he hired me. "I put off hiring you as

long as I could.” I think that I made a difference in Iowa; I think that I blazed a trail for the women in the men’s prison there. I didn’t get to blaze any trails here.

Joyce believed in the value of correctional work, and she formed strong relationships with her subordinate staff who respected her as a leader and role model. However, in Colorado she never really felt that she was valued by the people above her in her chain of command. These feelings affected her willingness to leave corrections and move to a different career. In some sense, it made the decision to reach out to George easier.

Although the relationship did not end as Joyce has hoped, she believes that she was good for George, at least while he was in prison. She also thinks that she provided a strong support system that encouraged the parole board to release George: “I don’t think he would have been released if we weren’t together. His chances of getting paroled were improved because of me.” She also thinks that their relationship was a good model for other inmates who observed them in the visiting room and heard of the ways they supported each other. Joyce knows from a very personal perspective the struggles of some of the inmates who are serving life sentences in the Colorado Department of Corrections, so she continues to offer support for them. She is currently an advocate for a man who is serving a life sentence for a very high profile crime. She goes to his parole hearing to advocate for his release, as a friend, to show the parole board that this inmate and others like him are worth taking a chance on and encouraging their release.

In the end Joyce believes that she would not make the same decisions about her career and her relationship with George, if she had the luxury of doing it all over again:

“If I knew how it was going to end, even though it was good, all but the last year, I would not do it again.”

Lynn's Portrait

As I parked in front of Lynn's house, I realized that I was in neighborhood that was familiar and which seemed so out of place in this context. This neighborhood was a stone's throw from my home. I had been on this street many times, sometimes on bicycles with my children, sometimes walking a family dog. I looked around and saw homes of people who had been in my life and the lives of my children. The house across the street was where I had dropped off and picked up a little girl for Girl Scout meetings for several years. Just down the street on the corner was the home of another little girl who had been a part of our lives before her family fell apart and she moved away. Now, as I sat in my car, feeling ridiculous for even driving the two blocks from my house to hers, I wondered about the young lady who I was going to get to know. Lynn had lived on this street throughout most of her childhood and now she is raising her family there.

Lynn is five years older than my children, so they were never in the same activities or groups of friends, but I noticed as she grew up. I had developed some connection to her family through the years, so I noticed when she had a child, graduated from high school, went to college, and then, when she went to work for the Department of Corrections (DOC). I also made note of her achievements at work. She started off her corrections career by getting the outstanding student award in basic training. I was there that day; her parents were there, and they were so proud of her. I was proud of her too. I knew this beautiful young lady had many opportunities ahead of her in this career. I

could see she had grown into a wonderful young mother, and when she walked off that stage, I could see she had hopes and dreams for her life.

I also noticed when the rumors around town said that she was fired because she fell in love with an inmate at work. After working for the Colorado Department of Corrections for three years, she was walked out of the facility and escorted off the complex in disgrace. I noticed that my heart ached at the sound of that story. I did not want to think about what her parents, who had both retired from high ranking positions from this Department, were feeling. I hoped that the rumors were wrong, but I dreaded the fact that they probably were not.

It is in front of this house that I hesitated before I got out of my car. I was here a few months earlier to see if she would be willing to be a participant in this study. I remember being surprised by her willingness to participate. She was willing as long as it would help someone else. I reflected on that statement as I gathered up my recorder and session notes. If this can help someone else, then she thinks that this kind of intrusion into a very personal part of her life was worth it. I headed to the door, with a renewed sense of passion, to begin the exploration of the path that led this young woman through the process of entering the world of corrections as an officer only to leave it as a woman in love with an inmate.

Lynn greeted me with a smile that let me know that I was welcome, not only into her home, but into her story. We sat in the living room of her home to begin her story. This room showed much evidence of a loving, caring family. The overstuffed couch was surrounded by the trappings of life: big screen TV, computer desk strewn with household paperwork, articles of clothing laid over the backs of the dining room chairs and even an

aquarium with a bearded dragon in the corner of the room. It was in the middle of her home that Lynn began to tell me the story of her time as a correctional officer. But the story really began several years before she entered the world of corrections.

Path That Led Lynn to Corrections

Lynn grew up in a prison family, living in a prison town: Canon City, Colorado. Both her parents worked for the Department of Corrections and even as a little girl she realized that the job paid her parents well. Lynn talked of going to elementary school right down the street and then to the Canon City Middle School. It was the only middle school in town, so children from all over the town converged on this school for seventh grade. It was during middle school that Lynn described a change in her life, a time in her life when she rebelled against her parents. The result of this rebellion led her away from public school and to a private high school. She did well in the smaller environment of the private school, but she continued to date a “bad boy.” This dating resulted in a pregnancy at age 16. Lynn acknowledges that this child changed her life for the better; she was all of a sudden responsible for someone else. This child, who is now 14 years old, put her life back on track. With the support of her family, she raised her daughter while finishing high school and entering the university in a nearby city. She was able to drive back and forth so that she could live at home, study, and be a mom.

Even though Lynn had proclaimed herself as “not much of a planner,” college demands that decisions be made. The push to choose a major and a life’s work was influenced, like so many of these decisions, by the media. There were a number of TV shows that detailed the glamour of crime scene investigation and forensic investigation. This career field intrigued Lynn so much that she chose a major in the field of

sociology/criminology. The hope of catching the bad guys, like they did on TV, sustained her throughout her studies. She graduated from the university with a bachelor's degree in sociology; a degree she was assured that would open a lot of doors for her.

The first door that opened was a chance to work in Colorado Springs at a private community corrections facility. Lynn was anxious to put her degree and years of hard study to work. She worked as a case manager for a few months, but when an opening was available at the Department of Corrections, she jumped at it. Lynn knew that the pay was higher and that she would only be ten miles from work, instead of the 60 miles that it took to get to Colorado Springs. Again, Lynn admits that she did not really plan this career path, but that "I just kind of do things."

So a few months out of college, she was sitting in the basic training class at the Department of Corrections. Even the basic training academy was located in Canon City, so she immediately realized the benefits of being only a few miles from home. This new job seemed like a win-win opportunity: She would be getting more money and she would have more time to spend with her daughter, who was getting very involved in youth sports. Lynn knew that working shift work, especially the night shift, would be a challenge but that she could be there for most of her daughter's activities and sports practices. Lynn did not have any elaborate expectations or even a clear vision of the job. She stated: "I just kind of went and figured that I would be watching adults that are mean."

To say that Lynn did not plan for this career at all would be inaccurate. After all, she earned a bachelor's degree that in theory prepared her for work inside a correctional facility. But she did not pursue this degree with that ultimate goal. She intended to be on

the streets, or in the forensic lab, catching the bad guys and putting them away. She did not envision herself guarding these same bad guys in a facility. When asked why she did not pursue a job in forensics, she explained that even though she had a bachelor's degree, she would have needed to get POST certified (Police Officer Standards and Training certification). After years of college, she just did not pursue this certification. Lynn was satisfied with her choices. She was purchasing her childhood home in a town that she loved: "I love Canon City; it is not a party town and I think that it is a safe and good place to raise your family."

From the beginning, Lynn's mom was concerned about her working in corrections: "My mom said that I was too nice, I wanted to see the best in people. She did not say to not take the job, but she said I am a little nervous for you." As Lynn recalled this conversation, she realized that she felt strong enough to handle the environment, even though she also described herself as forgiving and a little gullible. She knew that she could make a good life for her and her daughter and that there was virtually nowhere else she would be able to go to work for the same amount of pay in the area. So, armed with a history of family members who had succeeded in Colorado corrections, her bachelor's degree, and her determination, Lynn went to work as a correctional officer.

The Correctional Environment

At the time that Lynn went to work in the Colorado system, all new officers went through a basic training program in Canon City. Lynn enjoyed the training experience: "It was exciting, I did really well, and it was just like school. I liked the PPCT [Pressure Point Control Tactics] because it was active and fun; the guns were pretty fun too." This

program was four and one half weeks in duration and a wide variety of topics were covered. The first few weeks consisted of reviews of policy, employment expectations, and interpersonal relationships between staff and between staff and inmates.

A major focus of this part of basic training was professional behavior of staff. This professionalization focus included classes specifically aimed at interactions with inmates and the ways that inmates may try to manipulate staff. Lynn realizes now that this part of the training fell short of what new staff really needed to hear. She explained:

In training, they make all of the inmates sound really horrible. They emphasize that all they [the inmates] want is something from you. Like for you to bring them something, like drugs, or whatever. It was all materialistic; they never said anything about you having genuine emotions for one of the inmates or the inmate having genuine emotions towards you. They never ever said that; in fact, they said that the inmates will never have genuine emotions toward you; it is always about what they can get from you.

Lynn was assigned to a high security facility in the Canon City area. At the conclusion of training Lynn felt prepared for the work, but as soon as she arrived on at the facility she was told: "The facility was not really what you heard about in training so forget all that; not everything was by the ARs [policies]." The first few weeks were spent on day shift completing specialized training for the specific facility. She was certified in specific skills, such as forced cell entry, specialized restraints, and stun gun use. Lynn learned the layout of the facility and watched the type of interaction that was expected between staff and inmates. The fact that she was assigned to a high security facility meant that all inmates were moved by two staff and they were handcuffed. In this

environment, Lynn felt safe: “I always thought I would be safe. I knew there was a chance, but in general I felt like I was safe, I almost liked it better because it was always two to one; you always had another guard with you.”

After the facility specific orientation, Lynn moved to her assigned shift, the night shift, which was also a training shift. There is very little movement or activity scheduled during the night, which allows time for more extensive training and orientation.

Seasoned officers are also assigned to this shift to help train new officers. Most new employees are assigned to this shift so that they can have an opportunity to work more closely with these training officers. The goal of this process is that by the time newer employees rotate to another shift, they will have many of the skills needed to work competently with the high security inmates. The night shift is also slower paced, so employees can more easily build strong relationships with their coworkers.

Lynn was off to a good start on the training shift, even though she knew that “more of the higher ups knew who I was [because of my parents], and I was more in the spotlight than another person that just came out of the academy. I didn’t get anything handed to me, but there were more people noticing me.” Lynn seemed to adapt to the duties of the job well. Most of her shift was spent making rounds and checking on the inmates and other officers. Lynn felt that she got along well with most of her coworkers, but there were a few exceptions. She described some general back stabbing and bickering that went on among the staff, and there were a few others who treated her differently. She assumed it was because of who her parents were and that they figured she would be “handed something special.”

Lynn continued to listen to the trainers and focus on learning the skills that she needed in this environment. Lynn developed good working relationships with most of the people on her shift, but there were two that she “hated.” She described one of these people as one who acted as if he were better than her and continually tried to push her down. Lynn felt this officer was constantly trying to stir up trouble for staff, especially the newer staff members. He would often accuse staff of spending too much time talking to a particular inmate. Lynn knew that these two officers had been at the facility a long time and would probably have a lot of support from the lieutenants and captain. So she developed her own way of trying to survive the nights when she worked with them by adhering to policy, 100%. This meant that the shortcuts that were normally taken to make an officer’s night go more smoothly, even though they were in violation of policy, did not happen. She would make sure that if she was in the control center, they had to wait for the correct door protocol to occur. This actually only increased their wait time at a door for a matter of 30-45 seconds, but the real message that was communicated by this wait was clear. She admits that this was rarely effective, as they would then take the first opportunity to return the treatment by correcting her uniform dress or nit picking other actions.

Lynn had a harder time adjusting to the fact that some of the female staff did not welcome her and did not appear to like her. Lynn said, “I generally get along with men better than I get along with women, any men, inside or outside a prison.” But overall, most of the staff did not seem to care too much one way or the other about her and if she succeeded or failed.

Lynn talked about being a female officer in a high security facility. She does not recall getting any grief based on her gender from anyone in particular. By the time that she worked at this facility, there were many women working on all shifts, so perhaps gender was not an issue for anyone. The one thing about being a woman at this facility that stood out in her memory was the frequent talk about women getting involved with inmates. Lynn recalls conversations about this topic that would often include a female officer stating: "I would never, ever, ever, do that; that is so stupid." Even in the beginning Lynn was silent during these conversations. She shared:

I never added to these conversations, just because I didn't want to look stupid; thank God I didn't say it, because I would look like a liar, a fake, and everything else. That is why I didn't say it. I didn't want to end up being like, oh yeah, I said I would never ever do it and I did. I didn't think that I would fall for an inmate. I never had any intentions, I didn't think it was going to happen; I just didn't want to look stupid.

Lynn remembered the first time she made a round on the tier: "The first time on the tier, they were yelling out dirty things and what not." The verbal abuse did not concern her as much as how she was going to handle sexually inappropriate behavior:

You hear about the intentional masturbating [in full view of staff] and think what would you do. You have to think about it; are you going to bang on the door and make a scene or are you going to go back later. I was told to address it, but not specifically when they are masturbating. Typically, I would continue my round then go back in and talk to him and tell him that is disrespectful towards me. I would tell them that if you do it again I will write you up and 99% of the time

they would not do it again; at least not that obviously. There was one inmate who did this every night. He would stand by the window naked. For that particular inmate I wrote him up constantly. I tried to talk to the particular inmate and he started licking his fingers. I was disgusted, so I called him on the speaker, so he couldn't do that again, and asked him why he continued to behave like that. He said that women like it; they go to strip clubs and they pay money for it. I told him that I am not at a strip club and I am not paying you any money, nor would I pay anyone money, so please stop. Another inmate would call me to the door and he would masturbate while he talked to me and try to keep me there until he finished. It was disgusting.

Specific training on how employees are expected to handle these masturbation incidents is not part of the formal training program; however, it is often discussed in side conversations with trainers at the academy and in the facility. Another related concern is the presence of sexually explicit materials that inmates are allowed to possess inside a correctional facility. Sometimes the inmates are not the problem. They may have tried to place these items out of view of the female staff, but then male officers would seek it out:

The male officers would go in to search a room with me and they would just sit there and flip through the inmate's [sexually explicit] pictures. They would go through their pictures and make comments like –“Oh yea, she is nice, or oh my God.”

Lynn made sure to clarify that not all male officers acted in this manner; but this type of event was not an isolated occurrence. However, she believes that the inmates usually

tried to keep these items stored in places that were out of our view so that they were not confiscated for review.

Interactions with coworkers influenced how officers dealt with inmates. Many new employees who Lynn observed took their cues from these staff and were not necessarily always professional around the inmates. Lynn made a conscious effort to deal with the environment and the people locked up there in a different manner: “It got a little scary, the people in the prisons, so I was nice to everyone, saying good morning, how are you... etc. I didn’t want to make their day worse.” Lynn really tried to treat the inmates respectfully, thinking not only that they deserved positive treatment, but that perhaps she could improve the atmosphere inside the facility: “I tried to be a positive part of the day.”

Lynn described interactions with inmates when they would ask her for advice. Sometimes the information they were seeking had to do with relationship difficulties:

A lot of the inmates wanted to talk to me about their girlfriend. They would ask me if I would help them edit this poem for a girlfriend. Talk with the guys [male officers] was more like, “Oh, that guy was a bad ass in football.” I felt like my conversations were more healing. I never had an issue with the guys [inmates] and I knew when they were trying to play me. Others would ask if they could give me something, and I made sure they knew I would turn it in if they gave it to me.

Lynn thought that she was getting very skilled at finding ways to be human while maintaining that clear line between the inmates and the officers. She tried to let the inmates know the consequences of their actions while still giving them the power to make

a good choice. She felt as if she had to determine the boundary between herself and inmates. She didn't ask for guidance on how she was interacting with inmate for fear of being criticized for her style of management and not being able to model what the other officers were doing.

Her interactions with inmates led Lynn to "feel kind of protected by some of the inmates; they took a fatherly big brother role to me like they kind of took me under their wing. I don't know if it was because I was nice to them and respectful." Lynn tried hard to keep this respect from the inmates that she had worked so hard to earn. She remembers one inmate admonishing her for disrespecting inmates. This inmate knew that she and other staff members had read a letter to an inmate and were joking about his dysfunctional relationship with his mother. The inmate told Lynn: "I am really disappointed in you. That is none of your business—that is our mail; you had no right to do that." Lynn reflected on this, apologized to this inmate, and admitted that she had crossed a line. This is the type of interaction with inmates that Lynn described. She felt that they seemed to approach her differently than other officers.

At the end of the shift, Lynn was clear that it was "just a job; I was up at night, went home, took my daughter to school, went back to sleep and then picked her up." On days that school was not in session, Lynn had a significant network of friends and family to help with day care for her daughter. Most of these friends were from her life before corrections. Someone asked Lynn why she was working in a correctional facility and she remembers telling them: "Because I have to pay my bills. I am not volunteering. Do I want to have a good time? Yes, but ultimately I have to pay my bills." Lynn admitted that she made very few friends at work and never "hung out" with anyone from work.

She never considered dating any of the male officers, and the closest she came to socializing with coworkers was when she would join a group of coworkers to work out in the employee gym before going home:

There was a group of us, me and other guys, no girls; we would go down to the weight room and lift weights for 30-45 minutes before we went home, but nothing outside of that. I started doing that not too long after I started. There were five guys and me.

These workout sessions only occurred during the time that Lynn was on the night shift; once she went to day shift, she did not seek out a group of coworkers to continue this activity, nor was she invited to do so by others. Lynn was beginning to see the negativity that was present in the lives of most of the people who worked there:

Corrections culture is pretty negative, not everyone by any means. It is different; you can't just leave and get out of doors. You have to wait for at least three sally ports to get out, I think some people it drug them down and they couldn't let it go. They always talked about this is such a bad environment, and people get so angry and others start buying in to it and they get angry too.

Even while she was seeing this in others, Lynn felt like she continued to make a positive contribution to the lives of the inmates confined in this high security environment. She did this by focusing on doing her job and doing it well:

With the exception of what happened with John, I think I was really good at my job. I knew the rules, I followed the rules, and I was consistent with everybody. I don't know if I would have made it a career. I would not have quit unless I had something better.

The high rate of pay, compared to other jobs in the area, was still the primary motivating factor for Lynn to keep this job. Nowhere else in the area could she make the same amount of money. Even though Lynn saw the negativity in the environment, she continued to try to fit in and make this new job a career. She felt that many of the men who she worked with took her under their wing and helped her to learn new skills. Most of the shift commanders who ran the night shift were men. Lynn talked about getting along really well with them right from the start. She felt that they really pushed her to try new posts and assignments. Lynn was chosen to be on a forced cell entry team on more than one occasion. The forced cell entry teams are used when a planned use of force is about to occur, such as an inmate who refuses to cuff up to be moved from one location to another. In such an instance, the shift commander will have the officers who were directly dealing with the inmate back out of the situation and call for a team. These planned use of force events are common in high security facilities in Colorado. Staff are assembled, outfitted, and briefed on the situation before they ever confront the inmate. This allows them to get ready for physical resistance. There are also unplanned uses of force that occur in these same institutions. Lynn was involved in an incident that required force that was not planned or anticipated.

Lynn describes doing a routine move of an inmate, with the assistance of another female officer. The inmate involved had a history of being disrespectful towards this other officer, so it did not come as a complete surprise when the inmate refused to follow directions and turned on Lynn and her colleague. The inmate tried to “head-butt” the other officer and Lynn helped her control the inmate. She had a good history with this inmate so she thought that would help her to get him to comply. Ultimately, other

officers came to their assistance and the inmate was put under control. She acknowledges that the use of force was not handled in an ideal manner, but that it was the first time that she had ever been involved in an unplanned use of force. Lynn found herself nervous and even shaking afterwards, which is a common reaction. When the threat from the inmate had been resolved, she joined other staff to prepare the documentation on the incident.

Use of force incidents are documented very heavily and there is an investigation that occurs after the incident. Lynn was well aware of this fact, so she wanted to make sure that her report was accurate and done correctly. Most of the other employees who were involved in the incident were sitting in the office working on reports, but Lynn found that she could not concentrate in that setting:

It was my first use of force and I wanted to do a good job. They were all talking, so I went outside the office and sat under the grate, and they said I was excluding myself from them. I ended up going to the front where they have the tables. I went over there to write because it was quieter.

When Lynn moved away from the group to be able to concentrate on her report, she did not ever imagine that this behavior might be interpreted as moving away from the “team.” Many of the staff members in the office were people who she worked well with; however, there were at least two officers in that group that she had problems with before this incident. Lynn completed her report, turned it in, and returned to her duties.

When a use of force occurs, the other inmates in the living unit know that something has occurred, and they often try to get more information from staff about the details. Lynn was questioned by many inmates about what had just happened with the

use of force. Although she did not intend to give inmates the full details, she was also concerned that the inmates not think that she enjoyed being involved in the incident.

After it was over, she remembers talking to one inmate:

All the inmates knew about it and I was telling inmate Ortiz that I wish it wouldn't have happened and I wished something else could have happened instead. Not saying anything bad about the officers or me or the inmate involved, I just said, "I wish the situation was different. I am not proud that we did it, I wish it was different."

Lynn left the facility that day feeling that she had preserved her integrity and reputation and that she had done her job well. The next day when she was confronted by her lieutenant, she was shocked that not all her colleagues felt the same way. She remembers her lieutenant asking her what was going on between her and inmate Ortiz. He told her that the other staff reported that when she went out to sit at the table, she sat in a provocative manner in a place where inmate Ortiz could see her. Lynn assured him that this was not what happened and that nothing was "going on" with inmate Ortiz. The lieutenant seemed to believe what she was telling him and told her that he would move inmate Ortiz to another unit just to quash the situation. Lynn again left thinking that the incident was behind her and feeling like her coworkers were just looking out for her.

Later that week, the female officer who she was working with when the inmate turned on them called her at home:

I was sitting at home one day and she called and said she heard that I was badmouthing her to inmate Ortiz about the situation. I was like, absolutely not and I was happy she called me. I told her that I completely supported her, and it

was [a] scary situation. All I told inmate Ortiz was that I wish it didn't happen. She had heard that I said that it should have never happened which is close to what I said, but it was not what I said. I thanked her for calling me and asking me about it. We just kind of moved on.

After this incident Lynn stated:

It seemed like I was "shunned," but that may be an over-exaggeration. It was more tense; you could feel more tension in the air. After that, I didn't have as open of a relationship with many of the staff, but it is not like I hung out with anyone from work anyway.

Lynn reflected on this particular incident and whether or not that incident changed the relationship between her and her coworkers:

I don't know if that changed something, but I felt like they [coworkers] then knew that I cared, but they knew that before the use of force. They all knew that I cared, not that I loved inmates but that I was a caring individual. I wanted the best for everyone. After that I really tried to be a positive part of the day and not go in there with a bad attitude. When I called inmates on the intercom for showers, I would say "good morning." I would wave at them in the morning, just generally being polite.

Lynn believes that this incident and the questioning of inmate Ortiz led him to develop an attachment to her in some way. He was very aware of her movements and seemed to be watching her closely, including when she began to develop a relationship with an inmate, John, about six months after this use-of-force incident.

Relationship Process Between Lynn and John

Lynn cannot point to a particular event or moment in time that a relationship started to develop with an inmate named John, but it definitely started while she was on day shift. This relationship just sort of evolved from their daily interactions:

I don't really even know how it started, I know that he was always really, really nice to me. Then one morning he started putting little colored fancy signs that said "good morning" in his [cell door] window every time when I would go around. He would watch for me to go around and then he would put the sign up and tell me good morning. He did that over and over and I knew that he was doing that just for me. I blew it off because no other inmates ever did little signs like that but they did other things . . . trying to get noticed.

Then Lynn started to turn the intercom speaker on in his cell to listen to the music he was playing so that she and the other officer working in the control room could have music too while they worked. Lynn explained that many staff working the control rooms would do this by listening in on different cells until they heard music that they wanted to hear in the control room. The music could only be heard in the control room, and this was a relatively common practice. Lynn took advantage of this practice to connect with John, while appearing to be engaging in a normal work routine. Lynn remembers a specific instance when she "clicked" on the speaker for John's cell and she heard him singing:

I thought, wow, he sounded really good, and it was one of those songs. So that happened and I heard him singing on the radio and I just couldn't get it out of my head, all day long, I just kept thinking about it over and over and over and over.

Of course, I downloaded the song, and listened to it over and over when I got home.

About the same time that Lynn heard John singing, she and another officer were assigned to search his cell. During this cell search, Lynn saw what she believed to be a poem that John had written for her. It looked like he left it in a strategic location for her to find: “He had written a poem about a girl with green eyes. He left it on his desk, just in case I went in and searched it.” Even though the other officer assigned could have read the poem, Lynn knew that the poem was for her because it matched her circumstances. Finding this poem under these circumstances led Lynn to become even more intrigued and interested in John.

Then the conversations started. Lynn talked to John while she was making rounds on the tiers and while she was working in the control room. From the control room she could talk to him through the intercom in his cell, but when she was on day shift, there was always another person working in the control room with her. Lynn’s actions could have been observed by control room officers and by other officers in the unit. Under these circumstances, John and she began to have conversations that at first were normal between an officer and an inmate, but these conversations began to slide into areas that went beyond the accepted boundaries of the officer/inmate relationship. Lynn remembered one of the earlier conversations that took place on the tier; John let Lynn see a photo of a woman who worked at her bank. Lynn told him that she recognized her and John told Lynn that he had been talking to this woman about his feelings toward Lynn. Lynn was surprised to hear this and surprised that John knew people from the local

community. She did not realize until then that he had spent part of his childhood years growing up in Canon City.

As the normal boundary between Lynn and John began to erode, Lynn took another step toward John by telling him that she did not have a boyfriend. In the past, Lynn had always answered inquiries from other inmates about this topic by telling them that she was involved with someone. Lynn did this, even though she was not involved with anyone at the time, just to make it “simple” when talking to inmates. After she told John she was not in a relationship, she described what happened next:

It just kind of went out of control after that. I told him that I didn’t have boyfriend and then the conversations turned more personal, I guess, not anything specific, like about my family or anything like that, but more that we were interested in each other. Not like conversations I had with other inmates.

Lynn tried to explain to me how this relationship developed with him locked behind a door during all of these interactions. She described it as purely an “emotional relationship.” And she felt the attraction throughout her whole body. Early on, John asked her if she would ever consider dating him. She responded to him by saying: “Yea, if you weren’t in prison. You can’t do anything for me right now, but if you weren’t in prison, I think you are nice.” From that point on, John’s view of the relationship spiraled, and Lynn affirmed his quest for a commitment. She told him that she would wait for him and that she would not get into a serious relationship until he got released, so they could give it a shot.

At this point in the relationship, the only boundary that was crossed was that of an emotional connection and conversation. No letters or other types of communication had

been attempted, but with the way that John was building more and more out of the commitment that Lynn had made, it was inevitable that he would try to reach out to her when she was not at work. The first hint for Lynn that he had tried to cross over into her personal life was near the time of her birthday. She got a phone call from Lisa, the woman who worked at her bank. John did not have any contact information for Lynn, so he must have influenced Lisa to take advantage of the information on file at the bank. Lisa told her that John sent something to her house and that she should come to pick it up. Lynn reeled at the prospect that he sent her something. This was the first thing that had penetrated the massive perimeters of the institution. She knew that her next step could be life changing. She had to decide whether to take this next step, which was actually a giant leap. She could turn him in, or ignore the phone call and not go to get the item, or she could pick it up and find out if they had a chance at a real loving relationship.

Lynn did go to get the item; it was a birthday card, but Lynn did not immediately write a return letter to John:

I held on to it for a while because I didn't know if I wanted to write him. I was curious and I liked him, I thought about him all the time but then I was scared about losing my job or getting in trouble. I knew it was wrong. I kept it and I decided to write him back.

John would mail letters to Lisa's house and Lynn would go there to pick up and drop off return letters. Lisa was also one of the people who John was allowed to contact by phone, so Lisa would let Lynn know when he was going to call so she could be at Lisa's house. Lynn talked to John by using this system more than once. Lisa was feeding into the excitement by telling her: "Oh, he likes you so much; he talks about you

all the time.” Lynn continued accepting help from Lisa for a few weeks, but soon she decided to take more control of the phone calls and the letters. She contacted one of her friends and set up the same type of arrangement. However, this friend gave Lynn one of her cell phones to use so that John could call her more directly. This friend facilitated Lynn’s communication with John until she got caught by the investigators. Lynn described this part of the relationship as progressing very quickly. She would “give an inch and he would take it a mile.” Lynn admits that if she was in a relationship with someone on the streets and this type of progression occurred, she would have slowed it down, but the intensity of the environment seemed to add fuel to this romance.

Lynn’s heart was whirling around her emotional high and connection with John, but she still tried to go to work and be an officer. She tried to act as if nothing was different, and she worked hard to make sure that she did not change her mannerisms. She admits that she must not have done a great job at hiding it because it did not take her long to get “caught.” This may be in part because she was so engrossed in building the relationship with John that she stopped paying attention to little things: “When you first start writing letters, you make sure that you don’t put anything that is personal or identifying, and then as you go, you start to feel more comfortable and let your guard down.”

Lynn realized that her days working for the Department of Corrections were numbered when inmate Ortiz asked her about John. He wanted to know if she was “with him.” Lynn of course denied it and immediately confronted John. John denied that he had talked to anyone else, but then he demanded to know why she was talking to another inmate. Lynn explained to John, not for the first time, that she still had a job to do and

that included talking to other inmates. After that conversation with inmate Ortiz, Ortiz started to contact her through the intercom system when she worked in the control center to tell her that he loved her. This type of behavior is usually documented and could possibly even result in disciplinary charges for the inmate, but Lynn did not write him up. She hoped on one level that he would stop on his own, but there was also the risk of him exposing her relationship with John if she provoked him.

The conversations with inmate Ortiz were a warning to Lynn that their secret was unraveling. She knows now that she should have quit at that point but she admits:

I just wasn't as motivated to do it as I should have been because it paid so much more money than anything I could have gotten. I just bought my house so I didn't want to take the lower pay. I knew that I should just leave before I got caught. I was not seeing John that often; by that time we were writing and talking on the phone. It was nice that I could see him, but that is not why I was still there; it was the money.

By this time, she was back on night shift and had very limited access to actually seeing John, so most of the communication was through the letters and phone calls. She held out hope that John would be released to parole and they could be together.

Lynn also described another inmate who tried to tell the authorities that she had crossed the line with John. However, this inmate was not well liked by staff or inmates, so each time he put out a kite (note addressed to a staff member) the other inmates would use ratlines (a string that is manipulated to move items between cells) to capture it before a staff member could pick it up. These other inmates helped to keep the relationship

secret because they respected John. John was also respected by many inmates and some staff, but to others, he was just intimidating.

Lynn was attracted to John not only for the emotional support but also because she felt enamored by the way he carried himself. She described him as someone who was confident and carried himself really well. This relationship also gave her something that a free individual could not: emotional support with convenience. Lynn was able to feel the emotional support of being in a relationship without having to balance the needs of another individual in her personal life. She was so busy with her daughter's activities that she did not have time for anyone else. This relationship gave her a relationship without the normal dating and time commitments: "I could still be me and a mom and have my life with my daughter, but then I was also getting a huge emotional support from him for a while."

The day finally came that Lynn had been expecting. She was caught. Lynn had an interaction with a day shift employee who was acting so differently from her previous interactions with him that she knew her secret must be out. This sergeant, who was usually very warm and welcoming, responded to her greetings in a closed and cold fashion that morning. Lynn was sure that the next few days would be her last at work, but she went home and went to bed as usual. In the middle of the day, a knock at the door revealed two Department of Corrections' investigators. To her surprise, they had come with back up:

My house was blocked off with sheriff's cars. It made it seem like it was a huge drug bust or something. There were cop cars blocking off my house, at least two on each side and then there was at least two investigators and then multiple sheriff

deputies. I was just kind of like, oh, hi. They said they were her to search my house and I was like, okay. They asked, “Are we going to find anything?” and I said, “Ya, you probably will.”

As the investigators entered her house, she retreated into the back yard to call her parents. She was scared to tell them what was going on, but she knew that small town gossip would get to them in short order. Her parents were in shock and did not know what to say at first. Her mom told her to cooperate with them, but to not say anything until they consulted a lawyer. The investigators took the letters that John had written to her and the cell phone that her friend had given her. She had been secretly in a relationship with John for just 12 weeks before she was placed on administrative leave for investigation. Lynn knew that she would be fired, but she did not resign because as long as she was on administrative leave, she was getting full pay and benefits.

Two months later, the warden finally contacted her for a disciplinary meeting. She went into the facility and resigned before she was fired:

I went into the R 6-10 [disciplinary meeting], which I didn’t have to do, but I thought just take accountability for what you did and just face it. [I thought to myself that] if it is embarrassing, walking into the prison when everyone knows what I did, then I get to walk into the prison when everybody knows what I did.

Throughout this time period, she worried about the possibility of criminal charges. Lynn has never been the kind of person to hide or try to manipulate her way out of taking the consequences for what she had done, and this was no exception. She willingly talked to the investigators and told them what she had done. She knew that they had the evidence and there was no way to realistically deny it at this point. Lynn

maintained that the only rules that she had violated were that she put money on John's account, talked to him on the phone, and wrote letters to him. Even though she was accused of smuggling in a cell phone and stamps, she maintained her innocence regarding these accusations. Eight months later, she was charged and convicted of Official Misconduct, a Class II misdemeanor. Her sanctions included probation, a fine and court costs. Lynn allowed me to review the documents that were generated during the investigation and the subsequent criminal proceedings. This report revealed that the investigators talked to her coworkers and friends, including Lisa.

After the investigation was complete and before the criminal charges were resolved, the investigators contacted Lynn more than once to ask her for help regarding things going on inside the facility:

They [DOC investigators] were calling me asking me about John and calling him to try to get him to help them out with other investigations because John knew a lot about the gangs in the prison. So they would ask if I knew anything about any of it. I thought fine, I still liked some of the people out there and I didn't want anyone to be hurt, so of course I was telling John if there is something dangerous you need to let them know.

After Lynn found out that they were going to push the district attorney to file criminal charges, she felt as if she had been misled so that she would help them. After she was formally charged, she told the investigators: "Don't call me ever again, asking me for help."

Lynn reflected on whether her actions created danger for anyone else at the facility and whether she compromised the security of the facility. During the time that

she was still employed, she worked really hard to make sure her actions did not hurt anyone else:

I really thought that I wouldn't affect anybody else. I didn't think I was putting anyone in jeopardy, not the inmates or the staff. I don't think that I compromised the security of the facility. I didn't want to hurt anyone else, because I liked many of the people who I worked with and I don't think that I hurt any of them. There were people who believed in me but I didn't put them in danger, or in jeopardy. I think that I just disappointed a lot of people.

Lynn did not ever tell John about any upcoming searches because she did not want to be associated with him if she had to worry that he may have a weapon or drugs. She did not pass items to other inmates from him, even though he asked her one time to give another inmate a stamp. Lynn was never in a negative confrontation or a planned use of force against John and she was unsure how she would have handled that instance after she had grown emotionally attached to him. Part of her believed that if he acted out and put her in that position that she would have participated. She also knew that if she asked to be removed from the team, it would have cast suspicion upon her motives. She was glad that she was never in a situation where she had to make such a decision.

After Lynn resigned from the Department of Corrections, she felt a sense of relief; now her relationship with John and her feelings about him would not have to be hidden. However, this was not the end of the turmoil with her coworkers. Some of the correctional employees treated John poorly because of what happened. He was seen as someone who "took down" one of the staff who had a family history of honorable service

to this Department. This fact added a type of double insult to the action. Lynn does not believe that John knew about her parents until she told him, but after that she stated:

He was surprised. He was like, “no” after he found out, he almost seemed like it was an accomplishment maybe. It felt like more of a prize, I hate to say it as a victory, like “yea, I got this one.” It was like a notch on his belt, “I have this girl and come to find out. . . .” I believe that he didn’t know about my parents until I told him.

Lynn heard from John about things that happened after she left. John had never asked her to do anything sexually inappropriate, but after she resigned, the rumor mill claimed that she did cross that line by watching him masturbate. One particular female employee seemed to focus on John: “After I resigned, she started talking to John and told him that I was on film giving guys hand jobs [through the tray slots] and other really odd, bad things.” Perhaps the officers told him these things to get him to react negatively or perhaps it was an attempt to punish him; either way he immediately passed the information along to Lynn. In fact, he accused her of these actions:

John and I got into a pretty big fight. He was accusing me of giving other inmates hand jobs and I was like, “Are you serious?” I thought are you seriously asking me this, the person that just lost her job over you?

Lynn was disappointed that she had to defend herself to John, but the behavior of the staff did not surprise her. She described the behavior of some of the females with whom she worked inside the facility:

Some girls go in there and they suck on their lollypops and you go “really?” They would suck on them, trying to be provocative. You are like “come on,” do you

really have to suck on a lollypop doing your rounds as if they [inmates] aren't thinking about you anyways.

Surprisingly, inmate Ortiz actually defended Lynn to the other staff and inmates.

Lynn heard this story from a former coworker:

The same female officer who told John about the hand jobs also was involved in an incident with inmate Ortiz. He asked her to take a kite for him and she said, "I am not like Lynn, I won't do that." Inmate Ortiz started screaming at her and was cussing her out and was saying "No, you are not like Lynn." This inmate, who I had nothing with, got written up and defended me, yet John was accusing me of the stuff they were saying.

These first interactions after Lynn resigned should have been a warning about the relationship that she had lost her employment over, but Lynn was still optimistic, so much so that she reached out to John's family. She quickly became involved in the interpersonal relationships with some of his closest family members, and like most families, these relationships were not all positive. She and her daughter spent time with John's family and went to family events. Lynn also invited them to some of her daughter's sporting events. It was immediately obvious to Lynn that she was not like John's former girlfriends. She was law abiding, and she would defend herself against unreasonable actions from both John and his family. As a result, during the next five years that she was involved with John, there were many times that she and John had "broken up" and times when she had to clarify expectations with his family .

Even during some of the tumultuous times of this relationship, her world and that of her daughter's pretty much continued as it always had:

John wrote to my daughter and he would draw her pictures and little stuff like that, just to say hi. My daughter knew that John was in prison; I am sure she probably thought this was odd, but on the other hand, our life went on just the same as before. Except I wasn't making any money, but as far as the effects on her, she was still doing her sports, going to school, she was still doing everything.

It wasn't like a huge change, except she would get a letter and a card sometimes.

John asked Lynn to let his family bring her daughter to a visit so he could meet her. She refused:

I was just like no, there is no way. I think that my daughter was curious to meet him, but I didn't care really. It just wasn't a place to be. Why would you ever bring kids there? It is not a happy reunion; it is not safe, there is like hundreds of really bad people there. Why would you bring a kid?

Lynn tried to sustain and even grow the relationship by phone calls and keeping in touch by letters. Both of these methods were hard to continue at the same level of frequency and intensity as when the relationship began. The phone system at the Department of Corrections allows for an inmate to make a 20-minute phone call, and these calls cost the same amount of money if they lasted for 5 minutes or 20 minutes. So Lynn tried to be available to talk for the full 20 minutes whenever he called, but the cost of these calls was something that she soon realized that she could not afford:

I had some phone calls, after we were approved for regular phone calls and after he got out of maximum security. He would call a lot and that started another thing where he would say he needed money for phone time, but I just couldn't afford five phone calls a day and they were 20 minutes each and each call cost

about eight dollars. He would call like five times a day and when he called he wanted to talk the whole 20 minutes. It was good to hear from him, but I would tell him, just because you are in prison and you have time does not mean the world stopped out here and I have the same amount of time as you. I still have everything going on.

These phone calls were expensive and they were potentially monitored by DOC employees. Lynn was very aware of this monitoring when she talked to John:

Over time you kind of forget about the monitoring, but then again, sometimes John would push things, like he wanted to know about my “past sexual experiences” and I told him that I am not talking to you about this right now, one because it doesn’t matter and two because I don’t want all of the DOC knowing my business. I knew how fast that conversation would be repeated by DOC staff, if that call was monitored.

The letter writing was another way, and a cheaper way, to stay in touch and to build their relationship. Even though Lynn knew that these letters could be read, both those going into the facility and those going out of the facility, she knew that these reviews were done more inconsistently than the phone calls. The letters that Lynn received from John were usually 15-20 pages long, and at first, receiving the letters was exciting. But with the pressures of returning to college for a master’s degree, working full time, and being there for her daughter, Lynn could not keep up with the letter writing or even the letter reading:

There was a lot; I would get 10-20 pages maybe five days a week. It was a lot, a lot of letters—just hundreds of pages. At first, I read them all. Some of them I

would re-read. After a while, I would get a lot and it is time consuming too, because it would take an hour to read a letter. It was exciting for a while and you know we would write, but then I was in school. So I wasn't writing him as many letters and he started getting frustrated that I wasn't giving him time and he felt like he was less important and I tried to explain to him I am tired, I am working, and in school full time. I would tell him, "You are not here to help me. I don't know what you want from me, but I can't do it. I write you as much as I can, I am sorry it is not as long, but the world doesn't stop just because you are in prison. I still have to keep going."

In an effort to sustain the relationship long enough for John to get released, Lynn made two other significant decisions: She had his last name tattooed on her torso and then she agreed to marry him while he was still incarcerated. She had the tattoo done to try to communicate to him that he was important and they did have a future together:

He was insecure about me being out here and him in there. He didn't have a reason to be because I really wanted to see where it went with him. I ended up getting his last name tattooed down my side. I figured if I get married, that will be my name too. Then he was mad because it didn't say John.

Lynn thought that getting the tattoo would make him feel more comfortable, but she ultimately agreed to marry him while he was in still incarcerated in the Department of Corrections:

I had the tattoo done first because I was trying to hold him off and make him feel more comfortable and more secure. I didn't want to get married while he was in prison. I just kind of let him push me along, and I was trying to make him feel

more confident. When the whole marriage thing came, I figured that I planned on marrying him when he is out some day, so if that is really going to help him and make him feel more secure, then fine. I tried to push it off and push it off. I was a little bit scared that he was going to come out and it wouldn't be the same. I had some reservations that I wasn't going to be happy.

After Lynn and John were legally married, Lynn was allowed to attend John's parole board hearing:

I got approved to attend his parole hearing because I was his wife. They didn't pay attention that I used to be an officer. They didn't make me fill out an application, so I just went and they let me in. I went with the flow; I didn't get to touch him or anything like that and I don't remember if I talked at the hearing, but I put all the parole packets together and did all that. He was planning to parole to here [to Lynn's home in Canon City].

John's parole was not granted. During the parole hearing, Lynn felt as if she was breaking the rules because she had been told that former employees could never come in to visit or to attend a parole board meeting. After that hearing, she researched the policies on this issue and found that the policy had changed so that former employees were allowed to visit after seven years. So she filled out a visiting application, but was not truthful about her employment dates: "I lied on the application; it hadn't been seven years, but they didn't catch it so I was able to visit John at a facility in northern Colorado." During this visit, Lynn gave her husband a hug and kiss for the first time. The rules allowed for this at the beginning and the end of the visiting session. The lack of physical contact with her husband was something that she used to joke about: "I used

to make fun of it a lot. I am married and the only things I have ever done with my husband is handcuff and pat search him.” Lynn was allowed to visit two or three times, but when John was moved back to Canon City, she was denied access on her second trip to visit him. She was confronted at the processing center by a former coworker: “I think some of the people I had worked with recognized me and said something. An officer I had worked with asked me “What are you doing? You know you haven’t been gone seven years.” Even though John was upset by this denial, Lynn was relieved on some level. The commitment to visit John, even in Canon City, took her away from her daughter for too many hours: “It was a lot to come to see him; if you are allowed to visit, they want you to come every single week and I still have a life. It was time consuming.”

By this time in the relationship, Lynn was losing hope that she and John could ever really have a life together. He had not been approved for parole, and he had received a few more disciplinary convictions. Even though this was Lynn’s first marriage, she did not feel really married:

Other than me being technically married, I wasn’t really married. I didn’t have any physical help, I didn’t have the physical relationship, and I didn’t even have the companionship when I went places. It was still just me and my daughter. I didn’t have financial support, none of it. It was a financial burden.

After nearly five years of working on this relationship, a relationship that cost her so much personally and financially, Lynn decided to end it. She first tried to have the marriage annulled because the marriage was never consummated, but she discovered that they were not eligible for an annulment. So Lynn completed the separation paperwork and sent it to John, who returned the signed documents quickly: “I sent him the papers

and he notarized it and sent it back. He has a lot of pride and he didn't want to feel like he was begging so he got it to me pretty quickly."

Effect on Lynn's Life

While I was listening to Lynn's story, I kept thinking about the fact that this young woman had gone through this entire relationship process before she was thirty years old. Lynn was so open and even positive as she reflects upon these events, even though she said that if she had it to do over again she would not make the same choices:

Now I know it is not working out and John continues to get into trouble and the whole reason I was doing this was because I thought he really was going to give me a stable future. So, now, today, I think that I wouldn't do it all over again. Up until a year and a half year ago, I would have said yes, probably, but I would have tried to do it differently to where instead of just saying I need to get a new job, I would have just quit and then found a new job.

Lynn does believe that even for the few years that she was a part of John's life, she helped him. She believes that her support and love has made him better:

I think that if anything he is better because he knows what it feels like to be cared about and maybe he also knows what it feels like to care about somebody. His girlfriend from before just did anything for him and he was mean to her and horrible to her and she was always there and trying to get him to stay. I think maybe it taught him a little bit about how it feels when somebody moves on without you. I think he stayed out of trouble more, and I do think that he learned something and that he took more things seriously. In the big picture I think he is

better off, but I don't think he is better off enough that I would want to take a risk with him again.

Lynn believes that one negative consequence of their relationship was that it did affect his chance for parole. Even though John was not ever charged with any disciplinary violations because of the relationship and it was never formally mentioned at a parole hearing, she is sure that the DOC staff told the parole board members what he had done. The fact that he compromised a staff member, especially a staff member whose parents had also been in corrections, would have not set favorably with anyone making a decision about any of his privileges, including possible release.

Lynn also thinks that members of John's family were not hurt and may have been helped in some ways by having her and her daughter in their lives for a short time. Lynn was definitely different from the previous women who John had brought into their lives, and she thinks that she helped to role model honor and commitment to many members of his family.

When Lynn talked about the love that she felt for John, it was difficult for me to understand. After all, how can one love someone she has only seen through a door, or talked to through an intercom? She tried to help me understand that it was a very deep emotional bond:

Just the way he looked at me. I felt like he saw right through me. I don't know. I just felt like we had this connection that I haven't had very often. His expressions and the way he would look at me. I don't know how else to explain it. I literally felt it through my whole body; it was instant excitement when he would call.

Lynn also compared this to other relationships that she has had in her life and found that the intensity of their emotional bond surpassed some of those other more “normal” relationships. Lynn understood my skepticism because she has had other people in her life who have not fully accepted the fact that, indeed, she was in love with John:

They discount it like it wasn't real; I think I was in love. I talked to my sister about it some, and she doesn't think that any of it could have been real, but mainly because we [John and Lynn] never lived together and we never had to experience the annoyances of living with someone. We never even had the dating or any of that, so I don't think they understand it. I think they think something, because it lasted so long and I was devoted to it, but I think they think more it was more a dysfunction of me.

Lynn talked about doing it differently if she did it over again, but what she would do differently is that she would quit her job immediately. Lynn could not see herself not falling in love with John, even though the basic training instructors were adamant that this absolutely is never a true love: “It is just a ploy, it is never real. They are trying to manipulate you and get you to do, whatever.” Lynn did not believe that she had any choices, except to resign. She does recall the training instructors saying that if any employees started to feel any kind of affection towards an inmate that they should go talk to a supervisor, but Lynn never thought that this would happen to her, even though she knew that it had happened to a lot of female employees:

I really never expected it or looked for it or counted on it. I just never even thought it was going to happen. When it did happen, there wasn't any way I was

going to talk to anyone. I never thought about going to someone in the beginning to get moved because it was exciting, and then you get scared. As a girl, everybody is already thinking girls shouldn't be working in here, so the last thing you want to do is to say that I am having feelings for an inmate. I could not even imagine working there after I said those words.

The fact that John did not ask for anything made Lynn feel that this was not the manipulation she had been warned about. She also compared the type of relationship building that she experienced inside the facility to that which may occur in a social setting on the streets:

I think I may have been conned a little bit by John and I kind of fell into his little games, but I don't think that is any different than going to a bar and somebody trying to woo you and you falling for them like that. I never thought that he was solely doing it just to get a guard compromised.

Lynn also maintains that she did not fall in love with John out of fear, either fear of him or of the environment. Lynn stated firmly: "I never did anything because I was scared of him," but she does acknowledge that while doing her job, she was afraid more than once. Some of the men who are housed in the high security facility can be very difficult and intimidating, but in doing her normal duties, she usually felt safe. She also felt proud because she knew that doing a good job as a correctional officer made her family proud of her and that she could provide a good life for her daughter. She did not describe a pride in the actual job of correctional officer:

I wasn't necessarily thinking that this job was me, but I can pretty much mold into anything. I am good at adjusting and making the accommodations, and I learn fast. I didn't necessarily think "Yea, I am a correctional officer."

Lynn also discussed the power she had as a correctional officer. Lynn knew that she could affect the lives of the inmates through disciplinary reports or other documentation, but she felt her biggest source of power was her approach to the work:

I kind of felt good knowing that I would go in there, and I would be positive and not stomp on their day anymore. I felt like that from the beginning. Depending on the circumstances, typically I would give them a warning, if I caught them breaking a rule, but they knew the rules better than I did. I gave them my warning, I would tell them, "You know you can't do this and if you continue to do it, I am going to write up and put it in your notes." They would either call me a bitch, or whatever, or say okay. If they did it again, I would write it up; if they didn't, I would let it go.

Lynn felt that giving the inmates clear direction on their power to choose a course of action was the most effective way to manage the unit.

Lynn has tried to move on with her life while she continues to raise her daughter in the same community where this all occurred. Because this is a rather small town, it is common to run into former coworkers in public. Right after Lynn resigned, she was a lot more skittish about these types of interactions, but even now she notices that it affects her:

That doesn't bother me as much, I mean I do get nervous, because I think, oh my God, they know what I did. It is not enough to make it drastically affect me more

than the moment, but I find myself thinking that I used to be an officer until I did that. There is one officer that when I run into him in Wal-Mart, he won't look at me or talk to me. I don't hang out with any of them, but I didn't hang out with them before.

Not only does Lynn run into former coworkers in public places, but she often finds herself driving by the prison complex on the way out of town, and sometimes she feels ashamed:

When I drive by on the highway, it makes me feel ashamed, ashamed for me and my parents. It wasn't a great way to leave by any means; it definitely didn't show my potential or other good things about me.

Lynn was worried about finding another job, given the way she left the corrections. She applied for a job at another government agency, and even though she was called for more than one interview, she was not offered a job. Lynn does not know if the fact that she was on probation for official misconduct was the reason, but she was offered a job at a juvenile institution. Lynn enjoys working with the youth because there is a sense of hope about their lives, and this type of hope was not abundant in the Department of Corrections. She has adapted well, but this institution does not have the same promotional opportunities as a bigger agency, such as the Department of Corrections. The pay is also substantially less. This agency did not ask a lot of questions about why Lynn left the DOC, and after her final conviction, she provided them with the court results:

When I told them [employer] about my conviction, I was really nervous. I got tears in my eyes because I was embarrassed and I was basically pleading for my

job. It sucks telling people that this is what happened, and I was wrong. They said they would check into it; then they said because it was an adult, and not a child, they were okay with it.

The financial loss that Lynn has realized from losing such a good paying job, the criminal conviction, and the negative impact upon the relationship between her and her parents are the parts of her life that were affected the most seriously by the relationship with John. Lynn has maintained that she broke a rule and that she deserved a consequence. However, she believes that she was treated more harshly because of who her parents were, based on her knowledge of how the district attorney for the 11th Judicial District prosecuted other former corrections employees. She talked about one other former DOC employee who did not get charged, even though this employee's actions were more extensive than Lynn's and the actions occurred after Lynn was convicted.

The most difficult consequence for Lynn to manage is the impact upon her parents. She talks of embarrassment and the fact that she hurt her parent's image in the community and in the profession. She describes her actions: "I just put a big bowling ball through their image." Lynn knows that her parents have been questioned by their friends about what happened and that her parents have been confronted by rumors about her actions. Her mom was actually asked if Lynn was a meth or heroin addict. Apparently the rumor about what she did do was not enough, so she has frequently been accused of drug use and even attempting to try to smuggle drugs into the facility. Lynn knows that her parents were devastated:

I mean no one wants their daughter to marry an inmate, not even a former inmate.

If I waited until I had another job before doing anything about my feelings, I think

that they would have been more accepting; it would have taken a while, for sure, but there wouldn't have been as many doubts about whether he cared about me.

Lynn seems committed to make a life in the community where she was raised. She works at holding her head high and not letting any shame control her life. It has been almost one year since their legal separation, but John still calls to talk to her occasionally. Lynn has developed a relationship with another man, so John calls less and less. Occasionally she will get a letter from him, especially near dates that were significant to their relationship, but these letters are coming less often. Lynn has maintained her positive outlook on life, even throughout this entire experience. She still strives to see the best in people, all people:

I just believe the best in people, all the time. It doesn't matter who you are. If you see what it is like to be a good person, and how it feels to be treated like a good person, you could be a good person. In general I trust everybody, until you make it until I can't trust you. I just trust you.

Sarah's Portrait

I traveled into the southern part of Denver to keep my appointment with Sarah. She had given me directions that did not match my GPS system, so I was confused. As I turned into what looked like a new neighborhood with large homes and condos, I knew that I was close. I circled around a condo development that was located on the perimeter of an upscale golf course. When I did, I noticed Sarah standing outside her unit with her dog. As I approached, she welcomed me as if it had not been over five years since the last time we saw each other in Canon City. We made our way up a scenic walkway to the entrance for her home. The condo was the end unit. It was decorated in a modern

mountain style, and the main floor was welcoming with a fire glowing in the fireplace and soft over-stuffed couches surrounding the room.

The walls were finished with a three dimensional rock décor that made it feel as if we were sitting in a mountain ski lodge. As we sat and prepared to trace Sarah's experience working in the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC), we were joined by two dogs and a cat that occasionally wandered through the room.

Path That Led Sarah to Corrections

I knew parts of Sarah's story, having lived in Canon City when she was growing up there. She calls Canon City her home, and many members of her family still live there. When Sarah was growing up in the shadow of many of the state's prisons, she never planned to work inside. She had her heart set on being a street cop from the time she was very small. This dream did not develop from the media, as is so often the case. Instead, she wanted to be a cop ever since she was a little girl and watched helplessly while her dad hurt her mom. She wanted to be the cop who arrived to save her family from the abusive situation, and save herself from the frequent outbursts of violence that kept her young world on edge.

After Sarah graduated from Canon City High School, she went to school in Pueblo to be an x-ray technician. She made the decision to try this, instead of a law enforcement program, but she immediately hated it. She withdrew from school and took some time to grow up and save money to do what she knew she was destined to do: go to the law enforcement academy. It took a few years, and she learned a couple of tough life lessons, including the consequences of drinking and driving. This party phase of her life

lasted until she found a way to get student aid to go back to school. She enrolled in the Trinidad State Junior College Peace Officer's training program. At the end of that training, she was POST (Police Officer Standard and Training) certified, 25 years old, and ready to be a cop.

Sarah returned home and began to work as a county reserve deputy. In less than one year, she was offered a full time position at the sheriff's office. Sarah was excited about the position because she already knew many of the deputies and police officers, and she had developed good working relationships with many of them. She worked in the jail at first. This was a typical career progression for this sheriff's department, and even though she didn't love detention work, she knew that it was a step that she had to complete to be able to get a patrol position. Ever since she achieved POST certification, things had gone very smoothly in her career progression, so she was surprised when it looked as if she would not be put on patrol because she was a woman.

Sarah had completed her time working in the jail, and she had taken the test to become a patrol officer. She scored number two, and even though there were a total of five openings within a short period of time, she was not selected for any of them. Sarah knew how to stand up for herself, and she took on the battle with full force. She described the legal action she initiated against the sheriff: "We went to mediation first to discuss what we wanted as the outcome. He was just expecting to give me money. I told him that I didn't want money; I wanted my job. This was in 1995." This type of fight in the year 1995 seems unusual. By this time, many big police forces had women on patrol for years, and even the local police department had two female patrol officers. Somehow this sheriff, an elected official, thought that he could just keep on doing what he wanted

and get away with it. He didn't win and was ultimately forced to offer Sarah the position. Even after this legal action, he still tried to keep her off the streets by assigning her as the detention center investigator. This was only a stall tactic, taken perhaps to get Sarah to resign, which she did not do; she remembers: "Finally, when he could no longer hold the position, he finally put me on patrol."

Sarah reveled in the fact that she stood up for herself and won, but after all that effort to be allowed to do the job she coveted, less than one year later she fell in love with the lead patrol officer. The Sheriff's office was such a small department that this kind of nepotism was not allowed, so Sarah resigned from the sheriff's department and married Brian. After the marriage Sarah started looking for another law enforcement department to pursue employment. The police department was not a choice due to its nepotism policies—Brian had a close family member working there, so this meant that now Sarah had a close family member working there.

Brian pushed Sarah to apply to work at the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC). The work was similar in some ways to law enforcement and was definitely similar to the detention work in the jail. Additionally, Sarah's cousin worked as a correctional officer at the DOC, and she loved her job. The advantages of working for the DOC far surpassed any neighboring police or sheriff's jurisdiction based on the pay, benefits, and consistent salary increases. Sarah was not thrilled about applying to work at the DOC, so she sought advice from her cousin:

I talked to my cousin about not wanting to go [to the DOC]. She just tried to encourage me the best that she could. She told me that it is not so bad to work

there and that it would be a good change for me; I would learn a lot more about that part of law enforcement. Ultimately I ended up going; I hated it.

Sarah felt as if she was backed into a corner, so she did apply to work at the DOC and was offered a position. Sarah had a good idea about the kind of work that she would be doing based on her time working in the county jail. She didn't like the jail work but got through it because she thought it was a stepping stone to patrol. Working at the DOC did not hold the same promise of the type of job that she liked: "I didn't feel like I had a choice. I didn't want to be locked up, I felt like working in a prison was like being on work release." Sarah loved the independence and variety of tasks that were part of patrol work. She also thought that it put her skills to better use, but she did see some opportunity to move into a similar position in the Department of Corrections. Even though she would not have applied at the department if her husband had not insisted, she thought that she could work her way into an investigator's position. This type of position was about the closest she thought she could get to what she loved about street work.

The Correctional Environment

Sarah was assigned as a correctional officer to a minimum security facility on the prison complex east of Canon City. This facility had been open only a few years when Sarah reported to work; as such, the composition of employees was different than at other facilities because when it was opened it was consciously staffed to ensure a gender and racial balance. Consequently, the number of women working at the facility was higher than at most other facilities, and over half of Sarah's basic training class was female. Even though Sarah knew this before she reported to duty, it was still an adjustment for

her: “I had always been working where the majority were men in law enforcement. I never really worked with a lot of women.”

This minimum security facility housed inmates in two-man rooms with access to the bathrooms down the hall. Consequently, the inmates were not locked into their cells or even locked into the building. One correctional officer was assigned to each living unit, and occasionally the shift commander or other correctional staff would make a round through the unit:

I had no alliance to any staff member at that point. The only time I ever really saw anybody was once in a while the zones would come through. I saw them in the morning for briefing and then I saw them when we did our formal count at noon.

The remaining time, the housing unit officer worked alone with the inmates. The security level of the inmates was low, which meant that these inmates had maintained positive behavior in prison. Sarah started on the night shift and soon worked her way through swing shift to day shift.

Once Sarah was assigned to day shift, she worked with her cousin until her cousin was promoted to a position in Denver. During the time that Sarah worked with her cousin, she was relatively happy: “I worked with my cousin for a while. When she was there it made it much more comfortable. She was someone there who was not always whining and crying.” Sarah talked about other employees with whom she worked and described many as intolerable and about the cliques that were formed among staff that worked to exclude officers who were not attractive: “If you aren’t gorgeous, no one is going to pay attention to you. I don’t like putting up with the people who constantly back

stab you. You hear the bitching constantly about staff. You come to a point when you don't know who is worse, the staff or the inmates."

She also talked of not being able to "stand" two of her supervisors when she was with the DOC. She only talked about a few officers in a positive manner: her cousin, an officer with whom she went through basic training, and one sergeant. Although she never felt connected to or accepted by other staff in the facility, she did develop superficial relationships with a few other officers

Many of these officers left the department because they got involved with inmates: "I worked with five women who left because of inmates. One got moved out to another facility and then I heard about what she did and I thought that was really sad. Then I heard about the others, the same thing; I thought to myself that is really sad too." Sarah and I discussed the fact that this was a high number of staff considering that she only worked at the Department of Corrections for a total of three years.

Many of the officers worked in living units similar to Sarah's, and they worked closely with inmates. The only time another correctional staff member had to come into the unit was for count: A formal count is conducted at least one time on each shift and requires two correctional staff to complete. This facility was the location of two intensive treatment programs for substance abuse or sex offender treatment. These treatment programs used a therapeutic community model that meant that every staff member with whom the inmate came into contact was part of the treatment team. These programs were run by therapists, and the correctional officers were usually specially selected for the program. Sarah worked primarily in one of these treatment units, so several correctional counselors were in and out of the unit their work week of Monday through Friday. Sarah

did not go through any special selection process to be placed in the unit. She didn't ask for the assignment and after she saw how it was run, she didn't support the mission of the treatment program. One treatment strategy that was used included group punishment for an individual's behavior: "I don't know what they got disciplined for, but my whole entire shift except for lunch, they [inmates] had to sit and face the wall. They had to have their hands down to their side and face the wall."

Sarah thought that many of the therapists crossed the line in their treatment of inmates. She talked to her cousin about the verbal abuse that she saw the therapists inflicting on the inmates, and her cousin assured her: "That is how they do it; they break them down first." Sarah tried to understand this approach to treatment, but in the end she just felt for the inmates:

She [the therapist] used to bring inmates into my office when she needed to yell at them, and she would belittle them like they were little kids and scream at them. I would just look at her and think to myself if I was that inmate right now, I would beat the shit out of you. She was horrible to those people. I have never seen anything as bad in my life. She was calling them everything that she can possibly call them. They can't say anything. If they argue with her, they get kicked out of the program. They lose everything. Being there was when I started to feel a little sorry for the inmates. Just seeing how they were treated. I started to change a little bit; I didn't like the [treatment] staff.

Sarah never really connected to the treatment staff in the program. The therapists would rarely talk to Sarah, and Sarah did not reach out to them. She did not approve of the way the program was run, and she was never included in the treatment program:

I didn't feel like part of the treatment team because I didn't like what they were doing. I didn't like how it was handled. Once in a while, the inmates would come to my office and they would vent. I would talk to the head therapist about it, but then they [the inmates] would get disciplined for talking to me about it.

The office for the correctional officers in that unit was located directly across the hall from the inmate telephones. The phones were situated in such a manner that it was difficult for any inmate to have an animated conversation on the phone without the officer being able to hear. Sarah was already in a place where she was feeling sorry for the inmates in the program, and then she was able to hear them having tough conversations with their loved ones:

I guess, one thing that kind of made them more human was that you would hear them talking on the phone. When their wife would leave them and they would hear that on the phone, or when a family member would die, they would hear that on the phone. When you are going through stuff like that yourself, you can really, really start feeling sorry for them. They can't do anything about it; I can leave at the end of the day. They can't do anything. I felt like we were going through some of the same stuff. You start seeing them as human.

Part of Sarah's duties included overseeing the cleaning of the housing unit. Normally, the unit officer is expected to make sure everything is cleaned as scheduled and the officer is the person who is held accountable. In this treatment unit, the responsibility for the cleanliness is put on the assigned inmates: the porters. Sarah's role was to check their work in an effort to keep them from getting in trouble. Sarah spent a great deal of time working individually with her porters. She would sometimes be the

only person in the living unit with one or two porters because of the treatment and work schedules of the other inmates. Sarah talked to these porters and knew a lot about their backgrounds and future hopes. Sarah described the relationship with these inmates like “a relationship with one of the therapists or like a coworker.”

Sarah’s duties also took her out into the yard area to make rounds. She would walk in the area where the inmates were lifting weights, running on the track, and playing ball. Sarah and other female officers were often subjected to verbal abuse by the inmates in the yard: “We used to get called all kind of names by the inmates.” Sarah and other officers complained to the shift commander about this behavior, because verbal abuse of staff is against the rules for inmates. She did not get any support from the shift commander and knew that if she wrote a disciplinary report it would not be pursued. One shift commander told her that this behavior was something that could not be avoided and that she just needed to learn to “roll with it.” The message was clear: If she couldn’t figure out how to deal with these inmates, she probably was not cut out for this work. The inmates must have gotten the same information because the abuse got worse. Sarah was not able to “roll with it.” Many of the comments made her feel violated: “It was just really disgusting and it just really, really, grossed me out.”

Sarah remembered getting a lot of inappropriate verbal comments from inmates, specifically about her breasts. She was not able to deal with their abuse directly through the disciplinary process, so she started taking other actions that would draw less attention towards her body. The dress code allowed for a coat to be worn but it was a heavy winter type jacket which was impractical for the warmer weather. She found a light weight jacket that matched her uniform pants perfectly. She and other officers began wearing

these types of jackets to mask their body. This violation in dress code was soon addressed when Sarah and a few other officers were told they could not wear them. No one asked them why they were wearing them; they were simply told that they would have to stop, but Sarah noticed that not all of the women were told to stop wearing these jackets. Even so, Sarah complied with the order and began to wear bigger uniform shirts in an effort to avoid the verbal abuse. The bigger shirts did not work.

Some of the women who were “favorites” of the captain continued to wear the jackets. Sarah does not know if these women were wearing them for the same reason, but when the “favorite” women did not have to take off these jackets, Sarah put hers back on. The second time the captain talked to her she asked why these particular women were not being held to the same rule. There was no answer given to this question, so she continued to wear the jacket, in violation of the dress code. Sarah was not trying to be a troublemaker: “It wasn’t that I wanted to be defiant. I just didn’t want the inmates looking at my chest.” The fact that Sarah had to resort to such a measure to protect her from abuse by the inmates is one more thing that pushed her away from her correctional colleagues.

The negativity in the jail and prison environment was what Sarah disliked the most: “When you work in a jail, everything is always so negative. You see the same people [inmates] all the time who are miserable, and they think that it is your fault. So many officers were just so negative too.” Sarah continued to work as a correctional officer because that is what her husband wanted, and she was so totally in love with him that she wanted to please him. She tried to make it work, but in fact she was miserable. Her attitude about work may have affected her relationship with her husband. She found

out that her husband was having an affair, and even though he recommitted to their marriage, it was an on-again and off-again commitment. Sarah tried getting away for a while by taking leave, but he called her and said that he wanted her back, so she returned. Eventually, the marriage was over, and Sarah came home to a note and his wedding ring. He was gone. This threw Sarah into a deep place where she could not even think of surviving without him in her life. She tried to kill herself by taking pills.

Sarah survived this suicide attempt because a dear friend found her and got her to the hospital. When Sarah was released from the psychiatric care facility, she had a plan to put her life back on track. One part of the plan was to start over at work. She went straight to the warden to ask for a transfer to another facility. When that request was denied, she asked to be at least moved to another unit within the same facility. The warden made it clear that she would not be moved at all and she would definitely not allow a transfer to another facility. Sarah remembers pleading with the warden:

I told him that I was having a really, really hard time and that I wasn't happy there. I told him that I didn't want to be there and that I didn't even want to live anymore. The warden said, "We don't move our problems to other facilities." I remember leaving there and feeling really defeated. I felt very defeated.

Sarah's relationship with her coworkers suffered dramatically after her return:

By that time, I was so disconnected because everybody was angry. I don't think they knew what I was going through, and they really didn't understand that it was really hard for me to get to work. They were short [staffed] because I was calling in sick. The lieutenants were frustrated because I was coming in late and stuff like that. But instead of sitting me down and saying, "Look, what is wrong with

you? Is there some help we can get you?" No one ever did that, not even after I tried to kill myself.

Sarah worked in a treatment unit that had several therapists assigned specifically to that unit, and even under these circumstances not one coworker approached her to offer help. Sarah felt like no one cared: "No one listened, so it didn't really matter. I mean it mattered, but no one cared, and no one did anything." Sarah's coworkers may not have noticed or just did not care, but Sarah is sure that the inmates noticed: "There was a huge, huge, change in my personality. I went from being myself every day to being really tired and groggy and just kind of in a fog."

Sarah was horrified to find out that most of the inmates at the facility seemed to know what she had gone through:

They knew that I was going through a divorce; they knew that my husband cheated on me and left me for someone else. Staff told them. I think every inmate in that whole entire facility knew. They [the staff] run their mouths more in there than the inmates do. I had inmates who would say stuff [about my personal life] to me in the yard. I was feeling really, really vulnerable.

So Sarah continued to spiral downward; she became a problem employee. The medication that she was on to control her mood was adjusted more than once, but she had difficulty sleeping at night. Sarah began reporting to work late, sometimes just a few minutes, but always late: "I was late almost every day, from 2 to 15 minutes. I was late all the time. I missed roll call probably at least once or twice a week." She hated her job more and more and just could not get it together to show up ready to work at the appointed time. The warden took disciplinary action against her more than once because

she was not at work, but even when Sarah was at work, she was having difficulty concentrating. Sarah never asked for job protection under the Family Medical Leave Act and no one ever suggested that she should do so. Sarah feels that she detached from being a correctional officer: "It made me sick to put on the uniform every day. When I came back after I tried to kill myself, it was just discipline after discipline." During the disciplinary meetings, Sarah tried to explain the problems she was having coping and her mental and emotional state, but none of that seemed to matter. Sarah felt that the warden thought she was just making excuses for her actions. The disciplinary actions taken never addressed or even acknowledged her emotional condition. She was never referred to the employee assistance program or even questioned about whether she had any support from a mental health professional.

Sarah's husband continued with the necessary steps to get a divorce. Each time she was notified of the next step, usually by a process server, it hit her hard. Sarah was sad about the state of her marriage, and she was angry. This anger resulted in her reaching out to a male coworker. They developed a relationship, and within weeks, she and her three dogs were living with him and his children. Sarah quickly realized that she should not have been in this relationship: "This was definitely not the place for me. I hated it. I should have never been there to begin with. I only was with him so I could show my husband that I could move on."

The whole time she was trying to make this relationship work, while going through the final steps of the divorce, she felt as if she was in a fog. The medications that she was on could have been the cause of this feeling, but she could not get to a place

where she had medication that helped her get rid of this feeling. It was during this time that Mike moved into her cell house.

Relationship Process Between Sarah and Mike

When Sarah saw Mike's name on the move list for the inmates coming into her unit, she immediately recognized the name. This was a man who had grown up in Canon City and had been part of the group that she hung around with for a good part of her rebellious phase in middle school. This man knew a great deal about her past and about many of the struggles that she went through growing up: "He knew things about me that no one else knows about me. He knew things that I didn't want other people to know." Sarah felt that this was the last person who she needed to be supervising. She immediately reported this to the shift commander. Sarah knew that Mike was being sent to this unit for the specialized treatment program. It would be difficult for the department to deny him this treatment, so she was hopeful that she would finally be moved, maybe even to another facility: "I told two lieutenants and a captain that I knew this inmate. They didn't offer to move me or anything."

To her amazement, her concerns were not acted upon. She was told that she would occasionally be assigned to another post but that the relationship that she described did not sound serious enough to move her. Perhaps they thought this was a ploy to get what she had already been refused.

The day Mike moved into her unit, Sarah could tell that he was shocked to see her there:

You could tell both of us were really nervous. He had no clue I was there until he came into the facility. I don't think that we really talked for probably a couple of weeks. I know that I was overly avoiding him.

Sarah felt vulnerable in her personal life and at work, but the additional stress of having Mike in her unit as an inmate compounded her stress level. Sarah described Mike: "He was a hunk, a really good looking man." Sarah continued to go through the motions of her work, but she went out of her way to avoid Mike, at first. She was nervous that Mike would share details of her childhood with inmates or staff: "Mike had already known a lot about me from growing up in Canon. I don't know why he was in prison; I think it was drugs. He had been back and forth, on and off of drugs for years." She also knew that Mike had become involved in a gang and was somewhat powerful in the gang leadership. Even though she knew that he was a "bad" guy, there was also a level of comfort between them because of their shared past. It was not long before she and Mike were talking:

I don't really remember a whole lot; I just remember that I was really, really sad and really depressed and eventually he just came in and we just started talking and stuff. It just kind of happened from there. We started talking about personal stuff with him first. Finding out what he has been doing and what he was in prison for. It kind of made me sad that he went down that path. He was always a little rebellious, but he was never like a bad guy. He was a pot smoker and that was probably pretty much the extent of the drugs that he did in high school.

Talking to inmates about their path to prison and the choices that they made was not completely out of line, especially in the treatment program. All the employees,

including the correctional officers, were expected to connect with the inmates in treatment so they could explore the consequences of their choices. The conversation with Mike was not that unusual at first, but the tone and topics turned personal very quickly. It was obvious to both Sarah and Mike that they were getting connected on an emotional level, beyond the approved correctional officer/inmate connection:

We had actually talked about us, and he respected the fact that I wasn't going to do anything while I worked there, and he never asked me to. He never tried to . . . he never tried to kiss me, he never tried to do anything. He never asked me to do anything. He was just there, he listened to me and I was there and I listened to him. We started talking about feelings.

Sarah remembers that the issue of how inmates manipulate staff was addressed in the training academy, but Mike was not asking for anything. He was not acting like a horrible inmate, and they had this prior connection. This did not feel like manipulation to her; it felt like someone finally cared.

Sarah still looked like she was doing her job: "I made rounds, but my head wasn't in it. I didn't let inmates get away with something that I particularly recall, but I probably didn't even notice it. They [the inmates] knew that." Sarah knew that she had crossed a line emotionally with Mike. Sarah admits that she was not thinking clearly and remembers still feeling like she was in a fog: "He made me feel better about being there. It was someone that knew me and was talking to me." Sarah looks back on this time and describes the relationship with Mike as providing comfort to her: "I knew that was really bad and I knew that it was wrong. But he was very comfortable, you know what I mean? I felt disconnected from people, except when I was with him."

Sarah talked to another female officer who was also involved in an inappropriate relationship with an inmate:

I knew one person that was involved with an inmate, and he “groomed” her good.

I knew that she had feelings for the inmate because she talked to me about it. It was kind of like the blind leading the blind. She had no idea that I was feeling the way I did about Mike.

Given the circumstances, Sarah did not report this officer’s conduct to anyone: “I guess I couldn’t really judge her because I started having those feelings for Mike. I just kept telling her that she needed to get out.”

Sarah saw more than one officer leave the facility because they became physically involved with inmates, but she maintains that the only boundary she crossed was an emotional one. Only once did Mike cross the physical boundary: “The most that he ever did was that he put his hand on my back. We were walking down the hallway and he reached over and put his hand on my back. It was a little uncomfortable.” Sarah did not document this behavior. Mike was clear to Sarah that he wanted more from her: “He wanted to hug and all that kind of stuff, but he respected my boundary, so he never pushed this issue.” Sarah believes that some of the inmates saw what was going on between her and Mike and did not report their behavior. This failure to report may be expected in a normal unit, but a fundamental part of the treatment program was that inmates were expected to call inmates on their behavior and even tell the treatment staff about any rule infractions. The power that Mike possessed in the unit and in the gang may have been the reason that the inmates did not report the behavior.

Mike's power was apparent to Sarah immediately. Sarah had told Mike why she was always wearing a jacket and even that the shift commanders would not back her to confront the verbal abuse. The verbal abuse that was so prevalent when she was making rounds in the yard stopped. Not one inmate ever again said anything to her that was offensive while she was making rounds. It was obvious that Mike had taken care of the situation, and Sarah believes: "Mike came to my aid. He knew what they were saying, we talked about it, and he took care of it." She is unsure if the inmates stopped verbally abusing all of the women or just her. She did not notice. She also did not care, as she continued to feel alienated by her coworkers and in the fog from the medication: "I didn't pay attention; I was not worth anything because I didn't pay attention to anything around me. I withdrew from everyone at work."

Sarah and Mike continued to talk and to grow closer. Sarah was worried that she would violate more boundaries: "I knew better than to cross the line, but I wanted to cross the line. I wanted to hug him and let him hug me. I wanted to." Her one remaining friend in the facility, Stacy, saw what was happening and confronted Sarah. Sarah told her what had occurred and what she was feeling. Stacy was immediately concerned and counseled Sarah to resign. Stacy also went to the warden on Sarah's behalf and asked him to reconsider allowing Sarah to transfer out of that unit. The warden told Stacy that he would not approve a transfer.

Stacy constantly confronted Sarah about what she had or had not done with Mike, almost daily. It was the constant concern from Stacy that helped Sarah to keep from crossing anymore boundaries. Without Stacy's concern, Sarah believes that she would have "broken a rule. If it weren't for her, I know that I could have very easily done a tail

spin.” Stacy was “completely freaked out” by Sarah’s actions. She tried to get Sarah to see that this inmate was using her:

“You are throwing your life away for someone who has probably done this with a million people. You have to think about what you are doing. You are going to get yourself in trouble. You are either going to have to make a choice to leave or something bad is going to happen.” That is what she kept telling me. She never told on me. I think it was a struggle for her everyday too because in her mind, being the person that she was, she really wanted to tell somebody, but she already knew what the warden had said. She was stuck between being my friend and being a DOC employee.

Stacy ultimately detached from Sarah in an effort to protect her job and then resigned from the department to return to school.

Sarah remembers these conversations, but she thinks that she “was just too far gone.” She was connected to Mike and only to Mike to the point that no one else mattered. Sarah also started connecting to Mike’s family. The first interaction with his family was in the visiting room at the facility. She made a security round through the visiting room, and Mike introduced her to his grandmother and his daughter. This part of the interaction was not that uncommon, especially for inmates in the treatment program. However, during this interaction, Sarah gave Mike’s daughter her phone number; this action crossed the line from a normal interaction to something more. Soon after that, Sarah heard from Mike’s sister. She called Sarah’s personal phone and wanted to talk to her about Mike. Sarah remembers that his sister just wanted to check her out because she wanted to know the woman that Mike had feelings for. Sarah tried to assure her by

telling her that “she didn’t want to hurt Mike.” Sarah also told her that she was going to resign, which made his sister happy. Sarah thinks that his sister was always suspicious of her and thought that she may have been a plant to set up her brother for something: “In her eyes, I was always a cop. It was a difficult relationship to handle.”

In the midst of the relationship that was building between her and Mike, Sarah knew that she had to take action to save her future. If she was ever going to be a cop again, she had to leave the DOC in an honorable fashion. She thought that she might go too far with Mike, so she had to resign:

My only option at the time was to resign because I didn’t want to cross a line that I knew that I was going to get into trouble for. I had to quit before I did something. Mike was supportive of me quitting because then we could write to each other and talk on the phone and maybe, if Mike was ever moved, I could go to see him.

Sarah did not think that she could approach anyone in the administration of the facility to get moved or that she could tell any of them what she was going through. She felt that she had been “set up to fail. I was set up by the staff and administration, by the people who were supposed to have my back.” Sarah did not ask for help; she just put in her notice to quit. After she resigned, Sarah knew that she had done the right thing. Now she just had to make it through two weeks at the facility and then she could pursue her relationship with Mike.

After all the attempts Sarah made to get help and to get moved, it was after she gave her notice of resignation that the administration started to notice her behavior

around Mike. As a result, an investigator from the Professional Standards Unit was called in to investigate her actions.

When I saw the investigator I was pissed. I knew he was watching me. It was on a visiting day that the investigator was watching me. They called Mike for a visit while he and I were talking in the yard, and we didn't hear them call him. They called me on the pak set [radio] and I didn't hear that either because it was loud in the yard. That is when I noticed the investigator in the field behind the unit.

The next day Mike was interviewed by the investigator, and then Sarah was called from her post to talk to him. The investigator was a former police officer with whom Sarah had worked when she was at the sheriff's office.

He is the one who called me and we sat and talked for a little while. He knew that I was very emotional and distraught, he knew my husband, and he knew me from outside of work. He knew that I had feelings for an inmate because I told him. I had not crossed the line. I chose to quit first. He told me that they were going to go ahead and honor my resignation. I didn't work after that. I thought I needed to finish out my week, but after the talk, I was done. I was relieved when the investigator talked to me. I was very open with him. When I left that day, I was glad that I wasn't fired. I was glad that they accepted my resignation.

Sarah walked away from the facility feeling good:

When I walked out of there, it was liberating. I didn't have a job and I didn't have a place to live, but I knew it was right. I felt very free. I was sad because I had disappointed so many people, but I still knew it was right. I was planning on a future with Mike.

Even though Sarah describes herself as “very fogged and her mind was very clouded,” she was clear that the only boundary she had violated was an emotional boundary, and one time Mike crossed the physical boundary. She was successful at maintaining the physical boundary: “We never did anything; we have never crossed that line. We never kissed. At that point I hadn’t written to him and I hadn’t talked to him on the phone.” She left Canon City and immediately called Mike’s sister to let her know that she was done with the DOC.

Sarah stayed with Mike’s sister for a short period of time, but she had to find another place for her three dogs. Mike’s sister actually helped her to move her belongings out of the house she had shared with the man with whom she had been living for the past six months. This man was still employed by the Department of Corrections, so when he found out that she was leaving him for an inmate, he was angry: “He called me and yelled at me after I quit. He said ‘how dare I leave him for an inmate?’” About one week after Sarah left the department, Mike’s sister gave her a ring that she had purchased with money from Mike. Even though Sarah was nervous about the actions that she was taking, she took the ring and put it on. Sarah knows that Mike asked his sister to buy this ring for her, but that did not mean that the sister was in favor of this relationship. Sarah never felt like she was accepted by Mike’s sister or, for that matter, by most of his family. Sarah soon discovered that there was a girl who was a friend of the family who had feelings for Mike. Apparently Mike’s sister and most of his family preferred that he be involved with this girl as opposed to Sarah. Sarah describes this woman as a “hard core biker chick” who was so in love with Mike that she went out of her way to make trouble for Sarah. She even accused Sarah of sleeping with other inmates when she was a

correctional officer. It did not take long until Mike's sister started trying to manipulate Sarah and control the amount of interaction that Sarah had with Mike. Mike would call his sister's house to talk to Sarah only to be told that Sarah was not there when in fact she was. Sarah believes that some of the letters or cards that Mike sent to her at his sister's house were not delivered to her. She described one specific instance: "It was close to Christmas time and she, her daughter, and her sons got a Christmas card, and I knew that Mike had sent me a Christmas card, but I never got it." Sarah started finding other places to stay for a few nights and spent less and less time at Mike's sister's house.

Sarah did connect with Mike's daughter. She was 12 years old and lived nearby. Sarah would talk to her and even on occasion would pick her up to spend time with her. Mike's ex-wife was willing to let her daughter go with Sarah, and she talked to Sarah about Mike. She told Sarah that she was married to him during the first two times he was in prison and that he would not change: "She just warned me about his life, that his lifestyle was not the kind of thing that I wanted to get messed up in. I listened to her and I really thought about what she had to say."

Eventually, Mike and Sarah exchanged letters through a post office box that Sarah rented in Canon City. She was also approved to be on his phone list so they talked directly, without going through his sister. During this time, she was still interacting with Mike's family. One particular evening, she had made plans to meet them at a bar, but at the time that she was set to head that way, Mike called. She ended up talking to him for quite a while and did not meet his family until later. When she arrived at the bar, she found out that there had been an incident where someone was stabbed and the police were involved. Sarah could have easily been in the middle of this situation and

potentially could have been questioned or even arrested. Even in her “party phase” after high school, she had never been involved in this type of situation, except of course, later as a cop responding to it. This stabbing should have been a serious wake up call to Sarah about the kind of life she was in, but she was still not thinking very clearly.

Mike was kicked out of the treatment program after the treatment staff found out about his involvement with a staff member. The head therapist called and talked to Sarah, and she remembers the conversation: “She told me that if I was honest with her about everything that happened that she would keep Mike in the program. I was honest with her and so was he, and she kicked him out of the program.” Mike was regressed to a private prison, and Sarah was allowed to visit him there on two occasions. The first time Sarah went to visit Mike, she experienced the visitor processing from the visitors’ point of view:

We had to go through a wand [hand held metal detector], but there was no one working there that I knew. I got to kiss and hug him at the beginning and the end and we actually got to hold hands. That was different. It was just really weird. That is the first time that we actually, you know, touched, since middle school. Our only kiss has been in a visiting room, three or four times.

Sarah also had a hard time being a visitor and not an officer: “It felt weird to be on the other side. I was watching everyone, like a cop. Mike really tried to keep my focus on him because he knew that I was really uncomfortable.” Many visiting programs in Colorado allow family photos to be taken occasionally in the visiting room and the day Sarah visited, they were able to get their photo taken. This experience was also very strange to Sarah and almost surreal. She left the facility that day with a prison photo of

her and her boyfriend. As she described this photo to me, she added: “I know this sounds awful, and I got rid of those pictures right after I let him go.” On her second visit, Sarah took Mike’s grandmother with her and even though she was grateful for the ride to the facility, his grandmother was not happy that Sarah was there. Sarah was only allowed to visit because they did not know that she was a former correctional officer, and when they found out, she was removed from the visiting list.

Sarah struggled to live in a rented house and then a friend’s basement in Canon City for six months. She had trouble finding work that she could tolerate and a place to live that would accept her three dogs. She ultimately decided to leave Canon City and move to Colorado Springs. Sarah had to work very hard to cover her expenses, so she ended up getting three jobs. She worked, took care of her dogs, and communicated with Mike; that was the total of her life. Sarah describes herself at this point as “self-isolating.” She never really developed friends during this part of her life. She worked with many different people, but she did not interact with any of them outside of work.

Mike started asking Sarah for money after she resigned from DOC. She put money on his inmate account more than once. She believes that in total she gave him approximately \$800.00, even though he apparently had money stashed from past drug transactions. Sarah did not mind giving him money because she was getting to talk to him on the phone almost every night. Sarah saw it as covering the expenses that he was incurring because of her, yet she stated that she has never felt as if she had to cover her expenses in any other relationship. She never told him that sending him the money he requested was causing financial problems for her, even though it was. Sarah was scraping by with barely enough money to cover her living expenses at the same time that

she was sending him money every time he asked for it. She did not tell him no or even expect him to use his money; after all, he had given her a very nice ring.

The requests for money were increasing in frequency at the same time the phone calls and letters were decreasing:

He ended up calling me less and less. It was, like, maybe every other day and then it was, like, every third day. But then when he would call and it would show up on caller ID, I wouldn't answer the phone because I didn't want him to ask me for more money.

Sarah was beginning to feel manipulated, as if all he wanted from her was money: "The only a time that I would hear from him was when he wanted more money. I had already started detaching from him." Mike made a different request; he sent Sarah a letter asking her to send money to another inmate. Sarah knew that the only reason that an inmate wants an outside person to put money on another inmate's account was for some illegal transaction. This money could be to pay off a debt for gambling, drugs, or any number of other illegal activities. By having an outside person put money into an account, the likelihood of detection of the illegal payoff is decreased. Sarah did not ask what the money was for and she did not care. She knew that this was a step that she was not willing to take. If she was ever going to be a cop again, she could not get caught up in this type of transaction. The relationship was over.

The day that he asked me to send the other inmate money is the day I stopped talking to him completely. I never answered the phone after that. He wrote me, like, one or two more letters. I may have read them, but I didn't respond. I felt

angry at him for asking [me] to put money on another inmate's books. I thought it was love.

Sarah never corresponded with Mike again. She eventually told her family and few friends that she was no longer involved with Mike, and they were relieved. Sarah talked about how this decision was the turning point in how she felt:

Just like when you take medication and you are in a fog and then all of a sudden you come out of that fog and you can see clear, everything. You realize that you have that nasty pit in your stomach because you know that you had just completely ruined that whole part of your life. It is gone and you can't get any of that back. It was that day that I stopped talking to him. I was really sick about everything that I had done, and I just decided that I was going to put that all behind me and go forward. That was my crazy phase.

Effect on Sarah's Life

After the fog lifted for Sarah, she began to take stock of what she had done and what choices she still had to make. She refocused on getting back to being a cop. While she was involved with Mike, she did not feel that she could apply for any law enforcement positions because she would have to explain her relationship. Now that it was over, she could explain it as a former relationship. Sarah was very careful to declare this relationship when she applied at a small sheriff's department near Denver. Where the application asked for the reason for leaving the previous job she explained how she handled it:

I wrote "will discuss" and then I was able to tell them that I put in my resignation because I was going through a really bad time in my life. There was an inmate

who I had grown up with that was in my facility and I said that I had feelings for him and I said that I ended up quitting. I don't go into a lot of detail.

Sarah was hired as a deputy and eventually worked her way into an investigative position. Sarah was so happy to be back on the streets and working with a variety of people. She felt she had survived and come alive again. Sarah opened up to her coworkers as time passed, and at one point, she told them Mike's name. After Mike was released from prison, the sheriff asked her to make contact with Mike to see if her connection could help them with a gang problem in their area. This seemed like a simple request, but to Sarah it unleashed a torrent of emotions that she did not expect. Sarah did not in fact know where Mike was living, but she could have found him relatively easily. Somehow she just could not do it; she could not open that part of her life up again. Sarah told the sheriff she could not do it:

Not even for my job. I didn't think I would have feelings for him, but it is just a hard feeling to explain. When you are one side of the law and you are doing one thing with your life, when you are running with a criminal element, you feel really dirty. When you have never done it before and haven't done it since, you feel really dirty.

Sarah had no intention of feeling that way again. She worked hard to keep Mike and everything that his life represented separate from her:

I was really angry and I was really upset and it brought back a flood of emotions at the time. I had been away from Mike for about a year at that time. This gate of emotions just came flooding through. And everything that I had done kind of came back and it was awful, all the negative.

Sarah looked for other employment after this request. She had loved working in investigations and she was making pretty good money, but she knew her relationship with the sheriff was damaged. Sarah applied at an area police department and was hired. Even though she is not in an investigative position, she is happy just being a cop: "I am getting reconnected and love my job. That is what I love to do. I am a patrol officer now." Sarah worked hard to get to the point that she could apply for a law enforcement position, and even to the point that she saw herself as a cop again. She knows that the time she spent working so much at three jobs in Colorado Springs helped her to get past what she had been through:

I worked hard to get back to the way I was before my husband, and it took me a really long time. I isolated myself from everybody and I worked three jobs; I never had a day off, I just had to stay busy.

Sarah was very clear that in the days she was involved with Mike she could have easily been involved in criminal behavior and could have been in a situation where she was now doing time. Sarah recalled that she was never in a situation that she was afraid of inmates, and she was definitely not afraid of Mike. While she worked at the DOC, she remembers how she felt about most of the inmates: "There were a lot of the inmates that I just absolutely could not stand." However, she did learn a lot from her time as a correctional officer that has helped her on the streets.

Sarah has only heard from Mike one time since his last letters went unanswered over eight years ago. He submitted a friend request to her on Facebook. She was friends on Facebook with his daughter, so he was able to easily locate her. Sarah felt a sense of panic when she saw this request, so she immediately blocked him from further contact.

She has not had any other contact with him or on his behalf. She does still communicate with his daughter through Facebook occasionally, but they rarely talk about Mike. Sarah believes that she had a positive effect on Mike's daughter and enjoyed the time they were able to spend together. As for the rest of Mike's family, she assumes that they are happy that Mike is no longer connected to her. She thinks that his family views Mike's relationship with her as a temporary "lapse in judgment." This lapse in judgment did cost Mike by hurting his chance for parole. When he was kicked out of the treatment program, he was deferred by the parole board for release. Sarah believes that their relationship also had a positive effect; it helped Mike to see that not all law enforcement officers are bad and hopefully that will help him to stay out of prison. The only financial commitment that Mike invested in this relationship was the purchase of a very nice ring, which Sarah did not return. She sold it at a pawn shop.

Sarah's family and friends are relieved that she is no longer with Mike. They had been concerned about her for a long time and had tried to help her make good decisions. They also tried to warn people at the facility that Sarah was in trouble. These warnings seemed to go unheeded, at least until the investigation commenced. The lack of a response from the facility indicated that the administration was only interested in catching her doing something wrong, not in preventing her from doing it in the first place. When Sarah's request for a transfer right after her suicide attempt was not granted, she remembers what she said to the warden: "I told him that I was emotionally messed up and I felt like I was vulnerable and there was no one there that was supportive of me. I told him that I was very emotionally vulnerable."

Sarah had been told in the training academy that she was joining the DOC family, but she never felt as if she was part of a family that cared for her:

I didn't feel like I belonged to the DOC family. I heard about that family, but I was very let down by coworkers and the DOC. I was disciplined time and time again. I was going through one of the worst times in my life, and they [DOC family] were nowhere. I kind of blamed them because I felt like they just set me up to fail.

Sarah did not want to become a correctional officer in the first place, but once she accepted the position she was committed to doing a good job. She believes she was a good officer in the beginning, but then as she felt alienated by her coworkers she had trouble connecting to anyone at work. She did not see the inmates as "her people," but she also did not see the officers aligned with her. She described this feeling: "I didn't feel like any of them were my people. I felt like the staff were just as bad as the inmates, if not worse, because the inmates didn't tell my business to everybody. The staff did." The training she received when she started was aimed at managing inmates with very little that helped staff work well with one another. The training also painted a picture of inmates that built them up to be "pond scum." After she got to the facility, Sarah had difficulty seeing all the inmates in that light, and then, of course, Mike was moved into her unit. Not only was he an inmate who treated her kindly, but he was also a friend from her past. In the middle of feeling judged by her ex-husband, the facility administration, and her coworkers, Sarah remembers that Mike never judged her; he just supported her. If Mike had not moved into the unit, perhaps Sarah would still be working for DOC, or perhaps another inmate would have provided her support through what she described as

the worst part of her life. Sarah and I talked about the events of her life since she left the DOC, and she feels that her time in the department helped to give her clarity and strength to handle the losses that she later endured.

Sarah is not sure if the confluence of events pushed her into a relationship with Mike or if he targeted her. She described him as a “schmoozer,” but she also thinks that perhaps his feelings toward her were genuine. She reminded me that he never asked her for anything while she was an officer and he never discouraged her from resigning. If he wanted her to help him get something inside the facility or even to have sex inside the facility, he would not have supported her resignation. It was only after she resigned that he pressured her for money and then to help with a financial transaction. Sarah does believe that now she has a different understanding of inmates and she would not be so easily “played” if she had it to do over again. If she could do it over again, she would have never worked for the department and would have pursued employment at other police departments. She feels that she dodged a bullet by getting out of the relationship with Mike, and because of that she is a cop again.

Sarah left the Canon City area to recover from the effects of the decisions that she made while working in DOC. She does not avoid going home, but she does not have many friends left in Canon City. Some of her friends turned their back on her when they found out why she resigned, but she has maintained a few very good and supportive relationships. Looking back on life choices often creates clarity regarding past mistakes. Sarah is no exception. She sees where the path she chose led her to make decisions that were wrong for her, but she knows that she is stronger because of this path.

Kathy's Portrait

My first conversation with Kathy about participating in this study was difficult and tenuous. To her I was a total stranger, asking her to talk about a difficult part of her life. I was pleasantly surprised when she did not hang up the phone. Kathy did not immediately agree to participate, but she did agree to consider my request. We communicated through email more than once and met one time to talk about the study in more detail before she agreed to be a participant. Kathy was not willing to meet at her home and her work schedule was rather tight, so I agreed to find locations in Florence, Colorado where we could meet.

Kathy's schedule was not the same from week to week, so we met in a variety of locations in Florence. Our meetings took place in public places that offered a private space. It was in this fashion that I was allowed the privilege of being able to create Kathy's portrait. Her portrait revealed the path leading to her relationship with an inmate and the effect it has had on her life.

Path That Led Kathy to Corrections

Kathy lived between the towns of Canon City and Florence for most of her life. She attended school and graduated from the Florence RE-2 public school district, so Kathy had grown up with some understanding of the world of corrections. However, she did not see herself working inside a prison. She recalls: "I never planned on being in corrections but I didn't plan not to go; I just never thought I would be there." Her mother worked for the prison system, and Kathy saw it as just another employment choice.

Kathy was a good student and a star athlete in many sports, but her passion was basketball. She demonstrated such skill in high school sports that she was offered a

scholarship to the nearby university to play for the basketball team. Kathy played ball while she completed her degree in elementary education. She left college with the goal of teaching in an elementary school in the Canon City area and coaching school sports teams. Kathy did not get a job offer in education in the area, so a year later she left Colorado and attended a school in New Mexico to become a radiology technician. Very quickly, Kathy realized that this was not a good fit for her, and when she began to experience medical problems, she left that program and returned to Florence. Again Kathy needed to find a way to support herself and put her education to use. For the next few years, she worked at the local Estes Industries plant. This was obviously not what she had gone to college to do, but she did meet her future husband, Tyler, at Estes.

Kathy was still hoping to teach and coach sports, so she moved to Kansas with a friend of hers from college. She was offered a coaching position and was a fairly regular substitute teacher in the area. She was getting closer to achieving her goal of teaching and coaching full time, but her relationship with Tyler encouraged her to return home. Once again she returned to Florence and went back to work at Estes industries. Kathy was then offered employment in a school district where her primary position was coaching but she would be teaching also. This position was over 100 miles away from Canon City, but the school system was on a four-day school week. She took the job in Las Animas, Colorado, and drove home for each weekend. The classes that she taught were in the high school, so she was technically teaching out of her degree field, but her principal valued her as a part of the team and was not concerned about this technicality. Kathy taught there for three years and excelled at both coaching and teaching.

When a new principal was brought into the district, Kathy's contract was not renewed, and she ended up returning to Florence. It was during this time period that Kathy decided to marry Tyler, and she once again looked for employment. Kathy's brother told her about an opening as a contract employee with the Department of Corrections. The contracting agency was the South Central Colorado BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services), and the work location was in a small new prison in Pueblo, Colorado. Kathy applied and was offered the position. This contract position was the beginning of Kathy's ten-year career within the correctional facilities of the Colorado Department of Corrections.

The Correctional Environment

Kathy was responsible for providing recreation for a small women's facility on the Colorado State Hospital grounds, now known as the Colorado Mental Health Institute of Pueblo. This facility was located in just one building that was remodeled to house minimum security female inmates at a time when the female inmate population was growing at an unprecedented rate. Even though this is not what Kathy had gone to school for, this position did offer Kathy a way to put her experience and knowledge to use. Kathy was given a broad job description with high expectations. She was expected to develop recreation programs for the women, as well as be the supervisor for each program. Kathy seized this opportunity to create an effective program, one that became the basis for many of the programs that are still in place at the women's prison in Pueblo.

Because Kathy was a contract employee, she did not go through the regular training academy that all DOC employees were required to complete. The contract required her to attend only a few days, so that is all the formal preparation she was given.

These few days covered topics that were considered the most necessary parts of the academy's regular three-week curriculum. Topics such as the employee code of conduct, zero-tolerance for drug use, and use of force were part of the minimal training that Kathy received. Kathy remembers feeling "absolutely not ready to work with inmates." The formal education that Kathy completed at the university also did not prepare her for working inside a prison. In fact, Kathy does not recall any preparation at college for working with any special population.

Kathy was the only employee who provided recreation to the women, so when she was not at work, the women had limited recreation options. Kathy knew that she had to implement programs that could be used both with and without her supervision. She reached out to the state hospital recreation staff and developed agreements to use their recreation facilities. These agreements worked well because this was a time when the numbers of patients in the state hospital were declining, and many of their facilities sat empty and unused. Kathy quickly developed programs that allowed the women to use the state hospital's swimming pool, gyms, and sports fields. She also acquired bicycles that were used by the women to ride around on the hospital grounds. This activity required that she be with them, and it was a very popular event during good weather.

Kathy worked with the area community to create ways for the women inmates to provide community service projects while they learned skills for the productive use of their leisure time. She created a program where the inmates provided crocheted items to a local homeless shelter that specialized in services to women and children. Kathy was responsible to set up these programs, purchase supplies for the women, and deliver the completed goods. She developed positive public relationships between the DOC and the

Pueblo community. The Pueblo community was not a big supporter for a women's prison on the state hospital grounds, so the work that she did in the community helped to create an atmosphere of acceptance, if not appreciation, for the prisons.

Kathy developed a strong working relationship with the correctional staff. She was included in information that they thought she needed to ensure that she and the inmates were safe. Even though her shift was different from that of all the other employees, she connected to them. A normal shift only had three or four correctional staff on duty at one time, so Kathy easily became a part of the team. They shared details of their lives, both joys and sorrows. Kathy did not feel that she was treated any differently because she was a contract employee; indeed, she felt that she had earned the respect of many of the correctional line staff and management staff.

Kathy also developed relationships with the women inmates. She was not a correctional person, and the inmates were clear on that fact. She talked about the type of relationship that she had with the inmates: "In programs you are in a different place. You are not security, you are not on them all the time, and you are a person who they can almost trust." Kathy learned a lot about corrections from the inmates. Kathy was often shocked or confused about how things in the prison worked. She remembers being confused about the frequent confiscation of drugs from within the prison. The inmates offered graphic explanations: "I asked how the drugs got in and my women inmates would explain, and then I would just say wow." Kathy knows that the women inmates also played her or tried to manipulate her, but they were usually only trying to get things from her that did not really jeopardize the facility. For instance, they would try to manipulate her into getting them preferential placement in a game and other little things.

Kathy learned a lot from these women and she thought that she understood them: “I thought I kind of had the game down.” She thought she could spot manipulation by inmates based on these experiences.

Political forces soon focused on the use of contract staff throughout the state who held positions that could be held by state employees. The political base in Pueblo was a particularly powerful force in this issue because the decline of the state hospital population had drastically decreased the number of state jobs available in Pueblo. As a result of this political pressure, the recreation positions that were filled by contract employees were threatened. Kathy knew that her position was in jeopardy, and she was told that her hours may be cut in half. Kathy continued to look for teaching positions in public school systems, as well as other options in the Department of Corrections. Her experience and reputation within the DOC made her the ideal candidate for a new position at the newly expanded prison facility.

The political attack on contract employees focused on positions that had contract employees doing the same type of duties as DOC employees. Therefore a new contract position was developed with duties different from those for a DOC employee: a program developer for female inmates. This was the position that Kathy was offered. It involved the development of programs for women inmates in Pueblo as well as at a new Denver facility that was proposed to be built in the near future. The number of female inmates in Colorado continued to increase, and even the bigger Pueblo campus could not meet the projected needs. Kathy was called upon to use her skills and the experience that she developed in the department to reach out to other agencies in the major metropolitan

centers of the state. She was expected to create support for programs in the women's prisons in both Canon City and Pueblo, as well as the future Denver prison.

Kathy approached this assignment with the same level of professionalism and enthusiasm as she did in her previous position. She was assigned a small group of inmates to work with to help her develop the program and to implement the programs. This new position raised interest from different stakeholders in the state of Colorado, so Kathy attended and even presented at a few conferences. Kathy connected with people working in criminal justice agencies in many different jurisdictions.

The relationship that Kathy developed with her assigned inmates was closer and deeper than what she developed with the inmates in recreation at the smaller facility site. She depended upon these women to help her implement the programs to the point that their relationship was similar to that of coworkers in some respects. During this assignment, Kathy's office was located in the academic area of the facility, so she worked in close proximity to two other teachers who were also contract employees. Kathy looked to these two teachers, who had been working in the correctional environment for a number of years, as an example for inmate management. She judged her relationships and boundaries with her assigned inmates based on their example. They worked the same shift and often entered and left the facility together. The hours that they were assigned to work precluded them from attending the normal roll call meeting that most other facility staff attended prior to reporting to a post. Additionally, the academic area was located in an area that most staff did not have to pass through on their way to their posts, so they were visited infrequently by correctional staff. The inmate gym was located in the same hall, so when inmates were allowed access to the gym, correctional

officers would be in the hallway conducting searches and monitoring the activity in the gym. These officers would occasionally enter the program's offices and classrooms, but their visits were usually brief.

Kathy again compared the relationships with the inmates who were assigned to her program to relationships with coworkers. Kathy was emotionally invested in their well-being and their goals for the future. When we discussed the code of conduct, specifically the prohibition against any emotional relationship between employee and inmates, I asked her if she understood what that meant. Kathy was quick to say that the employees after whom she modeled her behavior had developed emotional relationships to certain inmates. Kathy is unsure how she could have done her job at either of the women's facilities without crossing into an emotional relationship. Kathy never had a discussion with anyone about the definition of emotional relationship, and she could not even define where that line was supposed to be at this point in her life. It sounded unrealistic to Kathy that anyone could interact with inmates in a program position without forming some sort of emotional relationship.

Kathy was always aware of the tentative nature of working in a contract position. These positions were often seen as an easy budget cut for legislators trying to balance the budget. Consequently, she chose to look for a regular DOC position to ensure the stability of her employment for her family, which now included three daughters (the two youngest were twins). Kathy applied for and was offered a teaching position at a new facility in Pueblo. She was excited to be teaching again, and the increase in salary for the new position was significant. Kathy was sent back to the training academy to fill in the parts of the training that she was not required to attend as a contract employee. She also

attended training at the facility after the academy because this facility was a new type of program in the Colorado Department of Corrections.

The program was designed to deal with young offenders who were sentenced specifically to this program. The facility was funded and approved for implementation after a series of violent crimes were committed by juveniles in the Denver area. This program was intended as “a middle tier between the Division of Youth Corrections and the Department of Corrections for violent youthful felony offenders” (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2012b). The program was temporarily housed on the grounds of the Denver Reception and Diagnostic Unit while the renovation of state hospital buildings in Pueblo was completed. The staff who worked in Denver attended training that was different from the ordinary training for Colorado Department of Corrections staff. Consequently, the employees who relocated to Pueblo when the program was moved came with an extremely different approach to management of these residents; they did not call them inmates. The Pueblo campus was five times the size of the facility in Denver, so additional employees were needed. This expansion created the position that Kathy was offered.

The conflict that arose between staff who had transferred to the facility from Denver and those who transferred from other prisons was perhaps foreseeable. The program included intervention strategies that were not used in any other DOC facility. One such strategy was a touch system to gain compliance. This touch system was a method to gain the attention of the residents. In the other DOC facilities, the only approved touching of an inmate was a use of force, and any other kind of touching was a violation of the boundary between inmates and employees. Kathy completed both the

training academy course and the facility specific training and reported to work, excited about her teaching position. The information that she learned in the facility training really pointed to the difference in boundaries between employees and adult female inmates compared to those between employees and youthful residents: “it was so different; you were supposed to be their friends and their advocates, so that they could go to you and talk.”

Her excitement soon faded as she walked into this new facility and into a maelstrom of conflict. Kathy was one of three teachers assigned to a unit. One teacher had worked at the facility when it was in Denver. The other teacher worked at a juvenile treatment center and had been a passionate teacher but was now approaching retirement and had more than a few health concerns. Kathy and these two teachers were responsible for a particular housing unit that had some residents who needed remedial help prior to entering the facility high school. Each housing unit had such a population, but for some reason, the one that Kathy was assigned to had a high number in need of this remediation. Kathy found herself working with teachers who were always gone from work. One was gone due to medical issues, and the other was deeply embroiled in conflict with the facility staff, which caused her to call in sick often. Kathy was the only one of the three teachers who was routinely at work and provided services to the assigned residents. Kathy quickly grew to hate her job. She was constantly pulled into issues about the program and into turf battles between program staff and correctional staff.

Kathy knew that the boundaries were different for the youth than they had been with adult women. She had gone through the facility specific training and was trying to implement the program as instructed, but she felt as if she was being buried with job

tasks. She did not have any planning time, and she was trying to do the work of three teachers. Everything about the youth facility was a battle. Kathy talked about her reaction to this stress:

I began to just hate it. I was a nervous wreck and it was not fun. Everything just got thrown on the teachers. We would have meetings with [correctional] staff versus education [staff]. All the residents knew what to do and how to do it and then the correctional staff wanted more punishment. Anyway, it was a mess with [correctional] staff versus teachers. I think that I went on anti-depressants then. I would drive home and I would be crying. It was terrible.

Kathy did not think that she could take the pressures at work while raising young children, and miraculously an option was presented to her just when she did not think she could take any more: “They finally said that if this isn’t working for you, we will give you an out, and you can transfer back into corrections.” Two openings were available for teachers in facilities in the Canon City area. Kathy had no preference between these two facilities; she just needed to a change. The medium security facility called her first and offered her the job. She was also offered a job at the other facility and the fact that both facilities wanted her was just the boost she needed to get back on track and recover from the drama that she had endured for those several months at the youth facility.

At the medium security facility, Kathy worked as a GED teacher in the academic school which was located in the basement of the food service building. This area was accessible through a controlled entry point that was staffed by a correctional officer, and only the inmates who were assigned to the school were allowed into that area. Every teacher had his or her own classroom with a desk set in the corner of the room. All of the

teachers worked the same schedule and were often entering and leaving the facility at the same time. Kathy was relieved for the opportunity to work at this medium security facility. The program manager and the warden both welcomed her, and she immediately felt a connection with the other three teachers. The lead teacher, Tom, was a great mentor for Kathy. This was the first time in her career that she would be working with adult male inmates, and she expected that there would be some differences.

The program manager was a man who had spent most of his career in the custody side of corrections. He seemed to sincerely want to help the teachers provide a good program, but his knowledge about education delivery was limited; however, his knowledge about inmates was extensive. The program manager told the teachers on more than one occasion that he would talk to them if there was a problem: “He always said that I will be up front with you if I see something going on, or if I feel something, I will talk to you.” Kathy felt that she was working in a professional atmosphere and working for someone whom she could respect and she thought that she would find stability there.

Kathy talked to the other teachers about her experience at the youth facility and described herself at that time as “an emotional wreck.” The teachers with whom Kathy worked had been in these positions for a number of years. All in all, they were a great support for her and helped her to adapt to the facility quickly. This medium security facility allowed the inmates quite a bit of freedom within the perimeter walls. Kathy was assigned to teach English and was given a male inmate to act as her para-professional (para-pro). This school was set up in a manner in which the inmates moved from class to class to learn different subjects, much as in a traditional high school. The para-pro acted

as an assistant to the teacher to work with specific inmate needs. The para-pros reported to the school to help the teachers before the students reported, and they often remained after the students left at the end of the school day. Much of the instruction was based on a self-paced model that allowed inmates to work independently. The way that the school was managed meant that all the teachers helped to prepare the inmates for the GED test. So when one inmate succeeded, all the teachers had a part in that success. This approach was dependent upon a strong team connection among the teachers.

Kathy felt that she was in an environment where she could freely address concerns to Tom and the other teachers. She remembers going to Tom to discuss her concerns about a particular inmate. She told Tom that this inmate was showing signs of affection toward her, and she asked for guidance. A short time later, the inmate was removed from the school, but Kathy is not sure if he left the facility because of the concern she raised or if he left for some other unrelated cause.

Kathy developed friendships with the teachers quickly. Tom offered to help Kathy's oldest daughter when she was struggling with reading. Kathy visited Tom and his wife at their home more than once, and she appreciated the support they offered her during her transition. Kathy was proud of the work that she was doing with the inmates and her family knew how she felt about her work and supported her.

When a new school building was finished, the teachers oversaw the move into the new area. This area seemed more conducive to learning. It was a stand-alone building, next to the gym and the access was still controlled by a gate and a correctional officer. The space was much bigger and was equipped with computers and other electronic teaching tools. The set up for the classrooms was similar to the old school, with the

teacher's desk serving as an office in the corner of the classroom. The building was built quickly and as economically as possible, so the classrooms had limited windows to the outside and only a door that led into the hallway. This school was located in a remote area of the facility, so correctional staff rarely wandered through except to make the required security checks. Management staff also did not visit the area frequently. Kathy and the other teachers settled into the new location and a new routine.

Kathy recalls attending a mandatory training class that was offered once a year and covered a variety of required topics. This particular year, a new class was added that discussed relationships with inmates. The law in Colorado had just changed to increase the scope and sanctions for correctional employees who developed sexual relationships with inmates. The warden was one of the presenters in the class that she attended. She remembers the warden talking about how staff can begin to be drawn into a relationship with an inmate. She remembers him saying: "If anything like that ever happened or you feel threatened, come to us." The warden went on to explain the changes in the law and that the executive director was determined to ensure that any corrections employees who violated this law were prosecuted. Kathy had heard of a few officers who were fired when it was discovered that they were involved with inmates. Most of the rumors of these types of incidents involved male employees with female inmates. One particular rumor involved a male laundry officer at a women's facility:

The guy in the laundry had been videoing women inmates up in the laundry area.

They [the inmates] had to go up to the laundry to get their clothes issued so they would try them on up there. He was fired and then he got rehired.

The impression that Kathy had regarding these types of incidents in the past was that they were just not that serious. After all, if the Department of Corrections re-hired this man, how big of deal was it really?

Kathy's work life was better, it was almost calm, but her relationship with her husband was heading into a turbulent time. Kathy and Tyler tried to work on their marriage and keep their family together, but it became evident to both that they were headed for a divorce, so they separated. Their daughters were still young, and Kathy had to make the adjustment to working and being a single parent. Tyler remained in the community and was able to offer continued support for the family.

Relationship Process Between Kathy and Pete

Kathy was confronted with several inmate students who did not speak or read fluent English, and she needed help. There was one para-pro in the school, Pete, who was bi-lingual. Pete was often sent to different classrooms to help with Spanish speaking students. Since the subject Kathy taught was English, he spent more time in her room than most others, even though he was technically assigned to Tom's classroom. Kathy noticed right away that Pete was not the typical inmate. He was highly intelligent and creative. She also noticed that he was treated more like a coworker by the other teachers than an inmate, even an inmate assigned as a para-pro.

Kathy and Tom decided to improve their language skills and began to study Spanish, and Pete helped them with this extensively. Pete was called upon by all the teachers to help with a variety of students who needed assistance, and he was good at what he did. His writing ability was excellent. This writing ability is perhaps what ended

up hurting Kathy the most in the end. He had the ability to write about anything and do it in such an eloquent fashion that the reader believed what he wrote.

One of the first times Kathy realized his skill in this area was when Tom found poems that Pete had written about Kathy. Kathy is also the name of Pete's grandmother, but these poems were obviously not about his grandmother. Tom showed these poems to Kathy to see if she had seen them and if she thought they were about her. When she explained to Tom that she had no knowledge of the poems, Tom confronted Pete. He admitted that he wrote them about Kathy and that what he had done was wrong. He assured Tom that it would not happen again. This situation was handled in a manner similar to any matter between coworkers. Pete was not fired from his assignment, and the incident was not documented as it should have been. Tom was relying on Pete to keep his word and not do anything else out of line.

Not long after this event, Kathy's para-pro left the facility, and she needed to hire another inmate to assist her. Pete immediately asked if he could be that person, and he was approved for the move. The fact that he had written these poems about Kathy such a short time prior to this change was apparently not considered an issue for concern. Tom could have denied this move based on the poems. Kathy believed that "Tom should have said no, we can't have this, because of the poems found on his [Pete's] computer. This move should not have happened." However, Kathy did not make any formal objection to Pete being assigned full-time to her classroom. She valued his assistance in the past and liked him as a person. The move happened quickly with little discussion.

Several special populations of inmates were housed in this facility. Many of the inmates were assigned to that facility to participate in sex offender treatment, so a large

percentage of the inmates were assumed to be sex offenders. Pete was not a sex offender, and he took it upon himself to protect Kathy from inmates who he thought could be dangerous. On more than one occasion Pete offered words of protection. Kathy stated:

I felt like he was protecting me. He would tell me stay away from that inmate or this inmate because they have a really bad crime. I knew most of the students were [sex offenders]. I was not afraid, but I definitely kept my boundaries.

The first few times this happened, Kathy looked up information on the inmates Pete warned her about, and she found that his information was correct.

The emotional boundary between Kathy and Pete quickly eroded. Pete moved from a trusted inmate to a trusted friend. Pete encouraged Kathy to share details of her personal struggles:

I don't know; he shared something that he had written with me, and then one week he came in and I crossed that line. He already kind of knew I was having trouble in my marriage. I told him that my mom was sick.

Pete reciprocated and started telling Kathy about his life: "He would talk to me about where he had been before. He had been incarcerated as a juvenile and through most of his adult life. He told me that his crime was armed robbery." Kathy knew that Pete was serving a long sentence, and she listened to him as he told her about his path to prison. Many of these details she could have read as part of his file, and maybe she did check some of them out for accuracy, but the emotion and details that he shared with her about his life could not come from a file. She believes that he let her see the real man inside. Pete started giving Kathy letters about his life and his hopes for the future.

Pete also told Kathy about inmates and correctional employees who had developed relationships with each other in prison and actually made it work: “He would talk about how teachers got involved with inmates and that he knows one inmate who married a CO. He told me lots of stories about that kind of stuff.” As Kathy heard these stories, she began to believe that it was possible for an inmate and a staff member to actually be in love. The next thing that Kathy remembered about the progression of the relationship was Pete showing her his new tattoo: “He came in one Monday with a tattoo of all the girls in his life, and he had my name on his back.” Kathy had no idea that Pete was going to do this. She realized that another inmate in the prison actually tattooed her name on to Pete’s back. When she saw this tattoo, she did not write an incident report. Tattooing is against the inmate rules inside a Colorado correctional facility, and this was obviously a fresh tattoo. All Kathy could think was “Wow, my name on your back, what the heck is that about?”

Kathy describes Pete’s actions as “wooing” her. She had never been “courted” like this by any other man. The letters and poems he gave her spoke to her on a deeper level than most of her other relationships. Kathy shared some of these letters and notes with me at the final session. The writing ability and eloquent way he communicated was very evident. It did not take long for the relationship to move past the next boundary: the physical boundary. The first time Pete hugged Kathy, she was shocked. She moved away and told him: “No, let’s not, this is not really what it should be.” Kathy did not report this behavior. After that, Pete backed off for a little bit and continued to give Kathy letters that he had written to her. Some of these letter detailed romantic fantasies that he had about her. Kathy remembers that they were so well written and romantic that

she took them out of the facility and kept them together in a file at home. The hugging happened again, several times, until it was a normal part of their relationship. Of course, Kathy was nervous about getting caught, but Pete searched the room for cameras or other recording devices regularly. Kathy and Pete also shared letters through their computers in the classroom on a regular basis. The computers in the classroom were part of a network so the teacher could see what the students and the para-pro were doing. There was also a way to share written documents between the teacher and the para-pro. They used this computer option to correspond with each other while sitting in a room full of inmate students.

Pete's writing ability continually amazed Kathy by the countless poems and the eloquent letters he wrote to her. Some of the letters he wrote in the evening by hand; some he composed sitting in the classroom. The boundaries around personal information quickly dropped as the letter writing continued. The thoughts that Kathy shared with him through the computer and what she received from him in that manner was the foundation of the love that she was beginning to feel towards him. The feelings that Kathy was struggling with over her impending divorce and now, thinking that she was in love with an inmate, were difficult to reconcile. However, whenever she had doubts about her love for Pete, he would write her something that made her doubts vanish.

Pete and Kathy talked about their actions and their feelings. Pete assured Kathy that she would not be in trouble: "He always convinced me that I was very well liked and very respected by my colleagues and the administration, so that they would not ever do anything to me." As Kathy told me this, she seemed to have a hard time believing that she believed this at the time. However, she did believe it. She remembers the program

manager telling her that if there was a problem, he would talk to her directly: “He always said that if something was going on he would definitely talk to you. I guess that was my hope, that if he really thought there was a problem, he would have told me.” Kathy was feeling connected to Pete, and she wanted to believe that she was not jeopardizing her job, but she was also worried about making trouble for Pete.

At one point in the early stages of her relationship with Pete, he was being considered for a transfer to another correctional facility. Pete went to Kathy and asked her for her help: he said, “Beg for me to stay here.” Kathy realizes now that she could have used this transfer as a way to end their relationship: “That would have been ideal and I could have said ‘see ya.’ I guess that I just wasn’t strong enough. I don’t know.” Kathy did provide information through Tom to ask for Pete to remain at the facility. She made a case that he was vitally important to the education department. He did not get transferred.

When Kathy came to Pete’s assistance with the facility move, she moved their relationship to another level. She communicated to Pete and to herself that she did not want the relationship to end. So Pete took it to the next level. Pete asked Kathy to get him some cigarettes so that he could sell them to other inmates. She recalled that cigarettes had been declared contraband for inmates in 1999 and then for staff use inside the facilities in 2000. So cigarettes had become the best black market commodity. Inmates usually had more success at getting people to help them introduce cigarettes into the prison because possession of cigarettes in free society was not in itself a crime. The same type of logic worked with Kathy. Kathy knew that bringing the cigarettes into the facility was a crime, but at least she could purchase them legally. Kathy admits to

crossing this line and started smuggling in cigarettes a little at a time to give to Pete so he could make money. During this time period, most Colorado facilities did not search the belongings of employees as they entered or left the facility. Kathy was fairly confident that she would not be caught bringing in the cigarettes or taking out the letters that Pete wrote for her. She also was aware of a male correctional officer who had been caught bringing in tobacco. He lost his job but was not charged with a crime. Kathy thought the risk of real harm was low.

Kathy took a few more risks. She wrote to Pete a few times from home and delivered letters to him. These letters may be the only ones that he had in his possession because the rest were written through the computer system in the classroom. Pete had shared information with her about his family, and he had talked to his grandmother about how much he loved Kathy. Eventually Kathy allowed Pete to call her at her home. Pete did not try to call her directly because the risk of detection would be too high. He called his grandmother in Florida and she would then connect a three-way call to Kathy. His grandmother was happy to help Pete connect with Kathy because she felt from the beginning that Kathy was making a positive change in Pete.

Kathy was content with the status of her relationship with Pete. She continued to receive letters from him that were wildly romantic and made her feel special and loved. She continued to supply him with cigarettes, and he made money. Pete then asked her to bring in marijuana: "He asked me for pot one time. I said no way; I haven't done that stuff for years. I don't even know who to talk to." The issue of marijuana was non-negotiable for Kathy. She felt that Pete understood that this was never going to happen. Not long after the discussion about marijuana, Pete pushed their relationship even further.

One day after the students were released and the teachers and para-pros were closing up each classroom, Pete came up behind Kathy and hugged her. This was not an out of the ordinary occurrence; by this time, they had done this many times. The end of the school day was a relatively safe time for physical contact. The risk of people walking by or coming to visit was low. In the other classrooms, the teachers are finishing duties so that they can leave, and the rest of the facility is preparing for count and the evening meal. Therefore, the risk of a correctional officer making a round was remote. So Kathy was not totally surprised or displeased by his physical action. However, Pete did not stop with a hug, before Kathy knew exactly what was happening, they were engaged in intercourse. She describes this first sexual encounter as rape, not as consensual sex. She did not consent and she did not intend for this to happen. Kathy had not been expecting Pete to try to initiate sex with her, but the dress that she wore that day allowed the situation to progress quickly and she lost all ability to control what was happening. Pete was a big guy, and she clarified that he did not use physical force against her; however, she felt powerless to try to physically stop him or call for help, even though the other three teachers were right there in the same building. After he was done, he returned to his housing unit for count, and she tried to get it together enough to leave her room as if nothing had happened. Kathy remembers walking out of the facility knowing that she had just been violated. She was caught up in the totality of her actions to this point and was unable to react: "I was just in another dimension. I don't know; shame, whatever, all those emotions."

Kathy is unsure if she ever even considered reporting this rape to the shift commander or to anyone. She knew that any action that she took could result in jeopardy

to her and her family. After all, she had committed a felony offense by smuggling in cigarettes on more than one occasion. She reflected on her thinking at the time: “Before the sex, I had already crossed that line.” If she accused Pete of rape, he would surely turn her in for the cigarettes, but Kathy was adamant that she did not even go there. She explained: “I was just way too far into it but I never dreamed he could have raped me, ever.” She felt like she was now in a position where anything could happen to her. She felt every bit the victim.

This was difficult for me to hear. I could not understand how any set of circumstances would result in a correctional employee getting raped inside a facility, by a convicted felon, and not being able to report it. To my many inquiries, Kathy just replied, “I don’t know.”

When Kathy returned to work the next day, she told Pete that they had to slow things down. She was not comfortable with what had happened. Pete did not seem to be sorry for his actions, but instead he acted as if he felt more powerful in the relationship. It was quite a while before any further sexual contact happened, and somehow during that time Pete convinced Kathy that what they had done was all right and that it was good. The next time they engaged in sexual intercourse, Kathy described it as a consensual act. Kathy cannot explain why she consented to having sex with Pete, especially in light of her first experience with him. She maintains that they had sex only a handful of times and that most of what he wrote about in those romantic letters never happened: “He wrote about sexual fantasies and things we didn’t do. He wrote about many more sexual encounters than what really happened.” Even though Kathy consented, she was really

not interested in having a sexual relationship with Pete. She clarified: “I would have been just fine without the sex part of the relationship.”

Almost a full year had passed since Pete became Kathy’s para-pro before Kathy had any reason to believe that their relationship had been discovered. A lieutenant told her and the other teachers that something was happening. He said: “Something is coming down the pike. There have been investigators here.” This was about a week before she was confronted. The last shift that Kathy worked was on a Friday, and she remembers her last day at work: “That Friday, and this didn’t always happen, all of us teachers walked out together. That was kind of surreal that we walked out together and that would be the last time that they would be together like that.” Later that evening, the warden called her and told her not to return to work until she was notified. When she asked why, he told her that she was under investigation for a relationship with an inmate.

Kathy did not know what to expect next. She was worried but tried to focus on getting through the weekend until she could talk to her attorney. She was in the final stages of the divorce from Tyler, so she had a lawyer that she could consult quickly. On Monday morning, she headed to his office: “I got up bright and early and went and sat on my lawyer’s step. He talked to me for a while and he then he asked me if my mom knew.” Kathy knew that she had to tell her mom before anyone else did, but she did not know how to explain it so her mom would understand. Kathy had to compose her thoughts, so she searched for a quiet place:

I went up to Skyline [Drive] and sat there and just kind of pondered it for a while.

I collected my thoughts and went to her house. I explained the situation to her and wow. It was pretty tough.

Kathy thought the hardest part of the day was behind her when she returned to her home. She was soon horrified when she realized that three DOC investigators were executing a search warrant at her home.

Kathy found that the investigators entered her home even though there was no one there to allow them access. She walked in and found that they had torn apart her bedroom and then she saw the folder where she had kept all of the letters from Pete. The lead investigator tried to get her to make a statement, but her divorce attorney had told her to say nothing. She recalls what the investigator told her: “It would be a lot easier on me if I told them what happened.” Kathy followed her attorney’s instructions and referred the investigator to him.

When the DOC investigators left with the letters from Pete, her computer, and a few other items, Kathy had only a few hours to put her house back together before her children returned from school. Kathy was horrified to find all the places that had been searched: “They just trashed my whole house, including my drawers, my underwear and my bra drawer. It made me sick. How dare they just go through all my stuff? It just made me feel really dirty. I felt as if I had been raped all over again.” The letters from Pete were kept in Kathy’s hope chest, which was unlocked. During the search, the investigators used a tool to pry open the chest and the marks on the piece of furniture still remind Kathy of how violated she had felt by that search. Kathy could have easily destroyed the letters over the weekend if she had any idea that the investigators would come to her home. In her wildest dreams, she did not think a search warrant would be issued for her home: “I was just a nervous wreck about what to do. I never dreamed that

they would come to my house. I have never been in trouble with the law.” The full gravity of her situation was quickly settling in.

After the search, Kathy did not hear anything from the warden or the investigators, with the exception of receiving her last pay check because she was terminated from employment. Kathy thought that perhaps nothing else would happen. She knew that the Department of Corrections investigators could find no evidence. They did not catch her smuggling cigarettes into the facility, and she did not believe they had any video evidence of her physical relationship with Pete. The only evidence that they had confiscated were the letters that Pete had written to her. Kathy did not believe the letters could be used as evidence in a criminal proceeding because they only established an emotional connection. The things that Pete wrote about were mostly romantic fantasies; the letters did not detail events that actually occurred. So she waited.

When Kathy was not notified of any further proceedings, she thought that perhaps it was over, at least until the sheriff’s deputies arrived to arrest her. Kathy was assured by the investigators and her attorney that if an arrest warrant was issued, she would be allowed to turn herself in, but that is not what happened. Two deputies arrived at her house without any notice and placed her under arrest: “They handcuffed me and put me in the back of the cruiser and took me to the Fremont County Jail.”

The horror that Kathy felt as she was taken from her home in handcuffs still reverberates in her voice today. She was escorted inside the jail in the same fashion that she had seen many inmates escorted from one part of the facility to another. Just like on TV, she was processed into the system. Her fingerprints and photo were taken, she gave a wide range of personal information to an anonymous figure on the other side of a

control room barrier, and then she waited. She had been given the opportunity to call her mother before she was removed from her home, so she knew that her mom was contacting a bail bondsman. The deputy told her to wait on the bench in the day room until the bondsman arrived. The hours it took for that process to occur gave Kathy a lot of time to become fully aware of what lay in store for her. After her arrest, Kathy's divorce attorney suggested that she get another attorney, one who specialized in criminal cases. When she secured the services of a criminal attorney, he actively took over the case by trying to reach a plea agreement that would minimize the damage to Kathy's future.

Kathy was able to communicate with Pete on a limited basis during this time. She received some letters and some three-way phone calls through his grandmother. Kathy was aware that Pete had been locked up in segregation right after she was told not to return. He was detained in the segregation unit until the investigators had thoroughly searched his cell and belongings and interviewed staff and inmates about the relationship between Pete and Kathy. Pete was interviewed as part of this process, and he later told Kathy that they had "it" all on tape. They had convinced him that video cameras had captured many images of their relationship; however, no such video evidence was ever introduced into the criminal proceedings, so Kathy does not believe that this video really existed. Pete was ultimately moved to a private prison in northern Colorado.

Kathy hoped for a relationship with Pete, even with the pending criminal charges. She was working for the school as a substitute and she started trying to rebuild her life. Kathy reached out to Pete's family. Pete's grandmother continued to be supportive of the relationship between Kathy and Pete, but his brother was a little more wary of Kathy. He

was worried about Pete: “Don’t hurt him; if you don’t want anything to go on, drop it here.” Kathy did not drop it, and she even helped his grandmother visit Pete in prison. His grandmother traveled from Florida and stayed with Kathy for a few days while she visited Pete. Kathy took her to the facility visiting center and picked her up each time.

Kathy’s attorney asked Kathy for the names of people who might offer a letter of support for her so that he could present these letters at her sentencing. Many people from around the state responded when asked to provide these letters. Kathy had developed relationships with people from a variety of law enforcement jurisdictions when she worked at Pueblo. She gained support from her “sisters in Christ” and other friends who could attest to her character. The attorney even received a letter from an inmate who Kathy had worked with in Pueblo. This inmate was begging the attorney to “please help and protect her.” The teachers Kathy worked with were asked to submit letters of support for her, but they all declined. Kathy does not seem surprised by this or betrayed. She was clear that she understood the situation that they were in: “They thought that their job would be in jeopardy. Basically, it was not to their best benefit to help me so openly.”

The next big blow to Kathy’s world came in the fall of that year, when the local paper detailed her sins on the front page of the paper. She had no idea that this story was about to be printed; it seemed to come out of nowhere. She was not about to go to court, it had been months since she had been terminated from the DOC, and several months had passed since she was arrested. The article in the paper provided details of four women who were currently facing criminal charges for having sex with inmates. Her case was somehow caught up in the middle of a frenzy to make an example of these of women.

The law was relatively new, and the district attorney was in the spot light to make sure that he fully enforced the intent of the law.

Kathy's attorney negotiated the best plea agreement that he could get, given the circumstances. The letters Pete wrote to Kathy were being used as evidence in the case. The investigators and the district attorney used these letters as if they confirmed what actually occurred. As a result, Kathy agreed to plea to one count of Introduction of Contraband, Cigarettes, a Class 6 Felony, and she would register as a sex offender for five years. The sanctions would include probation, community service, and court costs. Initially, Kathy was hesitant to accept the agreement because it included sex offender registration. The fact that she was negotiating at a time when three other women were also facing the same type of charges decreased her bargaining strength. When Kathy went to court she thought the judge would abide by the agreement but was surprised when the judge did not think the sanctions were enough. The same judge who had recently presided over her divorce sentenced her to the terms of the agreement but added a requirement for two days of jail time. Kathy remembers the judge stating that the jail time was needed to "appease the people and to ensure that justice had been done."

Exactly why people needed to be appeased was never clear to Kathy. She could not identify a single person who was hurt by her criminal actions. She was certainly not willing to call Pete a victim. In fact, Kathy felt as if she was the victim. She felt like Pete had manipulated her into a relationship that went far beyond what she wanted. The fact that Kathy would have to register as a sex offender was appalling to her. She thought that the idea behind sex offender registration was to protect the public, so she did not know who in the public was being protected by advertising her as a sex offender: "I am

not this sexual predator. I didn't rape this little boy."

Kathy described the process of registering as a sex offender as degrading and humiliating. She had to register once a year, and it was something that she dreaded each time. Kathy would report to the jail to register: "They say take a seat and wait. I have waited up to an hour while they aren't doing anything, except making me wait." Each time she went through this process she was treated disrespectfully and the judgment of the deputy was palpable. Kathy had to appear in court to get the judge to approve her motion to discontinue registering. This proceeding was in open court and was difficult, but at least it meant the end of the registration process.

Kathy arranged to do her jail time at the same time as one of the other former DOC female employee who was featured in the newspaper. Tonya and Kathy thought that if they were there together it would be easier for them both to endure. Tonya reported to jail about 12 hours earlier than Kathy for some reason, so she was already there when Kathy reported. Kathy entered the jail for the second time since this ordeal had begun. She described her first few minutes as something that "took her breath away." The jail had more female inmates than they could place in cells, so Kathy spent her two days assigned to a boat bed on the floor of the day hall. Boat beds are used in many jails when they have more inmates than beds. These boat beds are similar to a plastic tray that is the size of a twin bed. A mattress is placed in this plastic container and then it can be used anywhere in the jail to provide a bed for an inmate.

Kathy and Tonya spent most of their waking time together, but Tonya at least had a cell that she could retreat to when needed. Kathy's boat was placed in the day room where inmates congregate at any time they are not required to be inside their cells.

During the day, Kathy was allowed to go to the gym and to a volunteer religious service that was held. She and Tonya spent time with the other female inmates playing cards because that was about all there was to do. As one would expect, the other inmates wanted to know what Tonya and Kathy had done to get sentenced to jail; apparently, they did not look like typical female inmates. As soon as Kathy told them she was convicted of introduction of contraband, they remembered the details that they had read in the paper. One inmate told them: “You know you are lucky to be in Fremont county jail because otherwise, you guys would get punked [sexually assaulted].”

Kathy was not afraid of the inmates or even by this statement. She had spent the major portion of her corrections career working with female inmates and felt comfortable that she would not be harmed. She recalls that many times the female inmates who she worked with would talk to her about what really happened in jail and rarely did anyone ever “get punked.” Kathy was willing to put up with a little harassment from these women because apparently she and Tonya had achieved some type of “celebrity status.” The two days that Kathy spent in jail seemed to last forever. Finally when the 48th hour was completed she waited for her release. She had completed her sentence, but it just does not work quite that precisely in a jail. When the deputies got around to it, a few hours later, she was allowed to leave the jail.

Effect on Kathy's Life

Kathy still has some contact with Pete, even though it has been several years since she was terminated from the Department of Corrections. He is out of prison and has completed all conditions of parole supervision. Pete is a free man and is rebuilding his life. Kathy admits that she has maintained some sort of contact with Pete to prove to

herself that she was not manipulated and their feelings for each other were real. Pete was never punished for his relationship with Kathy. The law was written in a way that proclaims that the inmate is always the victim and the employee is always the perpetrator. Looking back on her life, Kathy does not feel like a perpetrator and knows that initially she was targeted by Pete. She knows that she was not the first person that he tried to manipulate because he talked of other staff that he had grown close to while doing his sentence. Pete convinced Kathy to smuggle in contraband cigarettes, but when Kathy refused to even discuss the marijuana, he did not make any demands. At that point, Pete could have threatened her with exposure for the actions she had already committed in an effort to get her to supply the marijuana, but he did not. His failure to threaten her with exposure indicates that it is possible he had developed real feelings for her.

Kathy believes that she was a positive influence on Pete: "I gave him hope. He had a terrible, terrible life before me." She also believes that she has been a positive part of his family's life, especially for his grandmother. Pete's grandmother reached out to Kathy on many occasions and still reminds Kathy that she holds Kathy and her daughters in her prayers. Pete's grandmother has definitely been a positive person in Kathy's life.

Kathy does not believe that her relationship with Pete harmed other inmates. She was a good teacher for the Department of Corrections and she believes that even after she began to fall in love with Pete, she provided her students with high quality instruction and assistance. The investigative report that Kathy reviewed prior to her court appearance revealed that an inmate first reported suspicious activity between her and Pete. She does not know if this inmate was one of her students or someone that Pete may have interacted with outside of class. She does not think that Pete intentionally told another inmate about

their relationship, but it is possible that he inadvertently said something to the wrong person.

Kathy does not believe that she was a sexual predator who took advantage of anyone; in fact she feels that if anything, she was the victim. Kathy developed genuine feelings for Pete, but that does not diminish the fact that she was raped by him and felt as if she was unable to report it to anyone. Kathy is certain that the justice system failed her. Kathy also believes that she was caught up in a set of circumstances where she was made to be an example. She knows that the requirement that she register as a sex offender was done merely as punishment and not to protect the public. Since the conviction of Kathy and the three other women who were featured in the newspaper article, Kathy has watched as the justice system has treated women in the same situation in an extremely different fashion. She is not aware of any other female correctional employees who have been given the same type of punishment, and in fact, she has watched as more than one recent case has been referred down to county court as a misdemeanor with no sex offender registration required.

The personal losses to Kathy as a result of this relationship have been numerous. In addition to the loss of her job and the criminal conviction, her teaching license was revoked in Colorado and in Kansas. Since she could no longer teach, Kathy pursued a new career in cosmetology and now works from her home. Kathy was not willing to let the shame that she felt about her choices with Pete or the judgment of others run her out of her home. Kathy has found that this new career has given her more freedom to be available for her children. She is able to be there for them when they return from school, and she can schedule time to participate in many of their activities. This new career has

also given Kathy a different view into the world of corrections because many of her clients work for the Colorado Department of Corrections or the Bureau of Prisons at the Florence complex.

Kathy has many clients who have no idea of what she has been through and how she was dealt with by the system. One long-time client of hers told her that she needed to change her standing appointment time because she had to go to annual training for work. She went on to tell Kathy that it is the same old thing every year, “Don’t have sex with inmates. That is all they talk about in training.” This client is unaware of Kathy’s story and probably would be shocked if she knew. Kathy also has clients who have worked in corrections for years, and she has watched how these people seem to be worn down from the negativity of the corrections environment. Kathy feels fortunate that she is not part of that world anymore and that she is in a position to be freer and live a more positive life.

Kathy knows that her recovery from the consequences of her relationship with Pete has been guided by her faith in God. She has been supported by friends that surrounded her with love as she pushed through the hardest part of the process. She believes in God’s power, and she looks at her public struggle as evidence that there is hope after even the most difficult challenges. Kathy admits that having her story on the front page of the newspaper was difficult, but she has an unusual perspective: “I have nothing to hide; everybody knows it all. My sins are out there for everyone to see. How many other people can say that? I have definitely gotten closer to God.”

There are many parts of this story that Kathy has shared with friends and family, but this may be the first time she has talked about the entire process in so much detail. Kathy carefully considered her participation in this study and had family members who

questioned her willingness to participate. As Kathy has talked to me about this process, she has described it as some sort of “cleansing process.” She also believes that if this information can help even one other person, her participation was worth it.

Emerging Themes

The portraiture process revealed that each participant described complex relationships that were formed in four very different ways, but read together, broad themes emerged. This is the same process described by Sauer (2012) in her work in *Negotiating the Social Borderlands: Portraits of Young People with Disabilities and Their Struggles For Positive Relationships*. The portraits of Joyce, Lynn, Sarah, and Kathy share four themes: Identity as a correctional officer, power, boundary confusion, and the correctional culture created an inability to ask for help. The portrait of Sarah and Kathy share an additional theme: personal relationship vulnerability.

Joyce

Four themes arose from the construction of Joyce’s portrait: Identity as a correctional officer, power, boundary confusion, and the correctional culture created an inability to ask for help. Joyce was very much a professional correctional officer when she worked in Iowa. She used that term to describe herself at a time when most people did not refer to this work as a profession. Joyce was in a position early on in her career to blaze trails for the women who aspired to work in prisons. She blazed more than one career path for women in Iowa and was very proud of that fact.

When Joyce made the decision to return to Colorado, she was disappointed to see the lack of progress that Colorado had made in the area of women in corrections. She did not expect to be confronted with this fact because she thought that Colorado was more

progressive than Iowa. Joyce knew that she needed to stay in Colorado, so she pursued her goal of continuing to work in corrections in the same way she approached most things in her life, with determination and confidence. Her first experience of working in the department was a struggle. When Joyce had to start at base pay as an officer, she did not feel that she was given any credit for her previous experience in corrections. Joyce did have success at building good relationships with the people with whom she worked, but she was not always treated like a professional correctional officer by those who outranked her. When she felt she was cheated out of a position that should have been hers, she resigned. This resignation hurt her ability to continue to progress in Colorado's correctional system, and once again, upon her return she had to start at the bottom.

When Joyce regained the rank of lieutenant and she started to report problems within the inmate population, she did not feel she was being treated professionally. By the time Joyce was threatened and the threat was from staff, not from inmates, she was no longer fully invested in being a part of the Colorado correctional team. Joyce was always attentive to her subordinate staff and her immediately assigned area, but she did not believe that the management team was behaving ethically, and perhaps not even legally. Joyce maintained her responsibility to the state as a correctional professional, but it is hard to see her as a part of the team in such a situation.

George, the inmate with whom Joyce developed a relationship was powerful, a power acknowledged by her sergeant's actions to get him transferred to her cellhouse. The willingness of the sergeant to seek out the transfer of George to help to control other inmates is a clear example of George's perceived power. When George was moved directly into the canteen distribution position and then into the youth program, his power

was advertised to the inmate population. The power that George possessed was conveyed by his mannerisms; he was quiet, self-assured, and confident. These attributes may be what attracted Joyce to George.

Joyce had a very clear sense of where the boundary was, and she knew that she was putting herself in danger of crossing it. Joyce saw the boundary so clearly that she saw no room to take any other action. In essence she saw her feelings as demanding action, and the only action to take was to resign. Joyce went to great lengths to leave in an honorable fashion. The manner in which she ended her employment may explain why she was granted visiting privileges with George when most other former staff were denied access or at least granted access on an inconsistent basis. The visiting policy for former employees changed many times during the 16 years that she visited, but her visits were never interrupted.

When Joyce realized that she was developing feelings for an inmate, she did not see any options but to resign. Joyce did not believe that she could go to anyone and ask to have the inmate moved to another facility or even to ask for a transfer, even though Joyce admits that had he been moved, her feelings may have never developed any further. Joyce's situation was somewhat different from those of the other participants because she was dealing with this issue at a time when women were just beginning to be placed in many positions within the Colorado correctional facilities. Consequently, her actions could have had a lasting impact on women who were pursuing promotions or other leadership opportunities. Joyce knew that she could not turn to anyone else for support or help, and she would have to look inward and depend upon her sense of right and wrong.

This inward analysis led Joyce to make the decision to leave the department and her career.

Lynn

Four themes emerged from constructing Lynn's portrait: Identity as a correctional officer, boundary confusion, power, and the correctional culture created an inability to ask for help. The ability or willingness of Lynn to identify as a correctional officer is central to the decisions she made both in preparation for correctional work and once employed as an officer. Even though Lynn was raised in a corrections family in the heart of the Canon City, she did not grow up with the goal of becoming a correctional employee. In fact, Lynn admits that she did not think about her future much before attending college. Her original career goal of being a forensic investigator was very heavily influenced by the media and was not realistically something that she was willing to pursue. This fact forced her to examine how she could put her educational effort to good use. As a young, single mother, her choices were perhaps more limited than those of other young adults her age. She knew that she wanted to raise her daughter in the town where she was raised and that the support of her parents living nearby was very important to her. Her parents and the life that she lived growing up were powerful motivators to apply for work in the Department of Corrections. She saw that her parents made a decent salary and had freedom to be present at events that were important. Lynn wanted the same type of benefits for her daughter.

When Lynn went to work at the DOC, the reputations of her parents went with her. She was not an ordinary officer. A further distinct difference between her and many of her colleagues was her education. The value of education is something that is not

universally agreed upon within the corrections community, especially at the level of officer (Morn, 1995). When Lynn reported to work as a young, attractive, educated officer who also happened to be the daughter of two very well-known people, she was anything but ordinary.

Lynn had to try harder than most to be part of the team. She worked at making friends, doing her job well, and meeting everyone's expectations. By her own admission, she had a much easier time working with men than with the women who were on her shift. She had a history of getting along better with men than women, so when it came time to become part of the team, she may have been more distrusted by the women. Lynn is an educated and well-read young woman, and her education was obvious, if by no other means than her vocabulary. Lynn was enthusiastic to be at work and eager to learn all of the skills that she would need. This type of enthusiasm made her stand out to her supervisors and trainers. As a result, she was selected to be a part of forced cell entry teams and specialized training more than were other officers. Although she does not think that anyone ever gave her anything that she did not work for, that same opinion was probably not shared by all of her coworkers. This is evident by the way some of the officers never gave her a chance to even get to know them.

Lynn did not feel comfortable to ask for guidance from fellow staff members about her interactions with inmates. She felt that if she could not figure it out, then she might be judged negatively. Lynn mentioned several times that she was doing her job "differently" than other officers. She did not go out of her way to make anyone's day worse, and she intended to be a positive person in the workplace. This may seem like a very admirable quality for any employee in any work environment, but the message she

may have communicate to her colleagues was that their negative ways of interacting with inmates were wrong. No one ever actually told her to stop being so nice or so positive, but for the high security environment, this was not the normal way of interacting with inmates. Lynn also tried to resist some of the negativity that she felt from particular officers by requiring that they follow policy exactly as it was written. When she described delaying these officers at the doors, because she could, she was describing this resistance. Of course, she went on to explain that in the end this approach did not work well for her because they retaliated against her.

When Lynn apologized to the inmate for being part of the group that read and ridiculed the inmate's letter, she communicated to the inmates that she was confused about her role in the workplace. Then, when the use of force incident that Lynn described occurred, she further separated herself from the group identity. Any use of force in a correctional facility is a serious matter. After a team is involved in a use of force, it is a critical part of the corrections culture that all members come together and maintain support for the actions taken. Lynn certainly did not foresee that her action of moving away from the team members while doing her follow up report would have any adverse reaction from team members. She was, after all, just trying to complete her first use of force report in the best way she could. She needed to get to a location that was quieter. This move was not intended to communicate that she disapproved of any of the actions of the team members, yet the backlash that resulted from this one simple move is evidence that perhaps her teammates interpreted her move as disapproval.

After the use of force incident, Lynn thought that she needed to affirm her view of the actions that she took. When she explained herself to an inmate, she again

communicated to her coworkers and the inmates that she was not totally identifying with the officers. This is evident by the way in which her conversation with the inmate was misconstrued. Perhaps the inmate lied to officers and told them that Lynn actually said the use of force should have never happened. Even if the inmate told them exactly what she did say, the conversation was shared with staff for only one purpose: to cause dissension among the officers. This dissension was successfully created. Lynn was confronted by both her supervisor and the other officer involved in the incident about her actions. Lynn was able to explain her actions easily because she had not done anything that she was ashamed of, but she was not able to ever get back the working relationships that she had prior to that incident.

When Lynn was describing her relationships with prior coworkers, she referred to them as guards on more than one occasion. This term is frequently used by the public when talking about correctional officers, but it is rarely used by anyone who respects the profession. Lynn's use of this word would not have been tolerated during her employment. The professional identity of corrections is tied closely to changing the image from a guard to an officer.

John, the inmate with whom Lynn developed a relationship was powerful and respected. The power that John possessed and the respect that he garnered may be particular attributes that attracted Lynn to him in the first place. His power was one reason that their relationship was kept secret for as long as it was. The type of scrutiny within a high security environment includes scrutiny of the employee's movements as well as the inmates'. Her movements and interactions could have been noticed through video monitoring in a variety of locations, audio monitoring by officers assigned to the

control centers, review of letters through the mail room, and the monitoring of phone calls. Inmates are an additional source of information, and Lynn described how one inmate tried to report her conduct. Additionally, most posts in this environment are staffed with at least two people, so Lynn had very little freedom to interact with John when she was alone. All of these features made detection likely. The inmates protecting the relationship decreased one avenue of detection, and their willingness to protect the relationship was very likely a function of the power that John possessed.

Boundary confusion is evident by the fact that Lynn continued to work while being emotionally attached to John. She also crossed boundaries by writing to him and talking to him on the phone. The boundary confusion was described by her when she explained that she thought that her actions were not hurting or even affecting anyone else. Lynn was very clear about the fact that she was breaking rules, but she did not see these rules as necessary components to the boundary between officers and inmates.

When Lynn realized that she was developing feelings for John, she could not ask for help. This was clear from her statement: "I could not even imagine working there after I said those words." Even though boundaries about how to behave towards inmates on a daily basis may have been less clear, the boundary she was violating was very clear. Nothing in her experiences with her family, in basic training, or at work in the facility communicated to her that there was a way to fix this. She was developing feelings for an inmate, and even though he had not asked for anything and early on in the relationship she had not written to him or talked to him on the phone, she could not see going to someone to get moved or to get the inmate moved. The message that was communicated so effectively to her was that the culture of corrections would not stand for this

transgression and that if she had these feelings, she was not cut out for this work. The power behind that message was very clear. She remembered hearing women talking about how they would never, ever, do just exactly what she was thinking of doing. Lynn did not have the power to take on this cultural expectation, and she did not think she would have support from anyone. Even though she knew that many people wanted her to do well, she believed that these same people would not be able to help her in this situation.

Sarah

The construction of Sarah's portrait revealed the same themes (identity as a correctional officer, power, boundary confusion, correctional culture created an inability to ask for help) as Lynn's and Joyce's portraits, but also revealed an additional theme: personal relationship vulnerability. Sarah's path to corrections was very different from those of Lynn and Joyce. From the beginning, she did not want to be there. Sarah never intended to be a correctional employee, even though she grew up in Canon City. However, once there, Sarah did try to get along with coworkers and survive the experience. When she entered corrections, she expected to make a career out of it, so she set her sights on a position that she thought she could actually enjoy: investigations. She was deeply in love with her husband and wanted to make her job with the DOC work for the benefit of their relationship. It is hard to imagine how she could have developed an identity with the group under this set of circumstances. Sarah admits that she never felt like a correctional officer; she was a cop at heart. Even when she was first in college to study radiology, she knew that she was destined to be a cop.

When Sarah was in the process of divorce she realized that apparently everyone at work knew about it, including the inmates. This may have been part of what pushed her further away from coworkers and may have made her more vulnerable to Mike. Sarah had formed a relationship with another correctional employee and was living with him. In some circumstances, this may have worked to make her feel more a part of the team, but she knew that she was only with this man to send a message to her soon to be ex-husband. The reality of her motives for this relationship may have worked to distance her from the team.

Sarah not only crossed an emotional boundary with an inmate; she crossed it with a powerful inmate. Sarah believed that Mike was able to stop the verbal abuse that was directed towards her from other inmates. This verbal abuse is something that caused her considerable discomfort and that her supervisors could not or would not stop. Mike changed the behavior of the other inmates very early on in their relationship process. This communicated a powerful message to Sarah about his power and the fact that he would use this power to help her.

Eliminating the verbal abuse from inmates that is directed toward staff at a low security facility is not that difficult. These inmates have worked their way to an environment that is very open and to job assignments that are often highly coveted. An inmate who is faced with the choice to modify behavior or be regressed to a high security facility often modifies the behavior. The tools to control this behavior were there if anyone had wanted to use them. Sarah believed this fact and did not feel that anyone, other than an inmate named Mike, cared enough about her to control this offensive behavior.

Sarah describes her situation as a classic set up for failure. She found herself in a state of being heavily medicated, in a workplace that did not even pretend to care about her well-being. She did not feel that she could turn to anyone to ask for help or advice on how to handle inmate issues. The resulting boundary confusion was perhaps an inevitable outcome. When Sarah was surrounded with inmates who seemed to care about her as a person, she started to shift away from being an officer to something else. This confusion about who was on her “team” resulted in her violating an emotional boundary several times, and in one instance, of violating a physical boundary. Sarah stated that Mike was only able to get that close to her because of their earlier childhood connection, but then she later clarified that she was so vulnerable that she may have crossed a boundary with another specific inmate if Mike were not in the unit. The fact that Sarah knew she was vulnerable even in her “fog” leads one to the obvious question: How did her supervisor and coworkers miss this fact?

When Mike moved into the unit, Sarah once again asked to be moved, but this was only seen as a manipulation to get around her already denied transfer request. Sarah wanted to get moved before any emotional attachment was developed between her and Mike because she knew that she was in trouble, that she was vulnerable. If a legitimate suicide attempt was not enough to get someone to care, she was absolutely not going to tell them that she was afraid that she might develop an emotional attachment for an inmate.

Sarah knew, even while experiencing life through a fog that she was in trouble. She was under the care of a therapist who helped her to navigate her recovery, and a key component to her recovery was a chance to start over at work. When she was not only

turned down for a transfer but then also labeled a problem, Sarah very clearly got the message that she was on her own. Asking for help was not an option. This feeling of having no one to turn to for support was the exact opposite of the popular rhetoric of the department. As Sarah grappled with her sanity, she saw time and again how the DOC family would come to the aid of fellow officers. In fact, the Correctional Peace Officer Foundation was being promoted throughout the Department as an organization that was dedicated to “taking care of our own” (Ferramosca, 2009) during this same time period. In the middle of all of this talk of family, Sarah was in desperate need of the family. This correctional family was not supportive, and this family violated her trust by sharing information about the crisis that she was going through with inmates.

When her relationship with her husband started to deteriorate and ultimately ended, her relationship status was apparently known by all the staff and inmates in the facility. When Sarah realized that the inmates knew what she was going through, she realized that she had no privacy or support. This violation of her privacy made Sarah feel more vulnerable.

Kathy

Kathy’s portrait revealed the same five themes as Sarah’s: identity as a correctional officer, power, boundary confusion, the correctional culture that created an inability to ask for help, and personal relationship vulnerability. There was nothing in Kathy’s life that led her to corrections other than the need for a job. Her college education prepared her for a teaching profession, but even within this preparation, there was no preparation for working with special populations such as inmates. After her

failed attempt to gain employment as a regular teacher, she applied for a contract position in corrections.

Kathy described the environments in corrections where she worked as safe. The difference between the women's facilities, the youth facility and the medium security facility are noted in the portrait. Kathy's portrait described the program areas of the facilities as removed from the rest of the correctional facility. She talked about the cohesive work group among the teachers, but the rest of the employees in the facility were on a different schedule and there was little interaction between the teachers and the correctional officers.

Differences in power were reflected throughout in Kathy's portrait. The power that Pete possessed as a para-pro moved him into a position that allowed Kathy to cross emotional boundaries early in the process. Kathy saw Pete's power continue to increase when he protected her from certain inmates. When she realized that his advice about these inmates was accurate, his power increased. Pete continued to gain power as Kathy crossed physical boundaries and smuggled cigarettes into the facility. The amount of power that he possessed was obvious when Kathy did not report his actions after he raped her. Kathy did not report the rape at the time and has no desire to report the rape at this point. She does not feel she would have been believed then and she would not be believed now. Kathy clarified that the statute of limitations has passed for this crime and Pete is no longer under any type of supervision by the Colorado Department of Corrections, so he could not be held accountable through the internal administrative process within the department.

Kathy felt powerless to prevent the sexual assault because she knew that she had already crossed so many boundaries that she would not be believed. Kathy did not ask for help at any point as the relationship progressed. Initially she may not have wanted anyone to interfere with her spending time with Pete, and later she did not want to get him in trouble. Eventually, she had crossed so many boundaries that she believed that she could not ask for help. The process that occurred between the sexual assault and the first consensual sexual encounter illustrates the power that Pete had over her thinking. She eventually engaged in consensual sex with him on more than one occasion, and by that time, she felt that she was in love with him. During this entire process Pete was even able to convince Kathy that she would not be held accountable for her actions because she was well liked by “everyone.” Kathy recalls going to training that addressed the changes in the law that prohibited sexual activity between correctional employees and inmates, but somehow she believed that she would not be prosecuted. This belief was due, in part, to her belief that the administration liked her, but it was also built on her knowledge of how other incidents had been handled in the past.

The corrections environments in which she worked were very different from one another. The boundaries that were expected between the youth and the correctional employees were not at all what are expected within most other correctional environments. Kathy was fairly efficient at adjusting her behavior between each facility based on the culture of each facility. She described boundaries that varied based on the inmate’s position within the school. Pete was given a higher status than the other para-pros. The differences in boundaries that Kathy saw modeled by a variety of correctional employees

may have led her to believe that the boundary violations that she had crossed with Pete may not have been that serious.

Kathy was in the process of getting a divorce from her husband and her coworkers and Pete knew that she was having difficulty in her marriage. Kathy did not realize that sharing this part of her personal life was considered a major violation in this setting. Her coworkers did not tell her that she had crossed a line by sharing this information with them and with inmates, and this may have increased her vulnerability to crossing a boundary with Pete.

Review of the Research Questions

The portraits of the participants provided data to answer the research questions for this study. What is the process that a female employee goes through from the point of pursuing a career in corrections to the point of establishing a personal relationship with an inmate, including preparation for corrections work and a description of the environment in which they worked? The path that led each participant to corrections work varied among the four participants. Lynn and Sarah had specific educational preparation for a law enforcement career, even though neither planned to work in a correctional facility. Joyce and Kathy ended up in corrections because they needed a job. The environments in which they worked differed based on the security level and the physical layout. The high security environment that Lynn described was dramatically different from the open, minimum security environment where Sarah worked. The working relationships with coworkers also differed. These varied elements of each woman's job assignment dictated different interactions with inmates. Yet, each woman

felt a connection with a specific inmate, a connection that grew into a personal relationship.

What type of personal involvement with the inmate occurred, including type of contact, length of contact, and actions taken to achieve this contact? Each of the four women described the extent of the personal involvement that she developed with inmates. Joyce described a relationship that was limited to feeling an emotional attraction during the time that she was a corrections employee. Her relationship with George did not develop beyond her feelings until after she resigned. Joyce ultimately married George and spent the next 16 years visiting him while he was in prison. The relationship ended when George passed away.

The high security environment that Lynn described prevented her from a physical relationship with John, but she did take specific actions to be able to talk to him on the phone and to write and receive letters from him. After she left the Department of Corrections, Lynn married John and planned to have a life with him when he was released. After several years of trying to sustain the relationship, Lynn and John were legally separated. Lynn has occasional contact from John, but she has no plans for a future with him.

Sarah described a relationship that was limited to emotional support and only one physical action during her employment with the Department of Corrections. Sarah left corrections soon after Mike touched her because she was afraid that she would allow a physical relationship to develop. She continued to communicate with Mike after her resignation and visited him in prison twice. After her resignation, Sarah worked at

developing a relationship with Mike and his family, but the relationship ended when he asked her to cross a boundary that could have resulted in criminal charges against her.

Kathy's relationship progressed from emotional support to sexual contact. She described the actions that she took to share her feelings with Pete and the actions she took to help him by providing contraband cigarettes. The decisions that Kathy made to continue in the relationship beyond the point when Pete sexually assaulted her were described. After her termination from the Department of Corrections, she sustained a relationship with Pete and his family that became more distant as the years passed.

How did the relationship with the male inmate affect the former employee's life after the violation occurred? The effects of these relationships on the women in this study are significant, and all four women continue to struggle with different elements of the decisions that they made. Joyce gave up a career in corrections to pursue a relationship with George that she believed was in keeping with God's will. When George passed away, she felt as if she was alone in her grief. She has rebuilt a relationship with her daughter and is living a full life, but not the life she expected. Lynn described a relationship to which she was fully committed with John. She believed at the time that the sacrifices she made in her career path were worth it. As she looks back at the decision she made and her criminal conviction, she expresses regret about the way she handled the relationship. Lynn has been able to sustain a relationship with her parents, but she is aware of the damage to that relationship. Sarah described her "crazy phase" with Mike as "dodging a bullet." She knows that she could have easily made the wrong decision and ruined any chance of a future career in law enforcement. Sarah has moved past the relationship with Mike and has no contact with

him, but it is apparent that she is still shaken by the serious consequences of her decisions. The effect on Kathy's life has been substantial. The felony conviction and the requirement to register as a sex offender resulted in the loss of her teaching license. Kathy returned to school to become a cosmetologist and has adapted to a significantly different life than what she expected. Kathy has worked hard to recover from the effects of a very public process that exposed her story to the community in which she was raised.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the process that permits a female correctional employee to develop a relationship with a male inmate. The use of the portraiture method allowed this process to be examined in great detail from the point of view of the women involved in the relationship. Portraiture has been touted as a tool that can be used to capture the complexity of this type of issue, so that the actors and the context can be understood. Settings that are difficult to understand or that may be unknown to most people offer specific concerns, so this type of deep study and description can provide knowledge about a process that is often not captured by other methods (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983).

Conducting research within a correctional system can be difficult for the outside researcher due to issues of access and credibility (Struckman-Johnson, 1998). Additionally, conducting research as an insider can be difficult due to concerns about bias. In this study, I was uniquely positioned to bridge these difficulties and reach a population that is often inaccessible. The portraits of each of these women may not match the perception of others, but these portraits describe what these individual women felt and believed.

Boundary Violation Model

The portraits of Joyce, Lynn, Sarah, and Kathy describe the relationship process—the decisions they made to move them to a point of developing a relationship with an inmate. The portraits reveal the type of involvement they had with the inmate and the actions that they took to develop or hide the relationship. The environments in

which they worked are also described. Each setting and the individual circumstances differed, but common themes emerged. The major differences in the individual relationship processes revolved around the length of each relationship, the extent of the relationship, and how the decision was made to end employment. The boundary violation model (see Figure 5.1) depicts the relationships between the emerging themes, the community, the correctional organizational culture, and the prison environment.

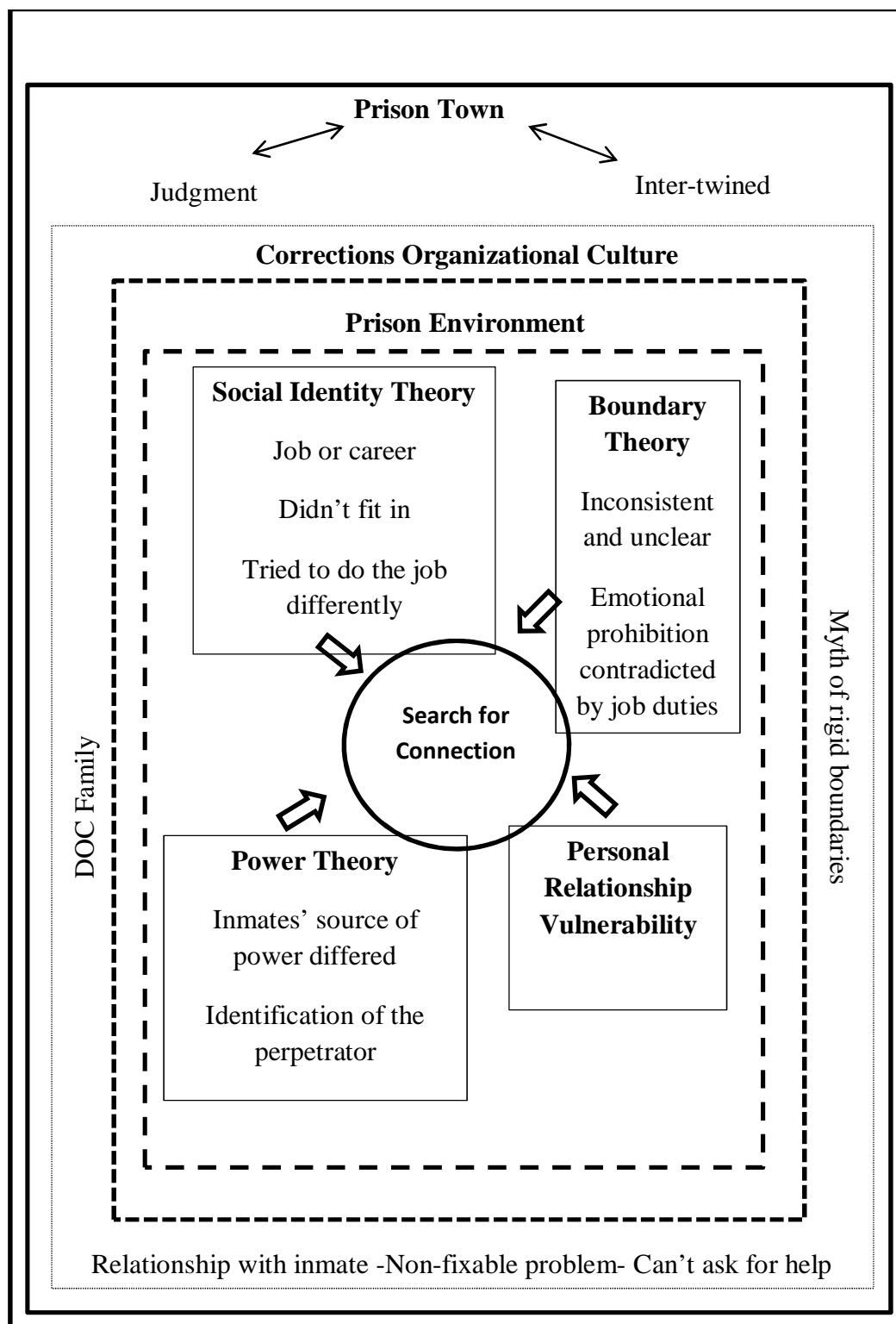


Figure 5.1 Boundary Violation Model

Prison Town

Each participant talked about the community in which they worked and lived during these relationships. Three of the participants continued to live in the area. Kathy shared that she remained living in her home town because she was not going to let shame run her out her community. Joyce moved away but eventually returned to be near her family; Lynn, a single mother, depended upon her family and friends in the area for support, so she remained. Sarah chose to leave the area to continue her life where people did not know her story. All of the participants communicated how much the prison is intertwined with the communities in which they lived. Lynn described going to the local Wal-Mart and running into people who work at the Department of Corrections. These encounters still cause her moments of shame, judgment, and embarrassment. Kathy also described the fear of judgment from members of the community. These towns are small communities and their size may magnify the amount of scrutiny that boundary violations receive or at least the perception of that scrutiny.

Canon City is a town that is intertwined with the prisons. The history, economy, and social structure cannot be separated from the corrections industry. It is a prison town, not merely a town that has a prison. The participant recruitment strategy is built around this fundamental premise. All potential participants for this study were identified by local residents. Members of the community possess a great deal of knowledge about events that happen within the prisons, including everyday routine functions, incidents of violence, and details of staff misconduct.

Corrections Organizational Culture

The corrections organizational culture is embedded in each Canon City facility and extends into the community. A strong part of this culture is the concept of family support and unity among staff; the DOC family is touted as a positive attribute of working for the Colorado Department of Corrections. This message is communicated at many levels of the organization and at organizational functions, such as basic training graduations, ceremonial dedications, and facility-based recognition ceremonies (J. Langloss, personal communication, June 6, 2012). The idea that there exists a DOC family that will always be there for support was communicated clearly by Sarah. She described the abandonment that she felt when the mythical family was not there to help her when she needed it most.

The culture includes the myth that rigid boundaries exist between inmates and staff and that the boundaries are known to all correctional staff. This myth is perpetuated by the training program that addresses boundary maintenance as if there is only one way to interact with inmates. The training is very much geared toward a medium custody level inmate and does not address differences between institutions or positions (K. Cathcart, personal communication February 12, 2013). The current training provided to employees does not address the continuum of boundary-violating behavior that exists (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2012a). Except for a specific policy that prohibits all relationships with inmates, there is no guidance, through training or policy, for the less serious boundary issues with which correctional employees struggle on a daily basis. Prevention of the less serious violations may be a key component to the prevention of boundary violations that are criminal in nature because there is rarely a criminal

boundary violation that is not preceded by a variety of less serious boundary violations (Blackburn et al., 2011; White, 1993).

The perception that a relationship with an inmate is a problem that cannot be fixed is never really discussed by correctional leaders. Employees are told very clearly that any type of sexual relationship with inmates is against policy and can be a criminal offense. The training in this area is clear and specific. However, for all the other types of boundary violations, there is rarely any discussion at all among correctional leaders, unless another law is broken, such as introduction of contraband. The culture does not have any tolerance for this problem, and the perceived repercussions are significant.

The culture discourages current successful employees from openly discussing mistakes they have made in their careers when they crossed a boundary with an inmate. So these boundary crossings that did not cause harm and did not result in the end of a career are never discussed. In the absence of discussion of these types of mistakes, other employees are led to believe that these successful employees never struggled with boundary issues and were never confused about boundary placement. The silence on this important topic further isolates people who are having a difficult time identifying the boundary in their particular context, and these individuals may begin to question their suitability for corrections work. The end result is that employees are discouraged from asking for help with any type of boundary violation. I am not aware of any commonly known examples of female employees who have developed an attraction to an inmate, asked for help, and are still successfully employed in the Department of Corrections.

The discomfort that I felt during the initial discussions with potential participants that took place in public places is another significant indicator of the strength of the

culture and the connections within the community. When I saw former colleagues in these same public places, I felt as if I may be judged for being seen talking with these particular former employees. As I began to get to know Joyce, Lynn, Sarah, and Kathy, the discomfort diminished when we happened to be in a public setting together. My level of comfort may have increased because of the relationship that I was developing with each of these women or because of the increasing length of time since I had worked in the DOC.

Prison Environment

The structure of posts and the layout of the correctional facilities were components of each portrait. Sarah described working in a housing unit as the only correctional employee assigned to the area. This type of assignment is not uncommon, especially at lower security level facilities. Many correctional systems have replaced large housing units supervised by several employees with smaller, direct observation units similar to what Sarah described (Gilmartin & Davis, 1986). These smaller units were designed to increase the interaction between inmates and employees in an effort to reduce violence and increase opportunities for employees to model appropriate social skills to inmates. At the opposite end of the security continuum, the high security facilities have few posts staffed with only one person. These environments are managed in such a way that much of the behavior of inmates and employees is monitored constantly. Lynn's portrait is evidence that employee boundary violations can occur even under this intense monitoring. Kathy and Joyce both described developing a relationship with an inmate in a medium security facility. Medium security facilities have some of the features that allow for electronic monitoring of inmates and staff, and these facilities

usually have staffing requirements for at least two employees working together in areas with inmate contact.

The freedom of inmates to move within the facility and the type of work assigned to each participant in this study reveal differences between the portraits. The relationship each woman had with other employees was influenced by the facility's specific procedures and the differences in the job duties. Lynn was in a position whereby she could have worked in any location within the facility, while Kathy had her own classroom and regularly interacted with the same smaller set of employees.

Social Identity

Within the prison environment are the elements of identity, boundaries, power, and personal relationship vulnerability. This boundary violation model is built upon the framework of each of these theories. The social identity theory purports that identification to a team or group guides individuals' actions and influences their support of the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This study examined components of the identity of a correctional employee as it affected the development of a relationship with an inmate. The path that leads employees to this work, including whether they viewed it as a job or a career, was important in understanding this process. Two major differences related to identity were revealed by these participants. Lynn entered corrections with no particular plan prior to her college graduation. The fact that she had a criminal justice degree did not mean, in her case, that she was preparing for work in a correctional facility. She took the job as a correctional officer because it was a good paying job. She did not describe her work as a correctional officer as a career path. Joyce approached the work within correctional facilities as a career from the moment that she started to work in

Iowa. She referred to herself as a professional correctional officer before most correctional systems were working to improve their professional image (Cullen, Link, Wolfe, & Frank, 1985). This difference in paths and identification with the job influenced the decisions that Joyce and Lynn made regarding the relationship with George and John. Joyce identified with corrections so much so that she could not handle the possibility of tainting her reputation by continuing in her role while developing feelings for George. Lynn stayed until her relationship was discovered because it was the best paying job in town.

Data from Sarah revealed that not everyone fits into the cultural identity, and some people have a hard time figuring out who is there to support them. Sarah described the process that she went through to the point of doubting that she belonged to the team. She did not particularly think that the inmates were on her side, but she definitely did not believe her coworkers were supportive of her. Lynn tried to do the job in a way that was different from the norm for a correctional officer. She mentioned that she was more positive and kind to inmates, and she did not see any reason to make their day any worse than it needed to be. The modeling that she saw from other correctional officers was negative, belligerent, and unprofessional in her view. These clashes with the accepted identity of the culture were part of the process that pushed Lynn and Sarah away from their coworkers and the identity of the correctional officer.

The human connection between employees is crucial to forming a cohesive team that is working towards the same goal (Flaherty-Zonis, 2007). These portraits reveal that somewhere in each story, a personal connection that was needed was not there. Bureaucracies can dictate many procedures and processes, but they cannot implement a

policy that makes employees care about one another. A policy can be written that governs supervisor responsibilities and coworker interactions, but a policy cannot force a person to see beyond these rules to reach out to a person who is not succeeding in the environment. The stories of each of the women in this study reveal details when people in the system failed to help them. Sarah was ostracized from her coworkers by a series of events that led to her to totally withdraw to the point of attempting suicide. Kathy did not reach out to her coworkers for advice or help in this situation, even though she had received support and help from them in the past. Each of these women worked with a group of people who could have seen that they needed help. These stories do include descriptions of individual coworkers or supervisors who were supportive and provided particular assistance, but when these women began to develop feelings of attraction towards an inmate, this support was not described. At a particular point in their career, these women moved away from their identity as correctional employees to something else. This shift was described by each participant differently based upon the decisions that they made about the relationship.

Boundary Theory

Boundary theory includes the concepts of both boundary crossings and boundary violations in the lives of individuals (Gutheil, 2005). The portraits of the women in the study reveal a world wherein crossing a boundary that did no harm was not confronted and not used as a training opportunity. Only boundary violations were addressed, and then the assumption was that such a violation was so clear that it must have been an intentional act of misconduct. In reality, there are no clear boundaries that everyone knows and accepts for all inmates in all correctional facilities. Instead, boundaries are

applied inconsistently with different inmates, in different settings, by different professionals. Kathy's portrait describes three different settings with different boundary expectations. Within these settings, she also described differences based on individual roles. The inconsistent and unclear application of boundaries makes it difficult for some correctional professionals to adapt to this work. Sarah described different approaches to individual inmates based on their position and status within the living unit and treatment program.

A correctional system is a bureaucracy that is characterized by excessive regulation and policy. However, in this important area of staff and inmate interaction, no clear rule or guidance is offered. The fact that not one rule or even a set of rules can define the boundary between staff and inmates is made obvious by the overly broad policy statement that prohibits employees from establishing emotional relationships with inmates (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2011a). This policy does not actually prevent emotional relationships in the Colorado correctional facilities between inmates and employees. These types of relationships exist, and they vary a great deal in their depth and breadth. The women in this study defined the boundary of an emotional relationship differently. Joyce's portrait illustrates a specific boundary between the role of correctional officer and an inmate. Kathy described different boundaries for the different inmates with whom she worked. The job duties that correctional employees are assigned are a component of defining this moving boundary. Many employees depend upon an inmate to complete their job duties, such as when George was assigned to distribute canteen or when Pete was helping the teachers in their classrooms, so the boundaries shift. This interdependent relationship demonstrates the reciprocity that

Sykes (1958) described in *The Society of Captives*. This environment requires reciprocity, and consequently, the reciprocity negates one clear boundary between staff and inmates.

Power Theory

Power theory has provided definitions of many different types of power. Legitimate and referent power were apparent in the portraits of the women in this study. Power is considered a natural component of correctional facilities, but it is usually assumed that the power is in the hands of the employees. The power of inmates, either individually or as a group, is not so readily acknowledged. The portraits in this study described different types of power that inmates possess. Sarah described the Mike's actions when he was apparently able to control the behavior of other inmates by stopping the verbal abuse. Not only was he powerful enough to make other inmates change their behavior, he was successful where correctional staff failed. Lynn and Joyce described attributes of referent power when they described George and John. These two men had engendered admiration and respect from other inmates and from employees. Kathy described Pete as possessing power to convince her that what she was doing was not that bad. She believed him when he told her that the administration liked her so much that she would not be held to the same standard as others. The fact that Kathy believed this at a time when the law had just criminalized their behavior speaks volumes to his powerful influence and charisma. Pete's power was further illustrated when Kathy felt as if she could not report his actions when he raped her. Kathy did not think that she would be believed, and she was afraid that Pete would report her for bringing cigarettes into the facility for him. His power was so complete that she admits that she did not even "go

there” in her head. She did not think through her choices and come to the decision not to report; she did not think she had choices. This lack of choice goes back to the corrections culture. She believed that her mistakes would be unforgivable, because she had developed an emotional relationship with an inmate that led to smuggling in contraband.

As an outsider, it is easy to see how each of these women gave power to these inmates. At first glance, it would seem that these correctional employees possessed legitimate power and could have maintained control with the full force of the department to back them up. But it is not that simple. Sarah tried to handle the verbal abuse through the official process but was not supported to document the behavior, let alone to hold them accountable. Kathy was in a work environment where the power of the inmate para-pros was established. She could have implemented a different structure within her classroom, but, again, she depended upon para-pros to help her achieve the expectations of her job. Pete certainly took advantage of the situation and pushed the limits of his power significantly past what was given to him, and his interpersonal skill at convincing Kathy that he was to be trusted gave him an edge. Lynn described a presence or charisma emanating from John the first time she noticed him. This charisma influenced her boundary decisions. It is notable that instances of coercive power were not described, and none of the women in this study stated that they were involved in a relationship with these inmates because they were afraid of them or of the environment.

Legitimate power forms the basis for policy and law that labels correctional employees as the perpetrator in any boundary violation that is a criminal act. The law in Colorado labeled Kathy as the perpetrator, and she was convicted of a felony based on the law. Kathy may well have been a perpetrator legally, but her description of her

relationship with Pete does not indicate that she was a sexual predator. Worley et al. (2003) referred to the inmates involved in boundary violations with employees as predators or manipulators. Retired Colorado Warden Rod Cozzetto believes that many correctional professionals do not think that the employee is the actual perpetrator in all cases, or, at the very least, is not solely responsible for the boundary violation (personal communication, February 13, 2013). The Colorado Department of Corrections Code of Penal Discipline includes a class one offense (rule 19) of Solicitation of a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer misconduct (Colorado Department of Corrections, 2011b). The infraction is described thus:

An offender commits this offense when he attempts or is complicit to an act(s) where he seeks to obtain as by persuasion, intimidation, or influence, to entice any DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer into an unlawful act and or violation of CDOC policy for any reason. (p. 9)

This charge is used when an inmate is discovered to be involved in a boundary violation with an employee. Punishing the inmate for his involvement in a boundary violation sends a conflicting message about just who is the perpetrator and who is the victim. The existence of this rule implies that the employee is not the lone perpetrator and that the inmate may possess more or different power than the legitimate power of the officer.

Personal Relationship Vulnerability

People in all work settings, including correctional facilities, may experience periods in their lives of personal relationship vulnerability. The vulnerability that often accompanies a personal relationship crisis has been acknowledged in a variety of settings, and this vulnerability can play a significant part in the boundary violation process

(Faulkner & Regehr, 2011). In non-correctional work settings, coworkers are often aware when someone in the group is in the process of divorce or is having trouble in a relationship, and, yes, sometimes coworkers will take advantage of that situation. In a correctional setting, inmates often try to capitalize on this type of vulnerability, and the consequences can be more severe. Sarah and Kathy were in the process of a divorce when they developed a relationship with Mike and Pete. They both acknowledge that this made them more vulnerable. Both of these women still believe that the inmates sincerely cared for them at the time. Kathy continues to be in occasional contact with Pete, and she has high hopes for his future happiness. Kathy believes that he is a good man, and she does not believe that she was manipulated by him. Sarah is at a place in her life where she described whole experience with Mike as her “crazy phase,” but she acknowledged that the feelings seemed very real to her at the time. The sincerity that they felt from the inmates was at a time when their marriages were ending and they were vulnerable. Joyce and Lynn were not involved in a serious relationship with anyone at the time of the boundary violation. Lynn described telling the inmates that she was in a relationship to help insulate her from inmates trying to get close to her because her lack of a personal relationship made her feel vulnerable.

Connection

The women in this study did not move away from the identity of a correctional employee because they were bad people. They did not enter the Colorado Department of Corrections so that they would be able to break a law or a rule; instead, they entered the department with the intent of being the best correctional employees they could be. Their move away from the identity of their coworkers, across the boundary into a relationship

with a powerful inmate, was the result of moving toward something. Each participant described feelings of attraction, friendship, or companionship towards someone that was available. The physical proximity of these inmates may have influenced the relationship (Quinn, 1977). These relationships provided comfort that they didn't have in other aspects of their lives. Joyce shared that the relationship that she eventually formed with George made her feel as if she was cherished. Lynn benefited by having a relationship with an inmate who possessed power while working in a violent and hostile environment. Sarah gained a connection with another human being, the only real connection that she felt during a time when her marriage was ending and she felt isolated at work. Kathy felt protected by Pete, and he filled a personal relationship void left by her divorce.

These relationships were not totally negative; in fact, each participant gained something positive from the relationships. They all gained a sense of connection during a time when they needed a connection with someone who cared about them. This type of connection was not found with coworkers or in their personal lives. They moved into these relationships, even though this move was a dramatic step over the cultural boundary. This was a one-way move because there was no returning to the correctional team. The need to find a connection was more powerful than the need to belong to this team.

Relationship Effect

The four portraits describe the impact of the relationship upon the lives of these four women. All four women described losses that they experienced as a result of these relationships, but some described positive effects that were realized. Sarah believes that she is a better police officer because of her work as a correctional officer. Kathy was

pushed into a different career field that she feels more positive about and that has given her more freedom to be available for her children. Joyce was involved in a relationship that gave her something that she had never before experienced: She felt cherished. Currently, these four women appear to be living positive, productive lives and are actively involved with their families.

Each of these women admitted to making difficult choices because of the relationship decisions that they made while working for the Colorado Department of Corrections. Joyce's decision to leave a career that she loved was a decision that she struggled to make. Lynn has worked to regain a relationship with her family and struggled to cover her expenses from her lowered salary. Sarah worked hard just to regain her sense of self and her sanity. The pain that Kathy described as a result of being the victim of rape and not being able to ask for help is still obvious. When she talks about the assault, it is clear that she felt trapped by her decisions and actions. She was trapped between her feeling towards Pete and the legal and cultural reality of her workplace. The criminal convictions that Lynn and Kathy have on their record have certainly affected some of their choices and blocked some opportunities. Each of the women in this study stated that they would not make the same decisions about their relationships with inmates if they had it to do over.

Implications for Correctional Leaders

Correctional leaders continue to struggle with the consequences of boundary violating behavior within correctional facilities. Facilitation of escapes, introduction of contraband, and sexual behavior between employees and inmates most often result in administrative and criminal sanctions against the employee involved. These types of

violations are easy to define; however, the many other types of boundary violations are not so clear. The portraits of the women in this study highlight a wide range of violations that occurred within correctional facilities, each including the development of an emotional relationship with an inmate. When these women stepped across the emotional boundary, they had not violated a criminal law, yet their actions did compromise the safety of the employees, inmates, and the public. When an emotional relationship begins to develop between a correctional employee and an inmate, other inmates are often the first to notice, as evident in Lynn's portrait. Lynn described the actions of an inmate who was aware of the relationship and who pushed her to extend the boundary of acceptable behavior because of that knowledge. As a result, Lynn did not document his negative behavior, fearing that her inappropriate relationship might be exposed. This inmate possessed knowledge that gave him power over the actions of the officer, and he used that power. This is an example of institutional behavior that falls short of a criminal offense and that can be directly tied to the issue of boundary violations. Given enough time, this inmate most likely would have continued to pressure Lynn to ignore other key components of her duties as an officer.

The portraits in this study make it clear that most boundary violations may begin as small, almost insignificant actions, but that they can develop into criminal actions on the part of the employee. The full extent of this problem is not known and cannot easily be measured. The data being collected for the Prison Rape Elimination Act are beginning to track the violations that cross a sexual boundary; however, these types of violations are often found at the end of a continuum of many more minor violations. Most correctional systems have mechanisms to track the number of disciplinary actions taken against

employees or the numbers of employees who are referred for criminal prosecution, but again, these behaviors are at the end of the continuum. Each of the portraits in this study shows a progression that begins with minor actions or minor reactions to specific inmates.

The culture of corrections communicates that good employees do not cross the professional boundary between correctional employees and inmates. So when instances of boundary violating behavior occur, it is easy to attribute the problem to the individual committing the violation. The Bad Apple Theory is often used to explain these violations by declaring that the wrong person was hired (Tschan, 2007). If boundary violations could be eliminated by improving the selection process of employees, then the wrong type of person would not be put in a position to commit these violations. However, the variation between participants in this study suggests there is no one type of person who commits a boundary violation. The participants in this study varied in educational preparation, age, position within the facility, relationship status at the time the violation occurred, and security level of the facility. If the Bad Apple Theory is valid and the wrong persons were hired, then it seems likely that they would not last long in the correctional environment before violating a boundary with an inmate, but both Kathy and Joyce had worked for over ten years in corrections before they developed a relationship with an inmate. This length of time on the job seems to question the easy explanation that the wrong person was hired.

In the absence of attributing this to individual failure, the organizational response aimed at preventing boundary violations of employees needs to be thoroughly examined by correctional leaders and a commitment to true organizational change must be the basis

for any action (White, 1993). Policy and training are typical organizational responses, but they have not been able to stop boundary violating behavior within the Colorado Department of Corrections, even though a variety of changes have been made in both areas. The Colorado Department of Corrections Code of Conduct is the primary policy that addresses boundaries between employees and inmates. This policy has evolved into a list of rules rather than a document that provides guidance for employee conduct. This list of rules does not reflect the reality of the correctional environment. A code of conduct that provides general guidance regarding behavior, including interactions among coworkers and interactions with inmates, is needed. An effective code must be applicable to the variation in boundaries within the correctional facilities so that employees can make informed decisions in the specific work environments in which they will find themselves. To merely publish a broad statement that prohibits emotional relationships has not been helpful. The participants in this study can now describe when they crossed a boundary with the specific inmate, but they did not necessarily know they were doing so at the time. Lynn described taking that big step of responding to John when he wrote to her the first time, and she knew then that she was crossing a boundary, but she did not have that same clarity the first time he put the greeting in his window and she failed to confront the behavior. Sarah knows now that those beginning conversations with Mike led to her developing feelings for him, but she did not realize at that time how close she would get to him. They both describe a progression down a slippery slope (Spinaris, 2008).

A written code of conduct might not have made it obvious to Lynn and Sarah during these first boundary crossings, but it might have helped their coworkers to

recognize the problem. A code that gives coworkers permission and even the responsibility to reach out to an employee struggling to maintain boundaries is needed. Current policy and laws have created an environment where coworkers are afraid to intervene because they might be accused of harassment or later implicated in the criminal investigation as someone who helped to hide the relationship (S. Wilson, personal communication, November 13, 2012). Just as inmates are in a good position to recognize the first boundary crossings by employees, coworkers are also in a good position to recognize and confront these crossings. Minor boundary crossings should be used as examples to help correctional employees and provide support to them as they learn the nuances of each specific environment. The human connection that is often lost in large bureaucracies should be emphasized within the code and role modeled by supervisors at all levels of the organization. The espoused family approach between employees can be reinforced in this manner.

Training is relied upon as a primary method to provide correctional employees with skills to protect them from inmate manipulation. But correctional leaders may benefit from a review of current boundary violation training, including the content and presentation format. The formal training that Lynn, Sarah, and Kathy attended informed them about potential manipulation by inmates and the consequences of crossing a criminal boundary, but this training did not prevent these women from becoming involved in inappropriate relationships with inmates. Preparing employees for an environment in which they may be manipulated by inmates is important, but the actual human connections that exist within correctional facilities between inmates and employees must be acknowledged and discussed. This connection is rarely formally

acknowledged, but is evident throughout the portraits of the participants in this study. The variety of relationships described ranges from communicating with an inmate behind a steel door to depending upon the inmate to help teach students in a classroom. Training for pre-service employees as well as in-service employees must address the vulnerability of employees as they change and adapt to corrections work. Changes in the personal relationship of employees have been identified as a consistent vulnerability of employees who are involved in boundary violations. The changes individuals experience in life may mean that at certain points they are more vulnerable in the correctional environment than at other points in their career. Training can provide a forum for coworkers and supervisors to openly discuss the importance of identifying changes among coworkers so that vulnerabilities can be identified and employees in question can be supported to ensure that they are not manipulated by inmates. During my 31 years working in correctional facilities in Colorado, I heard many employees say that they leave their personal life outside the fence and pick it up on the way home, but this is rarely the reality. This type of compartmentalization may prevent coworkers from knowing about the struggles of a coworker, but inmates are quick to notice such struggles. Although, inmates do not have a hidden gift that allows them to see changes in employees, they have the luxury of being able to watch and observe correctional employees, twenty-four hours a day.

Fundamentally, training and policy are not sufficient to eliminate boundary violations within correctional facilities. The corrections culture must be modified so that an open discussion among employees about boundary crossings or violations is encouraged. This current culture communicates the message that good correctional

employees should be able to figure out, on their own, where the boundary with an inmate exists in each situation. Each of the participants in this study revealed that asking for help or guidance about boundaries was not a real option. Changing the culture so that employees will seek assistance from coworkers or supervisors before serious boundary violations occur is critical, but changing a culture that is deeply embedded in an institution is difficult. If leaders are willing to talk openly about their own boundary struggles during their careers, the cultural barrier that currently prevents this discussion may become less daunting. A training program may be a good mechanism to encourage this type of discussion (Flaherty-Zonis, 2007), but role modeling by correctional leaders must occur for successful change. This type of role modeling may lead to real organizational change.

Communication about boundary issues among employees within work groups is necessary if boundary crossings are to be used as learning experiences. In therapeutic environments, transference and counter transference are expected components of the therapy process (Freud, 1959). The fact that correctional professionals believe that boundary issues are a significant problem (Alexander, 2011) indicates these issues are predictable within correctional facilities and should be expected. They are not rare occurrences. This information should form the basis for frequent discussions about boundaries among correctional employees. Discussions that are held in a non-threatening manner can highlight boundary crossings that have occurred and provide a forum for discussing actions that should be taken to reinforce the appropriate boundary with the specific employee and inmate. A shift in the culture may also encourage employees to reach out to employee assistance professionals or other therapists to discuss boundary

concerns in their work environment. Changing the culture so that the institutionalization of a therapeutic relationship with a professional is acceptable may help employees to develop a strategy to prevent or recover from boundary mistakes. This type of shift in the correctional culture may have a significant effect towards reducing minor boundary crossings and potentially towards eliminating boundary violations.

The fear of judgment, discipline, criminal charges, or of being ostracized prevents employees from reaching out for help. Joyce had worked in correctional facilities for over ten years, and she did not believe that she could ask for a transfer or ask to have George moved to another facility. Lynn could not even imagine working there after saying the words to ask anyone for help. Joyce, Lynn, Sarah, and Kathy knew that there was no solution to the problem that they faced and there was no one to go to for help, so they made choices that ended their careers in the Colorado Department of Corrections. In order to reduce boundary violations, there must be a valid option to continue employment if an employee crosses a boundary. Employees must be able to report a boundary violation and know that they can be helped. Understandably, a boundary violation that includes a criminal act may not ever result in continued employment, and other non-criminal actions may be serious enough to require disciplinary action, but not all boundary violations need to end in termination or resignation of the employee. This type of shift in the perception of how the corrections system handles boundary violations will provide support as employees adapt to the environment and will encourage them to turn to coworkers and supervisors for help. Employees may be less likely to turn away from their identity as correctional employees and less likely to turn to an inmate for help. If

Lynn felt she could have turned to her supervisor for help, she would have faced the possibility of disciplinary action, but she may have been able to save her career.

Another aspect of the culture of the Colorado Department of Corrections that affects boundary violations issues is the manner in which posts and assignments are made. Retired Associate Warden Tim Chase described the culture as one that is built on the premise that all new employees must pay their dues. For custody employees, these dues include assignments to the least desirable posts, often isolated posts. The more desirable posts, shifts, and work locations are reserved for employees with more seniority, and they are often posts that have more mobility and more contact with coworkers. The night shift is the first assignment for most correctional employees, and it normally offers the most isolation. The training shift that Lynn described offered her opportunities for training that included interaction with other employees, but not all facilities are staffed in a manner that allows this same type of interaction. Consequently, the correctional facility is managed in such a way that the new people go to night shift and often learn their job duties from inmates (T. Chase, personal communication, February 14, 2013). The data provided in this study indicate that this type of isolation might be a contributing factor in the boundary violation process. Corrections organizations may benefit from re-examining their post assignment process and the length of time employees remain on a particular post. It has been my experience that rotation of employees between shifts and posts is often met with resistance from the employees, employee unions, and even supervisors. The perceived disruption that rotation of shifts creates within a particular work unit is even feared by the inmates. Many times correctional leaders may support the idea of rotation, but the implementation

of a systematic rotation is complex. On an intuitive level, it seems that moving employees into new assignments on a regular basis would prevent relationships from forming, but it also may increase the likelihood that employees will be dependent upon inmates to learn the specific duties of each new location. As such, a rotation system must be carefully implemented and staffing resource needs must be provided to ensure this solution does not become another opportunity for inmate manipulation and potential boundary violations.

Rotation of inmates has also been used in many systems to discourage employees from growing too dependent upon specific inmates. The fact is that many systems move inmates on a constant basis to balance a variety of institutional needs, but beneath this appearance of constant movement there is often a core group of inmates who are protected. Kathy's portrait illustrated this when Pete was on the list to be moved to another facility and yet was retained. The stability of an institution requires that not all inmates be regularly moved because there is a need to maintain inmates with specific skills within each facility, such as an inmate who has a welding credential. Inmates who are necessary or valuable to a program are often put on a permanent party list and not moved. However, many times the permanent party list is made up of inmates who have developed a good relationship with employees, as described in Kathy's portrait. These relationships could be described as emotional relationships. The use of inmate rotation to prevent boundary violating behaviors must be carefully implemented, and routine audits of the manner in which inmates are exempt from movement is necessary.

Areas for Further Research

The research regarding boundary violations between female correctional employees and male inmates is scarce. This study has provided new and important information in this area, but the complexity of this issue requires additional study if these boundary violations are to be fully understood. This study is limited to the examination of this process between female correctional employees and male inmates. The study of relationships between male officers and female inmates and the relationships between officers and inmates of the same sex need to be examined.

Even though policies and laws have declared that the correctional employee possesses legitimate power and is therefore, the perpetrator in any boundary violation, this is an area of continued debate (Worley, Marquart, & Mullings, 2003). Further research in this area is needed to more fully understand the dynamics of the power relationship that may occur between an employee and an inmate. Incidents have occurred where the correctional employee has been described as using positional power to force compliance by inmates in a variety of illegal and unprofessional acts (Calhoun & Coleman, 2002). However, inmates have also been identified as preying upon employees and manipulating them for a variety of illegal actions (Allen & Bosta, 1981; Worley et al., 2003). What is clear is that the perpetrator in these actions is not always easy to identify. Research that focuses on the entire continuum of boundary violating behavior is needed to examine the different types of power that may influence these violations.

The effect these kinds of violations have upon coworkers and an understanding of any actions that they took to prevent the boundary violations is an additional area of study that needs to be more fully understood. The physical structures of correctional

facilities are necessary, but the towers, fences, and cameras are not enough to prevent boundary violations. Examination of why coworkers act or fail to act and the process of how certain employees are excluded from the correctional team is needed. The connections between people within the correctional facility may provide the key to prevention.

Training cannot fix all problems within the correctional workforce, but it is often a key mechanism to communicate and implement any type of change in culture or behavior (Flaherty-Zonis, 2007). Research focusing on measurable outcomes from different training approaches would provide correctional professionals with information to make real change in the culture within the correctional systems to reduce boundary violations.

Standardization of data collection regarding employee boundary violations is critical to aid further research in this area. The current data available does not capture the full range of boundary violations committed by employees, so an accurate analysis of the employee characteristics cannot be explored. The data that are available as a result of the prison rape elimination act has focused attention on sexual boundary violations. Sexual boundary violations are serious criminal actions that must be stopped, but it is likely that any sexual boundary violation between a correctional employee and an inmate was preceded by a variety of other, less serious violations (Blackburn et al., 2011; White, 1993). Therefore a full exploration of the less serious boundary violations would make a significant contribution towards the available literature and may provide correctional leaders with vital information that can be used to reduce the numbers of boundary violations within correctional facilities.

Conclusion

This study has provided vital information about a virtually unknown process within correctional facilities. The process that these former female correctional employees went through, while developing a relationship with an inmate and the impact upon their lives, was described in each portrait. Each of these women made very different decisions and took different actions to develop the relationship. Even though their paths may not describe every relationship that may develop between correctional employees and inmates, these portraits provide a starting point for further discussion and examination.

Joyce, Lynn, Sarah, and Kathy violated a cultural norm within the corrections environment and their actions had the potential to affect the safety of the inmates, staff, and public. The correctional culture's reaction to boundary violations would lead one to believe that women who commit this type of violation are criminals and should never have been working inside a correctional facility. However, the data from this study did not reveal four people intent on breaking the rules. The data revealed stories of women who worked hard to try to adapt to the environment but ended up in place where they did not feel connected to their colleagues but did find a connection with an inmate.

The fact that these women left corrections as a result of the choices they made regarding the relationships with an inmate does not negate the positive contributions that they made to the facility or profession. Joyce described the trails that she blazed for women at a time when women were rarely employed within male facilities. Lynn described the ways in which she tried to use a positive approach to change the environment within the highest security facility. Sarah worked hard to use her skills from

law enforcement to meet the expectations of her corrections career and she feels she is a better cop because of her corrections work. Kathy developed many leisure time programs for the expanding female inmate population. The correctional culture in Colorado often overlooks the positive contributions of employees who violated this boundary as if they only contributed negatively to the professional image of corrections. The search for goodness within this portraiture research process has revealed the positive contributions within each story. This process has provided data that can lead to a deeper understanding of this complex issue by correctional leaders. The results of this study “can be used to provide beginning and tentative empirical documentation regarding the phenomenon” (Calhoun & Coleman, 2002, p. 106).

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Appendix A—Ethical Performance Standards, 1986

DEPARTMENT OF	DOC REGULATION
CORRECTIONS	701-1
State of Colorado	
Colorado Springs, CO 80906	Version Date: 05/05/86

Staff Personnel

ETHICAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The department hereby establishes the following as a code of conduct for all employees, contract persons, volunteers, or persons from other agencies whose assignment is primarily on the premises of department facilities, centers, or agency offices. The department expects honesty, respect of human beings, and a commitment to professional service. This is a complete rewrite of the previous regulation by this number.

- I. REFERENCES: 20-50-116, C.R.S.; 20-50-125, C.R.S; Rules and Regulations of the Colorado State Personnel System; DOC Regulation 301-16, Use of Force, and DOC Regulation 701-12: Corrective and Disciplinary Actions.
- II. DEFINITIONS:
 - a. Abuse of Authority: Use of authority to gain personal favor or betterment; to force acts contrary to law or regulation; to humiliate or degrade another

person. Exceeding invested authority requiring persons to carry out acts contrary to their proper duties or responsibilities.

- b. Agency: A management unit of the department such as division (e.g. Adult Services), an office (e.g. Health & Offender Services), section (e.g. Food Services), facility (e.g. Shadow Mountain Correctional Facility), region (e.g. Eastern Region), or other entity.
- c. Appointing Authority: A department employee who has authority by statute or by proper delegation to appoint a person to a position or take corrective or disciplinary action against a specific employee.
- d. Confidential: Intended to be kept concealed from general knowledge; for a discreet audience with a specific need to know.
- e. Credible: Worthy of being believed; trustworthy.
- f. Degrading: An act or performance reducing the dignity, respect, honor, or integrity of a person.
- g. Discrediting: Causing loss of trust and credibility, to weaken the reliance of a person
- h. Employee: Any person employed personally or under contract, or volunteering service to the department. Any person who has duties conducted in a correctional agency of the department
- i. Illegal: An act or omission against or not authorized by law.
- j. Improper: Not with limits of state or department regulations, rules, or procedures. Includes illegal and/or unethical conduct.

- k. Investigation: An inquiry into specific actions, incidents, or events to gather facts and information concerning specific actions, incidents, or events.
- l. Malicious: An act or omission done with the desire to harm others, with intent to cause injury or commit an unlawful act.
- m. Mismanagement: To misuse personnel or resources in a manner that causes injury, loss, waste, or damage; to fail to meet set standards for achieving objectives or department requirements; to deviate from set procedures causing loss of accountability and/or creating unnecessary work for others.
- n. Negligence: The omission of a procedure or act; failure to take proper care as required by federal or state law, department regulations or procedures, or under prevailing circumstances, that which would be reasonably expected. Negligence can be construed as an act or failure to act.
- o. Off Duty: That time when an employee is not required to be involved in carrying out obligations which relate to their responsibilities as a department employee; not engaged in one's assigned work.
- p. On Duty: This shall denote the time when an employee is engaged in carrying out responsibilities for the department as assigned by supervisors, regulation, or law; when an employee is assigned to a specific period of time to conduct tasks assigned; or when at one's post or workstation when so assigned.

- q. Unethical: Not according to state or department ethical performance standards.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Legal and Regulatory: Employees shall conduct themselves in a lawful manner at all times. Employees shall comply with all applicable State of Colorado codes, regulations, directives, procedures, and lawful orders. Employees shall respect and protect the rights of the public to be safeguarded. Employees shall respect the legal rights of staff, inmates, and other persons.
- b. Abuse of Position: Employees shall not deal, barter, or contract with inmates or parolees unless the transactions are through an approved department process. Employees shall comply with Article 3 of the State Personnel Regulations. No employee may use their official position to secure improper privileges or advantages for themselves, their family, or any individual.
- c. Performance of Duties: Employees shall comply with the standards established in their performance plan. Employees shall not place another's safety in jeopardy and shall comply with standards set to assure safety of others. Employees who believe they are unable to perform their duties due to excess fatigue, illness (mental or physical), use of legal drugs, or for any other reason shall promptly advise their superior and obtain proper relief and/or leave.

Employees shall exercise their authority within the guidelines of department regulations and procedures. Employees shall be aware of the laws and rules on contraband in correctional facilities/centers and shall adhere to them. Employees shall not bring into correctional facilities/centers any item to be given to an inmate unless the item is administratively approved. Employees shall not take items out of any correctional facility/center or office unless proper administrative approval has been given.

Resources of times, property, equipment, supplies, and services shall be utilized in a safe, non-wasteful manner. Upkeep of equipment shall be in accord with department regulations. Employees shall use all state resources to the benefit of the department and shall not use resources for any private use or personal gain. Employees shall not commit expenditure of state monies or other resources except by approved fiscal procedures and with assigned authority. Employees shall conduct themselves with visitors, employees, and inmates in a professional manner.

Employees shall not disclose confidential information to other than approved persons. Employees shall take proper precautions to secure and handle confidential information. Employees shall respect the public's right to public information and shall share such information with openness and candor. Employees shall be diligent to record and properly disseminate any and all information which may contribute to sound inmate management, public, and employee safety.

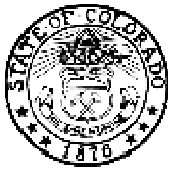
Employees shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, age, sex, religion, or national origin. Any employee who is responsible for personnel actions shall make appointments, promotion, or dismissals only on the basis of merit and not with bias towards race, age, sex, religion, national origin, or to further political interests.

- d. Personal Integrity: Employees are expected to be loyal to the stated mission of the department. Employees in complete or partial uniform, acting as a representative of the department at any event, shall conduct themselves in a professional manner. Employees making public statements will clearly distinguish between personal views and positions taken by the department. No employee will use their official position to promote any partisan political purpose. Employees shall not engage in or further disseminate malicious information against others.
- e. Obligation to Report Misconduct: Employees shall report any deviation from this regulation, violation of state law, or state regulation, to their supervisor. Employees participating in any departmental or otherwise lawful approved investigation shall give truthful, complete information and shall not withhold evidence or information concerning any possible law or regulation violation.
- f. Violation of Ethical Performance Standards: Employees who may be determined, after appropriate inquiry, to have knowingly violated any of the foregoing standards, shall be subject to dismissal, disciplinary, or corrective action.

Chase Riveland

Executive Director

Appendix B—Code of Conduct, Current

<div style="text-align: center;"> <u>ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION</u>  COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS </div>		REGULATION NUMBER	PAGE
		1450-01	NUMBER
			1 OF 14
		CHAPTER: Personnel	
		SUBJECT: Code of Conduct	
RELATED STANDARDS: ACA Standards 2-CO-1C-04, 2-CO-1C-11, 2-CO-1C-20, 2-CO-1C-24, 4-4056, 4-4063, 4-4069, 4-4070, and 4-4120		EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2011	
		SUPERSESION: 8/15/10	
		Tom Clements Executive Director	
OPR: EDO	REVIEW MONTH: April		

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Corrections (DOC) that DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are to have honesty, integrity, and respect for the worth and individuality of human beings, as well as a strong commitment to professional and ethical correctional service. *DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers must constantly strive to live up to the highest possible standards of their profession and to incorporate and adhere to the Department of Corrections “Code of Ethics” as its ethical performance standard. [2-CO-1C-04] [4-4069]*

II. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this administrative regulation (AR) to disseminate the “Code of Ethics” (Attachment “A”) to ensure that all DOC employees, contract workers, volunteers, or persons from other agencies whose assignment is primarily on the premises of DOC facilities, centers or offices, have read and adhere to the code. This administrative regulation and “Code of Ethics” provide DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers with rules and standards governing their conduct as correctional professionals. [2-CO-1C-04] [4-4069] [4-4120]

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Code of Conduct: *A coherent and documented set of standards with enforceable sanctions and protection (e.g., corrective, disciplinary actions with due process). [2-CO-1C-04] [4-4069]*
- B. Conduct Unbecoming: Includes any act or conduct either on or off duty that negatively impacts job performance, not specifically mentioned in administrative regulations. The act or conduct tends to bring the DOC into disrepute or reflects discredit upon the individual as a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer.
- C. Contract Worker: Any person other than a DOC employee who provides services to the DOC under contract, special assignment, or informal agreement (e.g. purchase order). A contract worker includes self-employed persons, sole proprietors, and persons employed by an employer in the private sector, another public entity, or by another agency of the state of Colorado.

- D. DOC Employee: Someone who occupies a classified, full or part-time position in the State Personnel System in which the Department has affect over pay, tenure, and status.
- E. Family Member of an Offender: Any person related to an offender by blood or by marriage. This may include, but is not limited to: spouse, children, stepchild, adopted child, foster child, parents, stepparents, adoptive parents, foster parents, brother, sister, niece, nephew, cousin.
- F. Former Offender: A person who has been found guilty of committing a felony, has been sentenced to any DOC, and less than three years have elapsed since his/her release from custody.
- G. Identification (ID) Cards and Badges:
 - 1. Permanent ID Cards: White ID cards issued to DOC employees, which include a photo, name, title, location, seal, and date issued on the front of the card. The back includes date of birth, height, weight, color of hair and eyes, sex, a bar code indicating social security number, and a warning that the card must be returned to DOC upon termination.
 - 2. Special (ID) Cards: Authorized permanent DOC ID cards issued to persons per authorization of the executive director, or designee, which do not display the state seal.
 - 3. Temporary Badges: Red or green badges issued to approved individuals who do not have a permanent or special ID. Red badge

indicates an escort is required; green badge indicates no escort is required.

4. Construction ID cards: ID cards made by individual facilities for utilization during ongoing construction projects occurring on DOC property. The ID cards shall be easily identified as construction ID cards and not easily confused with the facility red/green visitor badges. The appointing authority or designees is responsible to decide if these persons are required to be escorted.
- H. Offender: Any individual under the supervision of the criminal justice system to include community correction clients, parolees, correctional clients, probationers, interstate compact individuals, or individuals sentenced to the Youthful Offender System.
- I. Official Investigation: Includes, but is not limited to, an investigation conducted by the Office of the Inspector General.
- J. Sexual Conduct: Includes sexual contact, sexual penetration, or sexual intrusion, as defined in C.R.S. 18-3-401.
- K. Sexual Conduct in a Penal Institution: The act of any DOC employee, contract worker, volunteer, or individual who performs work or volunteer functions for the DOC or private correctional facilities, that involves sexual conduct with an offender under the supervision of the Department of Corrections, pursuant to CRS 18-7-701.
- L. Sexual Harassment:

1. *Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unequal treatment, and other unwelcome verbal and physical conduct based on an employee's sex when: [2-CO-1C-11] [4-4056]*
 - a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment; or
 - b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions about a person; or
 - c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially and unreasonably interfering with a DOC employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.
 2. Any inappropriate comments, language, written statements, gestures of a sexual nature, invasion of privacy for sexual gratification, incidents of indecent exposure of breasts, genital areas, or other body parts that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- M. Sexual Misconduct: Any behavior or act of a sexual nature, directed toward anyone by another person. Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to: acts, threats, requests for sexual acts, or attempts to commit acts such as sexual contact, obscenity, behavior of a sexual nature or implication of the same, taking or soliciting photographs/pictures of a

person's nude breasts, genitalia or buttocks, indecent exposure, invasion of privacy for sexual gratification, incidents of inappropriate or intentional touching of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks or other body parts with the intent to abuse, arouse, or gratify sexual desire or incidents of indecent exposure of breasts, genital areas, or other body parts. There are no authorized sexual acts in a penal institution. This includes private prisons and community correction facilities.

1. Sexual Harassment: DOC employees shall refer to AR 1450-05, *Unlawful Discrimination/Sexual Harassment*. Offenders shall refer to AR 150-01, *Code of Penal Discipline*.

2. Sexual Abuse: As defined in AR 150-01, *Code of Penal Discipline*.

N. Volunteer: A person who has been approved by Faith and Citizen Programs and the respective facility administrative head/designee to provide services without compensation for DOC correctional programs.

O. Workplace (Environment): Includes, but is not limited to: DOC owned or leased facilities; property; or any other location where DOC employees, contract workers, or volunteers are serving as representatives of DOC. This shall include off-ground work sites, whether DOC employees, contract workers, or volunteers are on or off duty.

P. Workplace Harassment: A course of conduct that results in an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

IV. PROCEDURES

The following rules and standards include, but are not limited to, accepted principles expressing in general terms the conduct expected of DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers. Violations of these principles may result in corrective and/or disciplinary action. [2-CO-1C-04] Failure to adhere to these rules and standards may also adversely affect the safety and security of the facility and the general public. The Department reserves the right to monitor DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers activities in order to ensure compliance with this administrative regulation. Violations of these principles may result in an investigation, as defined in administrative regulation 1150-04, *Professional Standards Investigations*.

- A. DOC employees, contract workers, volunteers, offenders, and their families shall be treated professionally, regardless of age, sex, race, national origin, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, disabilities/handicaps or offender's criminal history.
- B. Excessive physical force or verbal abuse of offenders by DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will not be permitted, nor will physical/verbal force be used beyond that necessary to control an offender or to enforce legitimate and legal commands.
- C. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will not exchange special treatment or favors or make threats for information from offenders.
- D. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers may not knowingly maintain social, emotional, sexual, business, or financial associations with current offenders, former offenders, or the family and/or friends of

offenders. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, telephone calls, letters, notes, or other communications outside the normal scope of employment.

1. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not directly or indirectly give to or accept from any offender, or member of the offender's family, anything in the nature of a gift or promise of a gift.
2. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not wager or engage in any unauthorized game, contest, or sport with any offender.
3. During the performance of their duties, or as representatives of the DOC, DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers may not sign any petition, letter, affidavit, or recommend in any way to the courts or representatives of the courts, leniency, pardon, probation, parole, or any other form of criminal case disposition on behalf of an offender.
4. Any exceptions to the above, or when these individuals are immediate family members of DOC employees, contract workers, or volunteers, must be approved in writing by the appropriate appointing authority who will forward a copy to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Relationships include:
 - a. A DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer with an offender.

- b. A DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer with a family member of an offender.
 - c. A family member of a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer with an offender.
 - d. A family member of a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer with a family member of an offender.
- E. Horseplay between DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers, with each other or with offenders is prohibited. Horseplay includes, but is not limited to, wrestling, pushing, chasing, or practical jokes.
- F. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not discuss their personal lives or other DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers personal lives with offenders.
- G. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are prohibited from aiding or abetting an escape or an escape attempt. They are under a duty to report any information regarding evidence of plans to escape, escape attempts, or actual escapes to their appointing authorities immediately.
- H. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not bring into or carry out of a facility any items for offenders. The introduction of any items of contraband into any DOC property is prohibited and may be criminally prosecuted.
- I. *All items received or purchased from offenders, or given to offenders, will be through officially sanctioned and documented channels and will have prior approval of the appointing authority. [4-4069]*

- J. Professional relationships will be of such character as to promote mutual respect, assistance, consideration, and harmony within DOC and with other agencies.
- K. Dating/romantic/sexual relationships between a supervisor and one who is within the direct supervisory chain of command of the supervisor, or when the supervisor is in a position to influence the employment/volunteer status of a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer, is prohibited.
- L. Supervisors shall not accept gifts, money, or favors from DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers under their supervision. Minor value gifts (e.g., Christmas, birthday, retirement) or collections for flowers or gifts are permitted.
- M. *DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall avoid situations which give rise to direct, indirect, or perceived conflicts of interest. [2-CO-1C-24] [4-4069]*
- N. Any action on or off duty on the part of DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers that jeopardizes the integrity or security of the Department, calls into question one's ability to perform effectively and efficiently in his/her position, or casts doubt upon the integrity of DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers, is prohibited. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will exercise good judgment and sound discretion.
- O. Gambling

1. The Colorado Constitution prohibits all forms of gambling unless specifically authorized by law. Authorized gambling includes the Colorado Lottery; live and off-track betting on horse and dog racing; bingo, raffles, and charitable games licensed and regulated by the Secretary of State's Office; limited gaming in casinos and on tribal reservation land; and "social" gambling. Any other gambling activity in Colorado is subject to the criminal gambling provisions of Title 18, which defines gambling as risking anything of value for gain based in whole or in part upon chance, the operation of a gambling device or the outcome of an event, including a sporting event. For gambling to occur, three elements must be present: consideration, chance, and reward.
2. Internet and Telephone Sports Wagering:
 - a. Title 18 makes it a crime in Colorado to transmit or receive gambling information by any means or to knowingly install or maintain equipment for the transmission or receipt of gambling information. In addition, the Federal Wire Act prohibits the use of wire communications in interstate or foreign commerce for the placing of bets or wagers or information assisting in the placing of bets or wagers. Similarly, the Federal Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992 bans sports wagering in all states but Nevada.

- b. Violation of the Title 18 gambling provisions are predicate offenses under the Colorado Organized Crime Control Act. Colorado law makes it a crime to intentionally promote or facilitate the commission of a criminal offense by aiding, abetting, advising, or encouraging the offense.
- P. *DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will not accept any gifts, presents, subscriptions, favors, gratuities, or promises that could be interpreted as seeking to cause them to compromise their official duties. They will not accept private or special advantage from their official status as DOC employees, contract workers, or volunteers. [2-CO-1C-24] [4-4069]* Department of Corrections credentials, uniforms, identification cards, or badges may not be used to coerce, intimidate, or deceive others or obtain any privilege or article not otherwise authorized in the performance of official duties.
- Q. Uniforms or identifiable portions thereof, are not to be worn outside DOC for recreational purposes, outside employment, in any business serving alcohol as a main source of income, during any political campaign, or while purchasing or publicly consuming alcohol.
- R. When a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer leaves DOC service, all uniform pieces originally issued by the DOC are to be returned for appropriate disposal. Uniforms shall not be given or sold to non-DOC agencies or DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers.

- S. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not bear false witness against each other or offenders.
- T. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will not engage in acts of corruption, bribery, indecent, or disorderly conduct, nor will they condone such acts by other DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers.
- U. When a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer is the subject of an external investigation; has been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of any crime or misdemeanor (except minor traffic violations); or is required to appear as a defendant in any criminal court, he/she will immediately inform and provide a written report to his/her appointing authority who shall inform the IG's office.
- V. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will not knowingly associate or deal with persons who are known or suspected to be involved in illegal activities.
- W. All incidents that may constitute a felony or appear to be of a criminal nature, or which involve a relationship between a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer with an offender shall be referred immediately to the IG for review, prior to inquiry or investigation. In such cases, the IG will make the decision as to when the subject of the inquiry or investigation is notified of the details of the misconduct. The executive director may require that an investigation be conducted by other DOC employees not assigned to the IG's office, or by an outside agency.

- X. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall neither falsify any documents nor willfully depart from the truth, either in giving testimony or in connection with any official duties or official investigation.
- Y. During the course of an official DOC investigation, DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall cooperate fully by providing all pertinent information that they may have. Full cooperation involves responding to all questions and providing a signed statement or affidavit, if requested.
- Z. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall politely give their names and assignments when requested to do so, unless such action is likely to jeopardize the successful completion of an assignment.
- AA. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not interfere with any legal investigation or fact-finding process or with the operation of any other work unit of DOC. They are prohibited from attempting to hinder or influence, in any manner, the testimony or information to be given by any witness, or potential witness, in an investigation or administrative proceeding.
- BB. Whenever any DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer appears in court on DOC business, he/she shall attend punctually and dress in the appropriate DOC uniform or business attire.
- CC. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are required to remain fully alert and attentive during duty hours.

- DD. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall report within 24 hours to their appointing authority, supervisor, and Office of Human Resources any change in their address and/or telephone number. If a post office box is used, the “physical” address must also be provided.
- EE. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are required to report to work at the time scheduled, unless prior arrangements are made with their supervisor. Those who are too ill to work will provide the supervisor with as much notice as possible, not less than two hours prior to their scheduled shift. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers who must miss a scheduled shift for reasons such as court appearances or promotional exams must give their supervisors prior notice (when they receive notice) or the next work day.
- FF. There is an obligation to be accountable and efficient in the use of state resources. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not use or allow the use of state time, supplies, or state-owned or leased property and equipment for their private interests. Loss, misuse, misplacement, theft, or destruction of state property must be reported to the appropriate supervisor immediately. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not appropriate any lost, found, evidential, offender, or DOC property to their own personal use. They shall photocopy multiple-paged documents on both sides of paper whenever possible.
- GG. State Vehicle Usage

1. DOC employees and designated contract workers not possessing a valid state of Colorado driver's license are prohibited from operating a state-owned/leased vehicle or a state-owned commercial motor vehicle. DOC employees and designated contract workers operating such vehicles are charged with and responsible for the safe operation and prompt, accurate, reporting of any accident involving the vehicle. Accidents or mechanical and/or maintenance problems shall be reported to their supervisor by the next working day.
 2. DOC employees and designated contract workers assigned state vehicles cannot use personal vehicles to conduct official business without prior authorization of the appointing authority or designee. DOC employees and designated contract workers are not insured by the state while driving personal vehicles on state business.
 3. Visitors are not allowed to drive or ride in a state vehicle without prior approval from the appointing authority, appropriate director, or executive director.
 4. DOC employees designated to carry firearms shall be responsible for ensuring personal or state issued ammunition and/or firearms are secure at all times and are not left in a state vehicle, unless placed in a secure lock box.
- HH. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall comply with and obey all DOC administrative regulations, procedures, operational

memorandums, rules, duties, legal orders, procedures, and administrative instructions. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not aid, abet, or incite another in the violation of administrative regulations, procedures, operational memorandums, rules, duties, orders, or procedures of the DOC. Failure to obey any lawfully issued order by a supervisor, or any disrespectful, mutinous, insolent, or abusive language or actions toward a supervisor is deemed to be insubordination.

- II. Verbal or physical altercations between DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers in the workplace are unacceptable practices. While on or off duty, DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are required to maintain a considerate, cooperative, and cordial relationship toward each other. Any DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer who becomes aware of threats against non-offenders, or allegations of threats against non-offenders, shall report such to the Office of the Inspector General for possible investigation.
- JJ. DOC employees, contract workers, or volunteers who are involved in or are a material witness to a use of force incident are required to provide a complete factual account of their actions and/or observations of the incident, as outlined in administrative regulation 100-07, *Reportable Incidents*.
- KK. *DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall not disclose information ranging from personal data concerning themselves and offenders to information that would breach security or unduly endanger*

any person, unless directed to do so by the executive director, or designee. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers receiving such a request for information will report the inquiring party to their appointing authority. They will not use or release for use official information for private purposes. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will not remove from files or make copies of records or documents, except in accordance with established procedures or upon proper authorization. [4-4070]

- LL. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are required to provide complete and accurate information on their employment/promotional application and supporting documents.
- MM. Former DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will be granted access only to DOC information available to other members of the public.
- NN. In any public statement, DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers will clearly distinguish between those that are personal views and those that are positions on behalf of the DOC.
- OO. Workplace harassment in any form will not be tolerated.
- PP. Any behavior of a sexual nature whether verbal, nonverbal, or physical is strictly prohibited. Examples of such acts include, but are not limited to, telling jokes of a sexual nature, making reference to one's sexual life or preference, making suggestions of a personal nature, use of profanity, and offensive touching.

- QQ. Displaying, reading, publicizing, or bringing any materials of a sexual nature into the workplace, such as pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually revealing, suggestive, demeaning, or sexually explicit are prohibited.
- RR. Acts of sexual conduct by DOC employees, contractors, and volunteers, regardless of consensual nature, to include sexual misconduct, sexual conduct in a penal institution, and sexual harassment against offenders may be a crime, as defined in AR 100-40, *Prison Rape Elimination Procedure*. Retaliation against offenders who refuse to submit to sexual advances or who make allegations against DOC employees, contractors, or volunteers is prohibited and is a violation of Department policy. All cases will be referred to the IG and if appropriate, the IG will refer to the district attorney for prosecution.
- SS. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers who receive any information from any source concerning sexual misconduct or who observe incidents of sexual misconduct are required and have a duty to immediately report the information or incident directly to the appropriate appointing authority. The appointing authority will report it immediately to the Office of the Inspector General.
- TT. *Use (including under the influence) of alcohol or illicit drugs or the misuse of prescription drugs while on duty is prohibited. Illegal possession, manufacture, use, sale, or transfer of a controlled substance is prohibited and may be subject to prosecution, except in the performance*

of official duties and with prior written authorization of the executive director. [2-CO-1C-20] [4-4063] Failure to submit to a

urinalysis/intoximeter or saliva screening when requested for DOC drug or alcohol testing may result in corrective and/or disciplinary action, as per ARs 1450-36, *Drug Deterrence Program* and 1150-04, *Professional Standards Investigations*.

- UU. The executive director, inspector general, or appointing authority may require an intoximeter, saliva screening, blood, urine, psychological, or medical examination of DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers, if it is believed that such examination is necessary for the purposes of determining the fitness of that person to perform his/her duties or for the safety of others.
- VV. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers who receive information regarding criminal activity or misconduct shall refer to administrative regulation 1150-04, *Professional Standards Investigations*.
- WW. Any DOC related or personal Web sites (non-DOC) placed on the Internet (World Wide Web) with information, photographs, or references to the DOC must be authorized, in advance, by the executive director. All content changes made to approved sites must be authorized, in advance, by the executive director (see AR 1350-01, *Public Information*, Attachment "C").
- XX. All DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall sign the certificate of review and compliance (Attachment "B"). The DOC shall

maintain an electronically signed copy. Contract workers and volunteers shall have their certificates placed in their training record. All DOC employees are required to review and electronically sign the certificate of review and compliance (Attachment “B”) on or before April 30 of each year utilizing DOCnet.

All DOC management shall receive refresher training on the State’s codes of ethics and conduct at least every two years.

- YY. Whenever DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are contacted by anyone other than an investigator with the Office of the Inspector General, the Attorney General’s Office, or District Attorney’s Office regarding any investigation or other allegations, they should direct all inquiries to the Office of the Inspector General in the case of a criminal investigation.
- ZZ. Any act or conduct on or off duty that affects job performance and that tends to bring the DOC into disrepute or reflects discredit upon the individual as a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer or tends to adversely affect public safety is expressly prohibited as conduct unbecoming and may lead to corrective and/or disciplinary action.
- AAA. All DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco, tobacco-related products, or tobacco substitutes in the workplace, as per AR 100-04, *Tobacco Use in Buildings and Vehicles*.

BBB. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers who receive a subpoena to appear in a civil or criminal case will notify their supervisor who will ensure that they are given sufficient time off to appear.

CCC. Lost ID Badges

1. DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall be held responsible for the safe keeping of the ID badge and shall not alter it in any manner. If an ID badge is lost, misplaced, or stolen, it must be reported immediately to the first line supervisor and either the facility/office investigator or the Office of the Inspector General. The investigator or IG's office will file a report, send out a DOCALL message, and enter the incident into CCIC (Colorado Crime Information Center). Replacements will be issued only with a supervisor's signed approval and a fee of \$25.00. Corrective and/or disciplinary action may be considered if a lost, misplaced, or stolen card represents carelessness or negligence on the part of the DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer that may compromise the security of the building or facility.
2. The DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer will make payment to either the facility cashier or to the facility liaison, or designated person, for the cost of the replacement badge. Payment made to the facility liaison must be in the form of a check made payable to the Colorado Department of Corrections. The facility liaison will forward the check to the Canon City business office

cashier or facility cashier. Cashiers may accept cash or personal checks.

Receipts will be issued to a DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer making payment to the facility cashier. The DOC employee, contract worker, or volunteer must present the receipt to the facility liaison as proof of payment prior to a replacement badge being issued.

DDD. Lost Metal Badges: DOC employees are to contact the staff resource coordinator if they misplace or lose their metal badge. The staff resource coordinator will order a replacement from the Training Academy at the current price. The DOC employee will be responsible for sending a personal check made payable to the Colorado Department of Corrections to the Training Academy.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Appointing authorities shall ensure dissemination, training, and enforcement of this administrative regulation.
- B. Appointing authorities shall ensure that all DOC employees, contract workers, volunteers, or persons from other agencies whose assignment is primarily on the premises of DOC facilities, centers, or offices, have read and adhere to this administrative regulation. [4-4120]
- C. All DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall be familiar with and comply with the provisions of this administrative regulation.

- D. The director of Finance and Administration shall review and update this administrative regulation annually. [2-CO-1C-20] [4-4063]
- E. The Training Academy associate director shall ensure all new DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers receive a copy and are trained on the contents of this AR during Basic Training and ensure that Attachment “B” is signed. [4-4069]

VI. AUTHORITY

- A. CRS 17-1-103. Duties of the executive director.
- B. CRS 18-1-603. Complicity.
- C. CRS 18-3-404. Unlawful sexual contact.
- D. CRS 18-7-701. Sexual conduct in penal institutions.
- E. CRS 18-8-308. Failing to disclose a conflict of interest.
- F. CRS 18-8-401 through 18-8-409. ABUSE OF PUBLIC OFFICE.
- G. CRS 18-10-101. Legislative declaration – construction
- H. CRS 18-10-102. Definitions.
- I. CRS 18-10-106. Gambling information.
- J. CRS 18-17-103. Definitions.
- K. CRS 24-50-116. Standards of performance and conduct.
- L. Colorado State Fiscal Rules (July 1, 1990).
- M. Colorado State Personnel Rules.
- N. CRS Title 24 Article 18 and 18.5, et seq.
- O. CRS 24-18-108. Rules of conduct for public officers and state employees.
- P. Article XXIX Colorado Constitution (Amendment 41).

VII. HISTORY

December 1, 2009

August 1, 2009

July 1, 2008

July 1, 2007

July 1, 2006

July 1, 2005

February 1, 2005

February 1, 2004

February 1, 2003

- ATTACHMENTS:
- A. AR Form 1450-01A, Code of Ethics
 - B. AR Form 1450-01B, Certificate of Review and Compliance
 - C. AR Form 100-1A, Administrative Regulation
Implementation/Adjustments

Code of Ethics

I. Declaration

Public confidence in the integrity of state government demands that public officials demonstrate the highest ethical standards at all times. Those who serve the people of the State of Colorado as public officials should do so with integrity and honesty, and should discharge their duties in an independent and impartial manner. At the same time, qualified individuals should be encouraged to serve in state government and have reasonable opportunities with all citizens to develop private economic and social interests.

When the voters passed Amendment 41, now Article XXIX of the Colorado Constitution, they sent a clear message that they want their public officials and government employees to meet a high ethical standard. The touchstone of Amendment 41 was that public officials and government employees must not violate the public trust for private gain.

Governor Bill Ritter, Jr.

Executive Order D 021 09

II. Ethics in Government

Article XXIX of the Colorado Constitution states:

Section 1. Purposes and findings.

A. The people of the state of Colorado hereby find and declare that:

1. The conduct of public officers, members of the general assembly, local government officials, and government employees must hold the respect and confidence of the people;
 2. They shall carry out their duties for the benefit of the people of the state;
 3. They shall, therefore, avoid conduct that is in violation of their public trust or that creates a justifiable impression among members of the public that such trust is being violated;
 4. Any effort to realize personal financial gain through public office, other than compensation provided by law, is a violation of that trust; and
 5. To ensure propriety and to preserve public confidence, they must have the benefit of specific standards to guide their conduct, and of a penalty mechanism to enforce those standards.
- B. The people of the state of Colorado also find and declare that there are certain costs associated with holding public office and that to ensure the integrity of the office, such costs of a reasonable and necessary nature should be born by the state or local government.

III. Code of Conduct

All employees, contract workers, and volunteers of the Colorado Department of Corrections:

- A. Shall serve the public with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness;

- B. Shall demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, and honesty and shall, through personal conduct, inspire public confidence and trust in government;
- C. Shall not use public office to bestow any preferential benefit on anyone related to the officer, appointee, or employee by family, business, or social relationship;
- D. Shall not disclose or use or allow others to use confidential information acquired by virtue of state employment for private gain;
- E. Shall not accept any compensation, gift, payment of expenses, or any other thing of value which would influence him or her to depart from the faithful and impartial discharge of his or her duties;
- F. Shall not accept any compensation, gift, payment of expenses, or any other thing of value as a reward for official action taken;
- G. Shall not engage in outside employment unless: (1) the outside employment is disclosed to the Governor or, in the case of an employee, the employee=s immediate supervisor; and (2) the outside employment does not interfere with the performance of state duties;
- H. Shall not use state time, property, equipment or supplies for private gain;
- I. Shall not knowingly engage in any activity or business which creates a conflict of interest or has an adverse effect on the confidence of the public in the integrity of government;
- J. Shall carry out all duties as a public servant by exposing corruption or impropriety in government whenever discovered;

- K. Shall support equal access and employment opportunities in state government for all of the State of Colorado;
- L. Shall comply at all times with the standards of conduct set forth in title 24, article 18 of the Colorado Revised Statutes and Article XXIX of the Colorado Constitution.

IV. Certification of Review and Compliance

All DOC employees, contract workers, and volunteers shall review and affirm to this Departmental Code of Ethics on or before April 30 of each year utilizing the certificate of review and compliance (Attachment “B”).

AR Form 1450-01B (12/01/09)

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
CERTIFICATE OF REVIEW
AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
CODE OF ETHICS

By my signature hereon, I swear and affirm that I have read and will abide by the
Colorado Department of Corrections Code of Ethics.

Signature

Date

Printed name

ID #

Witness

Date

Appendix C—IRB Approval



University of Colorado
Colorado Springs

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

Date: August 2, 2012

IRB PROTOCOL NO.: 13-009

Protocol Title: A Portraiture of Boundary Violations: Former Female Employees of Corrections that Have Established a Relationship with an Offender

Investigator: Susan Jones

Type of Review:

Full ☐ Expedited ☒ Exempt Review ☐ Report of Change ☐ Renewal ☐

Expires: August 1, 2013

Note, if exempt: If there are no major changes in the research, protocol does not require review on a continuing basis by the IRB.

If externally funded: N/A

OSP #:

Sponsor:

Dear Ms. Jones,

Thank you for submitting your Request for IRB Review. The protocol identified above has been reviewed according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations. The review category is noted above, along with the expiration date, if applicable.

Once human participant research has been approved, it is the Principal Investigator's (PI) responsibility to report any changes in research activity related to the project. The PI must provide the IRB with all protocol and consent form amendments and revisions. The IRB must approve these changes prior to implementation. All advertisements recruiting study subjects must also receive prior approval by the IRB. The PI must promptly inform the IRB of all unanticipated serious adverse (within 24 hours). All unanticipated adverse events must be reported to the IRB within 1 week (see 45CFR46.103(b)(5)). Failure to comply with these federally mandated responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Sanderson in the Office of Sponsored Programs at 719-255-3903 or michael.sanderson@uccs.edu or irb@uccs.edu

Thank you for your concern about human subject protection issues, and good luck with your research.

Sincerely yours,

Jenenne P. Nelson

Professor and IRB Chair

www.uccs.edu/~osp/compliance/

1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway Colorado Springs, CO 80918

719-255-3321 phone 719-255-3706 fax

Appendix D—Participant Consent Form

University of Colorado

Colorado Springs (UCCS)

Consent to be a Research Subject

Title: A Portraiture of Boundary Violations: Former female employees of corrections that have established a relationship with an offender.

Principal Investigator: Susan J. Jones, Student, UCCS College of Education, Educational Leadership, Research, and Policy PhD

Funding Source: N/A

Introduction

You are being asked to be in a research study. This form is designed to tell you everything you need to think about before you decide to consent (agree) to be in the study or not to be in the study. **It is entirely your choice. If you decide to take part, you can change your mind later on and withdraw from the research study. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.**

Before making your decision:

- Please carefully read this form or have it read to you.
- Please ask questions about anything that is not clear.

Feel free to take your time thinking about whether you would like to participate. By signing this form you will not give up any legal rights. If you are completing this consent form online, you may want to print a copy of the consent form for your records.

Study Overview

This study will examine the process that led former female employees in corrections to become involved with a male incarcerated offender and the impact of that involvement upon the female staff member and her life. This issue is very complex and there are many different areas for study and evaluation, but the need to examine this process from the point of view of the woman involved is critical to a full understanding of the issue.

Procedures

I will conduct a series of four interview sessions with each participant. The sessions will include a semi-structured in-depth interview. These interview sessions will not exceed four hours in length. Follow up informal conversations may be needed to clarify or confirm details. These informal contacts may be in person, via telephone or through email communication. Throughout these contacts, participants may share written documentation, photographs, videos or other items that help to explain how this relationship has affected her life.

Some of these interactions may be recorded to allow me to devote my full attention to each participant during these contacts. I will protect the confidentiality of these recordings and ensure that they are securely stored when I am not using them. The voice recordings will be destroyed after transcription is complete.

Risks and Discomforts

This study poses very little risk to the participants; however, there is a risk that some readers of this study may be able to guess the identity of a participant. This likelihood is remote, but in an attempt to protect the participants, care will be taken to use pseudonyms for the names and demographic details may be changed in the final publication.

If during this contact I become aware of any criminal activity, I will report that activity to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Benefits

This project may not benefit you as an individual participant, but it will provide you an opportunity to be heard by sharing your story. I expect this study to benefit the criminal justice profession to aid in a deeper understanding of this issue. This understanding may lead to policy development or change in this area.

Compensation: No compensation is provided to study participants.

Confidentiality

Certain offices and people other than the researchers may have access to study records. Government agencies and UCCS employees overseeing proper study conduct may look at your study records. These offices include the UCCS Institutional Review Board, and the UCCS Office of Sponsored Programs. UCCS will keep any research records confidential to the extent allowed by law. A study number rather than your name will be used on study records wherever possible.

Study records may be subject to disclosure pursuant to a court order, subpoena, law or regulation.

All information that you provide for this research study will be securely stored and your name will not be used in any publication for this research study.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study

You have the right to leave a study at any time without penalty. You may refuse to do any procedures you do not feel comfortable with, or answer any questions that you do not

wish to answer. If you withdraw from the study, you may request that your research information not be used by contacting the Principal Investigator listed above and below.

Contact Information

Contact Susan J. Jones, sjones@uccs.edu

- if you have any questions about this study or your part in it,
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research, or
- if you would like information about the study results when they are prepared.

Contact the UCCS Research Compliance Coordinator at 719-255-3903 or via email at irb@uccs.edu:

- if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research.

Consent

A copy of this consent form will be provided to you.

I understand the above information and voluntarily consent to participate in the research.

I have been given at least 24 hours to consider my participation in this study. By signing this consent, I am confirming that I am 18 years of age or older.

Signature/Date

Appendix E—Interview Protocol

A Portraiture of Boundary Violations: Former Female Employees of Corrections who
have established a Relationship with an Offender.

Portraiture Protocol

Interview session topics:

Session 1—Path that led participant to corrections

Session 2—The corrections environment

Session 3—Relationship process

Session 4—Effect on life now

Each participant will be allowed to share information about each of these topic areas in her own way. The probing reminders are listed to ensure that these pre-determined areas are covered.

Path that led you to corrections: What influenced you to accept a position in Corrections?

Probing reminders:

Describe your family background.

Do you have any family members in law enforcement or corrections work?

What is your educational background or preparation for corrections?

What other educational preparation do you possess?

What is/was your career goal? (before and after corrections)

Did physical location impact your decision to work in corrections?

What is your work experience? (before and after corrections)

Describe your career in corrections. (employment dates, rank and work locations)

Did your family support you when you went to corrections?

Corrections environment:

Probing reminders:

How did you feel the first day at work in corrections?

How did you feel at the end of training?

Was the environment what you expected?

What was your reaction to the other staff ?

What was your reaction to the inmates?

How did the physical structure affect your reactions?

What is your opinion about the culture of corrections?

Did you feel that help was available to you if you had a problem?

Did you feel the organization cared about you?

Were you respected?

Was the work you did in corrections important? Did you think others valued the work?

Were they glad you were a part of the team?

Were the group/team members supportive? Your supervisor?

Would the organization forgive an honest mistake on your part?

Did you feel the organization would take advantage of you?

Was the organization open and ethical in dealing with you?

Did you get a chance to be heard?

Were the job expectations clear to you?

Were you ever asked for suggestions to improve job processes?

What was your career goal when you worked in corrections?

Were you good at your job? Quantity?, Quality?

Did you feel the organization noticed when you did your job well?

Did you feel like you could be replaced by any other person?

How did you feel at the end of the first shift?

How did working in corrections feel in general: anxiety, low self esteem, low job involvement, loss of your creativity?

Did you think about leaving corrections before you did?

How did you feel when you left corrections?

How do you feel about it now your time in corrections, looking back?

Did the organization value your contributions?

Did you use your personal initiative or discretion in corrections work?

Did you feel the organization would react to a complaint from you?

Were you fairly paid? Benefits? Work scheduled fairly?

Relationship process: Describe the relationship process—beginning to the end (if it has ended)

Probing reminders:

Describe the process that you went through when you developed a relationship with the inmate.

Did your formal education prepare you for working with inmates?

What did they talk about in your pre-service training in regards to dealing with the inmates?

What was your reaction to the training/education?

Were you groomed by the inmate?

Were you targeted?

Do you feel that you were conned?

If so, were you the first women that particular inmate targeted or conned?

What do you think about the PREA rules?

What do you think about the state laws that prohibit sexual contact between staff and inmates?

What do you think about the code of conduct rules that prohibit sexual, emotional, financial, social, or business relationships with inmates?

Why did you continue your relationship with an inmate?

What satisfaction did you gain from it?

What hope for the relationship did you have? Was he going to get out?

Did you feel like you really knew him?

Effect on life now: What was the positive and negative effect of this relationship on your life?

Probing reminders:

Positive— what have you gained from this relationship? (financial, emotional)

Do you think that the inmate gained anything positive from this relationship? (financial, emotional)

Negative—What have you lost as a result of this relationship? (financial, emotional)

Do you think that the inmate lost anything as a result of this relationship? (financial, emotional)

Did your relationship impact other inmates?

What was the impact on your family? (financial, emotional?)

What was the impact on the inmate's family? (financial, emotional?)

Would you do it over again? What would you do differently if you could do it over?

Do you feel like you made mistakes at work? How do you feel about the mistakes?