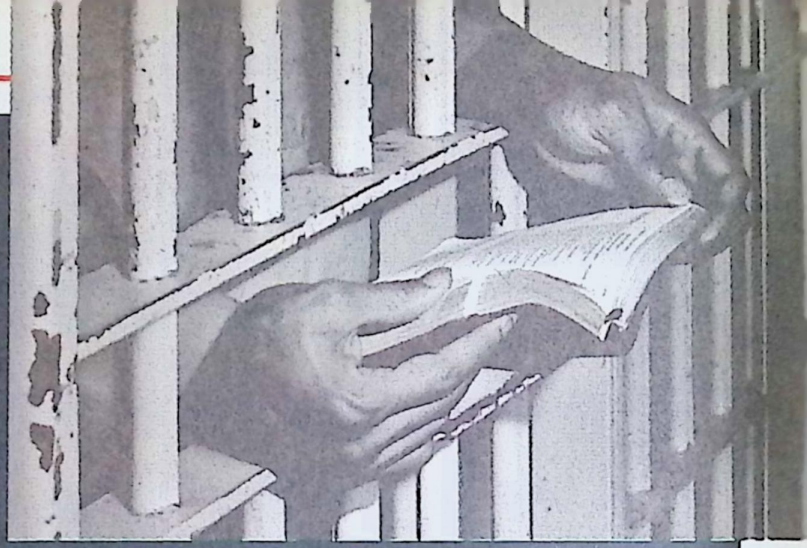
Prisoners Believe They Are Just as Law Abiding as Non-Prisoners



The belief that we consider ourselves better than our peers holds true to convicted criminals as well.

Research from the University of Southampton has shown that prisoners believe themselves to have more pro-social characteristics -- such as kindness, morality, self-control, and generosity -- than non-prisoners.

The research also showed that prisoners did not rate themselves as more law abiding than non-prisoners, but they did rate themselves as equal.

During the study, 79 prisoners from a prison in south England filled out a questionnaire, which asked them to rate themselves in comparison to the average prisoner and the average member of the community on nine traits. These were: moral, kind to others, trustworthy, honesty, dependable, compassionate, generous, self-controlled, and law abiding.

Participants rated themselves as superior to the average prisoner on all traits. Surprisingly, they rated themselves superior to the average community member on all traits as well, with one exception. Prisoners considered themselves as law-abiding as the average community member.

The study, published in the *British Journal of Social Psychology* also included researchers from Royal Holloway, University of London and Ohio University.

What Would Make You More Likely to Read This Story?



New research, published in the journal *Social Influence*, has found that question headlines are significantly more effective than declarative headlines in generating readership. The study by Linda Lai and Audun Farbrot of the Norwegian Business School, Oslo, looked at the impact of question headlines in computer-mediated communications.

Not only were question headlines more effective than declarative headlines, self-referencing questions (such as those including "you" or "your") were also found to generate higher readership than those without self-referencing cues.

The researchers conducted two experiments, one on Twitter and one on FINN™, a Norwegian shopping website similar to eBay. Over four months, a series of question headline and statement headline news stories were posted on a Twitter account with over 6,000 followers. Examples of two headlines on the same topic are: "Power corrupts" (control condition) and "Is your boss intoxicated by power?" (question headline with self-referencing cues). Readership was measured using the number of clicks to the ads.

Question headlines without self-referencing cues gained on average 150% more clicks, and question headlines with self-referencing cues on average gained 175% more clicks.