

THE ADAPTIVE USE OF HISTORIC CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS:
RETAINING ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

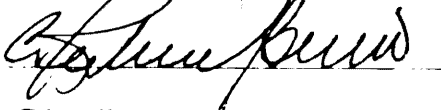
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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Goucher College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Historic Preservation

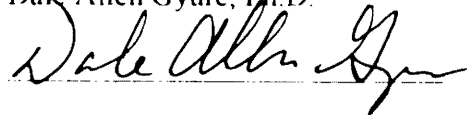
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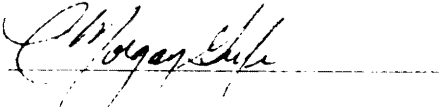
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ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: THE ADAPTIVE USE OF HISTORIC CORRECTIONAL
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This thesis examines the adaptive use of historic correctional institutions and the supposition that architectural and historical significance are vulnerable in the reuse process. The thesis investigates three less familiar aspects of significance: interior layout and finishes, spatial relationships in campus settings, and history that encompasses both the original intent and redirected changes over time. Research focuses on three case studies of reused correctional institutions – the Allegheny County Jail, the Sockanosset Training School for Boys, and the Lorton Workhouse.

Correctional institutions of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era were selected as case studies based on the premise that these decades encapsulated America's transition from imprisonment as profit-making reprimand toward rehabilitation. This era

also encompassed the waning years of employing America's most renowned architects to design these facilities, which were expressions of civic pride and artistic achievement. Research on incarceration practices since the Progressive Era supports this assumption. Beginning in the 1980s and continuing today, the purpose of imprisonment refocused on mere incapacitation, and good design consequently became an afterthought.

This thesis demonstrates that architectural and historical significance can be retained in both public and private reuse projects, in approaches that preserve all, some, or almost none of the physical plant, and at facilities that represent a variety of intentions in their historic context. Retention can be achieved by prioritizing the significance of site features, by providing honest and respectful interpretation, and by voluntarily involving preservation professionals and community members in decision-making that is afforded ample time and informed consideration.

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous correctional institutions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are facing closure or are currently mothballed due to changes in management style, structural problems and code violations, the economic burden of their ongoing operation on government entities, or overpopulation that has necessitated the construction of larger facilities. If vacated historic correctional institutions escape demolition, they are generally reused for a new public function or sold on the open market for private development. Reuse of a decommissioned correctional institution may require the modernization of building systems, rehabilitative exterior work, numerous alterations to the interior layout, and the expansion of the facility's footprint. With form and fabric that have achieved both architectural and historical significance, the potential loss of character-defining features in the repurposing of historic correctional institutions is palpable.

This thesis asks: how can architectural and historical significance be retained in the adaptive use of historic correctional institutions? The jails, reformatories, and prisons of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era merit special awareness when testing the hypothesis. During this transitional period in American history, this country ideologically (if not always in practice) moved away from incarceration as reprimand toward imprisonment as rehabilitation, introducing new correctional institution building typologies that represented the changing ideology of punishment. These decades also

arguably encompassed the waning years of employing America's most renowned architects to design many of these grand facilities, which were expressions of civic pride and artistic achievement meant to impress as well as intimidate. After the Progressive Era closed, the United States slowly regressed to previous priorities of incapacitation and deterrence but dismissed correctional institutions as priorities for architectural excellence. Correctional institutions of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era should be retained, preserved, and reused as presentations of the evolving social context of imprisonment and as evidence of the potential breadth of thoughtful civic architectural design.

This rather broad hypothesis has been narrowed by considering three aspects of historic and architectural significance beyond the often discussed historic exterior. Through three case studies, this thesis explores the retention of interior significance, the maintenance of spatial relationships, and the public presentation of a painful past for consumption when that history has changed over time. The challenges of retaining interior significance will be explored in the reuse of the Allegheny County Jail in Pittsburgh, a late nineteenth century masterpiece by architect Henry Hobson Richardson that was converted to house the juvenile and family sections of the Common Pleas Court. The County and its design team faced the daunting task of reconfiguring the layout for a new program while preserving Richardson's celebrated design, deferentially sharing the building's past, and making a severe building form approachable for children.

The importance of preserving historically significant spatial relationships is investigated at the former Sockanosset Training School for Boys, which is significant for its creation as a juvenile reformatory designed on the "cottage plan" popular in the late nineteenth century. The campus was sold for private development and now functions as

"Chapel View," a mixed-use residential, retail, and office complex. Reuse of the site, which was not protected by local historic preservation designation, involved demolition of more than half of the remaining structures, alterations to circulation routes, and extensive new construction.

The third case study provides an overview of the challenges of structuring and sharing the history of the Lorton Workhouse, the physical plant of which diverted from its original historical significance as a model of President Theodore Roosevelt's "New Penology" of inmate rehabilitation and vocational training to become, in its last decades, a violent and overbuilt prison site notorious in its reputation. The Lorton Arts Foundation has reused the facility as a cultural arts center and faced, in consultation with preservation professional and the public, the daunting task of honoring a complicated history while selecting a period of significance to guide alterations to the site.

Following this introduction, the next chapter of the thesis provides a social context for crime and punishment during the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, including an overview of major correctional institution building types employed during this period. The subsequent three chapters present case studies on the reuse of a decommissioned jail, juvenile reformatory, and workhouse, with each facility evaluated in the context of the hypothesis on a specific subsection of significance. The fifth and concluding chapter predicts a response to the as-yet unanswerable question of whether future generations will see any merit in the preservation and potential reuse of contemporary correctional institutions based on their significance. A brief conclusion outlines considerations for similar projects and suggests related topics for further research.

Decommissioning Historic Correctional Institutions

Because correctional institutions operate at the local, state, and federal levels and can be administered by government entities or by private companies, there is no blanket authoritative entity that evaluates their viability for continued use. These decisions are made by the applicable owner and are most often in response to economic issues that may include overpopulation, burdensome maintenance and code compliance costs, or potential economic advantages associated with constructing a larger facility. Prisoner lawsuits alleging inhumane, unconstitutional conditions were also a prevalent reason for closings during the 1990s, though the Prison Litigation Reform Act of 1995 sought to control the number of these cases going forward.

When research for this thesis was in the early, exploratory stages, a reasonable supposition was made that the pool of potential case studies on which work was planned or underway would be relatively small in comparison to the number of extant facilities. That was indeed the situation, but it became clear that the potential audience for this thesis was vast, with a number of jails, prisons, and juvenile facilities of all historical periods and located across the country planned for closure or already vacated.

Operational budget constraints at state prisons have been a dominant concern in the current economic recession. The rapid construction of numerous state prisons to accommodate overpopulation has left states stretched thin in a time of budget shortfalls. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that the cost of housing a single prisoner has hovered around \$25,000 per year over the last decade. Many states have opted to reduce spending on other services such as education and health care rather than slash corrections budgets. However, a growing number of states have chosen to close correctional

facilities, or to divert more corrections funding to less costly probation and parole programs instead of prison operations and construction budgets. During 2009, the states of Michigan, Kansas, New York, New Hampshire, Tennessee, and Colorado announced plans to close multiple state prison complexes due to budget constraints. The states of Washington, Connecticut, and Vermont have also debated closures on economic grounds.

Even newer facilities face uncertain futures, such as New Jersey's Riverfront State Prison in Camden, built in 1985 and shuttered in the summer of 2009 despite overpopulation of the state's other prisons. The Thomson Correctional Center in Illinois, constructed in 2001 as a 1,600 cell-site, houses only 150 inmates due to budget woes and has reached an agreement with the Obama Administration to fill its cells with terrorism suspects transferred from Guantanamo Bay. In Texas, the Harris County Jail, built in 1980 and closed in 2002, has been recommended for demolition due to renovation costs to bring the facility up to code after only twenty years of use. The Federal Bureau of Prisons has also announced plans in the last few years to close federal prison camps due to Congressional budget cuts.

In contrast to the desire to *save* money, a number of historic correctional institutions, prisons in particular, have been decommissioned and replaced by new facilities in an effort to *make* money for towns and states. The relocation of a correctional institution to an economically struggling rural town has been a common practice in the last three decades, the benefits of which ostensibly include economic development that contributes to the local and state tax base and employment opportunities for residents at the new facility and at tertiary businesses that support its

operation. The success of this strategy is debatable, and the collateral damage is often well-built and thoughtfully designed historic correctional facilities that are serviceable for ongoing or new uses.

The Elephant in the Room

This study will not explore economic challenges that are universal in the preservation and reuse of historic correctional institutions, or suggest strategies for problem-solving. This is a lengthy and significant topic unto itself and one that should certainly be researched in conjunction with successful financing structures in the reuse of other large-scale, purpose-built facilities such as stadiums, armories, mental institutions, and airplane hangars. It is worthwhile, however, to devote some space here to highlight just how costly and complicated upgrading and converting these facilities can be, especially those that have endured much of their life without proper maintenance and have subsequently been vacant since being decommissioned.

As a prime example, the Hampden County Jail and House of Correction in Springfield, Massachusetts was demolished in 2009, with the cleared land made available to developers for new construction. Built between 1885 and 1887, the elegant Hampden County Jail and House of Correction (also referred to as the "York Street Jail") contained sixteen brick buildings situated around a central courtyard and sited along the Connecticut River. The old jail closed in 1992, when a new county facility opened in Ludlow, Massachusetts, and was vacant for several years. The city's Office of Planning and Economic Development subsequently collaborated with site manager MassDevelopment to commission a report on the construction challenges and cost of

reuse. At that time, the city's capital improvement budget for the preceding year totaled under \$40 million for all projects.

The jail reuse report prepared by Arrowstreet, Inc. found that extensive work to upgrade the facility prior to any tenant preparations would be necessary such as: the replacement or repair of the roof, windows, and doors, structural stabilization to meet seismic codes, replacement of all the building's systems, and abatement of lead paint and asbestos. The fit-out for tenants would necessitate removal of the cellblocks and insertion of a new floor structure in some parts of the complex, accessibility and egress improvements, and the construction of interior partitions. In considering potential uses as residential units, office space, a hotel, or retail, Arrowstreet, Inc. estimated the cost of construction for the shell and core to be in the range of \$30 million, or \$500 per square foot. The report also outlined site challenges that might affect the ability to attract a viable new use. Residential use was discouraged due to the limited availability of parking, traffic and noise from the nearby interstate, and the site's distance from other nearby neighborhoods. The surplus of vacant office space in downtown Springfield made the site less attractive for commercial use, and the substantial size of the structures was feared to be unattractive to prospective retailers. The winning contract for demolition was just over one million dollars, and the Springfield Redevelopment Authority is now seeking development bids.

Breadth of the Findings

Challenges in retaining significance during the adaptive reuse of historic correctional institutions apply to numerous other building subsets under the broad

umbrella of functional architecture.¹ The findings detailed here are germane to other similar building typologies that are also at risk of inappropriate alterations due to function-specific internal programming, siting on large tracts of land with lucrative redevelopment potential, and costly and overdue restoration work necessitated by their age and ongoing, heavy use. In all three of the included case studies, which have assumed very different approaches and faced site-specific risks to the retention of significance, the projects have all been successful. All of these projects have also maintained the intangible, visceral "sense of place," on which functional architecture relies to connect with the audience and their own experiences, to understand the significance of the site over an evolving history of use, and to utilize site history as a tool for education on our shared social context.

¹ The term "functional" is used in this thesis to describe purpose-built architecture that both clearly expresses function through exterior form and that features interior layouts and furnishings that are function-specific. These buildings may be civic (courthouses, city halls, military installations, and armories), institutional (libraries, schools, churches, hospitals, and correctional institutions), industrial (warehouses, barns, mills, power plants, and factories), or may serve other purposes such as entertainment and transportation (sports facilities, concert halls, and airport, bus, and train stations).

CHAPTER I AN INTRODUCTION TO THE "WHY" AND "WHAT"

It was architect Louis Sullivan who memorably stated that, "Form (ever) follows function." This mantra will be a core principle of the thesis, though it is only half of the equation. The other half was well-expressed by Indian artist and architect Satish Gujral, who avowed that, "Form follows culture." Taken together, these two variables suggest that the *why* of social context helps us to understand the *what* of architecture. This chapter serves as a brief overview of the *why* and the *what* of correctional institutions during the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era by discussing the evolving social context of these two eras and by introducing major correctional institution building forms.

Introduction

When considered across both the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, a period of time extending roughly from 1876 to 1921, the prevailing social issues of wealth, control of the lower classes, and artistic appreciation were also represented in punishment trends. Just as Americans of the Gilded Age were divided into an opulent upper class that owned the factories and an underpaid lower class that labored there, the penitentiary system's practice of contract prison labor capitalized on the hard work of inmates and made rich men of the private contractors. Likewise, as the city halls, train depots, libraries and schools of the Gilded Age demonstrated the power of the state and the talent of

America's best architects, correctional institutions of the late nineteenth century were prominently sited, carefully crafted, and built to impress. When the Progressive Era arrived in 1901, a previously dormant middle class became the flag bearers for reform in America's cities by calling for improved living and working conditions that sought to elevate the downtrodden. Similarly, inmates in Progressive Era reformatories were prescribed productive work, good food, and vocational training as preparation for a self-sufficient life.

Though not as easy to love as most civic buildings, correctional institutions play a role of equal consequence in comprehending the evolving social context of this country. How we treat those we believe or know to have wronged us relays as much about our priorities and personal fears as how we educate our children, improve our minds, and worship our gods. Man's desire to torture, take advantage of, detain, or rehabilitate the incarcerated has taken many ebbs and flows through our history. These structures evidence our humane successes and our inhumane failings and can teach us a great deal about where we have been and where we are headed in the treatment of one another.

Grandeur and Grittiness in the Gilded Age

The Gilded Age followed an already volatile decade in which the country struggled to unite a fractured citizenry, recreate its identity, and define the meaning of success. As America recovered from the casualties of the Civil War and from the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln in 1865, a difficult period of Reconstruction lasted through 1877. The Panic of 1873 (an economic depression lasting until 1879) followed the Black Friday panic of 1869, the Great Chicago Fire in 1871, and attacks of

influenza in 1872. Although the mid-1860s through the mid-1870s were a chance to start over, it was a bumpy beginning.

America opened a new chapter at the Centennial International Exhibition of 1876, held in Philadelphia. As the first World's Fair, the occasion attracted millions of Americans eager to see new technological innovations, tour grand buildings constructed for the event, and mingle with luminaries from around the globe. The Centennial was an opportunity to embrace nationalism and independence and to trumpet emerging intellectual and material progress. In the years that followed, America hastened a transition from a simpler, agrarian lifestyle to a period of urbanization, industrialization, artistic appreciation, and cultural exchange with the outside world. The Gilded Age began in 1876 with optimism about America's future growth and a thirst for consumerism.²

Although the country had been relatively docile on the international stage prior to the Civil War, the Gilded Age signaled the emergence of an animated and commanding country in which glorification of the city was the first duty of the architect.³ The architect was celebrated, listed with politicians and the country's wealthy as an elite category, and courted for the design of major public buildings in heavily-watched competitions. Major architects, artisans, sculptors, and landscape designers collaborated

² The term "Gilded Age" was coined by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner in their book of the same name. Written in 1873, *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today* criticized materialism and government corruption through the unfolding stories of a poor family and two upper class men, all of whom desire to acquire wealth through speculative land development.

³ Frederick Platt, *America's Gilded Age: Its Architecture and Decoration* (New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, 1976), 13-19.

on building execution and looked to classical models from Greece and Rome. These shared creative efforts and the preference for classical architecture were most visible at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago. Thousands of citizens attended, and as a result, cities and states across America adopted similar architectural language for their public buildings.

Despite efforts to rally together after the Civil War, the country was soon to sharply divide again as Americans began an obsession with luxury and large-scale industry. As urban population numbers exploded and metropolitan areas became hubs of culture, life was not so comfortable for all city residents. The lines of class were being drawn more clearly than ever before. Wealth was unabashedly flaunted by such rail, steel, oil, timber, land and coal industrialists as Morgan, Astor, Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Vanderbilt. In 1890, it was reported that more than half of the wealth was held by only one percent of the households in America.⁴

In America's cities, home to many of the 13,259,469 immigrants that arrived in the United States between 1866 and 1900, living and working conditions for the poor were unsafe, unhealthy, and unfair.⁵ Tenement houses held as many as two dozen families in tight quarters, and unemployed workers sought out such urban "immoralities" as the saloon, vaudeville house, bordello, and gambling hall as distractions. The industrialization of America and the resulting mechanization of manufacturing led to the

⁴ Kevin Phillips, *Wealth and Democracy: A Political History of the American Rich* (New York: Random House, Inc., 2003), 42-43.

⁵ Roger Daniels, "The Immigrant Experience in the Gilded Age," in *The Gilded Age: Perspectives on the Origins of Modern America*, ed. Charles William Calhoun (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 76.

construction of flour mills, oil refineries, steel mills, and an array of textile, houseware, and furniture factories. The factories employed few safety precautions, demanded long hours in injurious conditions, and left workers subject to the hiring and payroll whims of management.

Varying factors of unrest – economic depression, dense concentration of the poor in cities, labor strikes, high unemployment rates, and rapidly advancing technologies – contributed to a feeling of impending uprising by the masses in the eyes of the wealthy. A series of often violent and bloody strikes by the unions notably included the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and the Pullman Strike of 1894. During the depression years of the Gilded Age, nearly 100 railroads went bankrupt after the illustrious early years of industrialization, and thousands of businesses closed. Unemployment rose to over 16% during the 1870s and skyrocketed again in the 1890s.⁶

The middle and upper classes read salacious newspaper and magazine articles on the evils of the day. In particular, the *National Police Gazette*, initially founded in 1845 to report crime statistics, published all manner of tabloid-like articles on murders, prostitution, and affairs, along with advertisements for saloons and venereal disease remedies.⁷ The highly-publicized hatchet murders of Andrew and Abby Borden in Massachusetts by their daughter, Lizzie, and the notorious crimes of Jesse James and his gang were splashed across newspapers in the most grisly of descriptions.

⁶ Eric Arnesen, "American Workers and the Labor Movement in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *The Gilded Age: Perspectives on the Origins of Modern America*, ed. Charles William Calhoun (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 56.

⁷ Elliott J. Gorn, "The Wicked World: The National Police Gazette and Gilded-Age America," in *The Culture of Crime*, ed. Craig L. LaMay and Everette E. Dennis, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1995), 13.

Scholars, journalists, and authors warned of the threats that the "dangerous" classes posed. Henry George, in his book *Progress and Poverty* (1879), described the "general sense of disappointment" and "bitterness" that lower classes felt and warned of a menacing revolution to come. In 1881, Dr. George M. Beard authored a book entitled, "American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences," in which Beard blamed a modern civilization characterized by the press, the telegraph, the sciences, and the mental activity of women as contributing towards a lack of "nerve-force" in America's most wealthy.⁸

Alleviating this "nervousness," however, did not include elevating the poor but instead concentrated on control.⁹ The well-heeled accepted sociological theories such as Darwinism to justify the division of the classes. Charles Darwin himself unsympathetically stated, in *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1882), that human sympathy for the suffering of another was instinctual and that humans would have to bear the effects of the survival of the weak as they continued to procreate. William Graham Sumner wrote, in the 1880s, that government programs would only burden the good members of society and that attempts to better one's position in life were irrational and impossible.¹⁰ The strategy, therefore, was to isolate the poor and criminal and to fervently express the power of the state in an effort to avoid further chaos.

⁸ George M. Beard, *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1881).

⁹ Some middle class members of society did organize local charitable institutions after the strikes of the 1870s, though fear of anarchy still pervaded.

¹⁰ William Graham Sumner, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1883).

Punishment in the Gilded Age

Punishment trends in the Gilded Age were closely aligned with social attentiveness to wealth and control during the era. The history of America's correctional system during the late nineteenth century was largely defined by prison labor as a commodity, the embrace of two correctional institution layouts that physically represented the desire to incapacitate and capitalize upon the earning potential of inmates, and prison reform attempts that were slow to take effect.

Prison Labor

The practice of contract prison labor during the Gilded Age was rooted in the same lust for industry, profit-making, and authority that filled American factories with underpaid and overworked employees during this era. Under the arrangement, private businesses paid state governments to put convicts to work and sold convict-made goods on the open market. Each day in the 1880s, over 45,000 prisoners, which equated to seventy percent of population of men, women, and children behind bars, performed hard labor in the service of profit-making businesses. In the fiscal year of 1885-1886, these American prisoners manufactured goods worth almost \$29 million for the open market.¹¹

Contract prison labor was a microcosm of the tense divide between upper and lower classes during this era, representing the overarching desire to castigate and capitalize upon the baser members of society rather than teaching them skills and encouraging their upward mobility. In 1887, journalist Edwin Lawrence Godkin, often

¹¹ Rebecca M. McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment: Protest, Politics, and the Making of the American Penal State, 1776-1941* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 88-90.

critical of immigrants, the poor, and the temptations of city life, warned that, "It is a great pity that we cannot shut up the mouths of the Anarchists by love. But as we cannot shut them up by love, we must do it by fear, that is, by inflicting on them the penalties that they most dread."¹²

Although widespread attempts were made during the 1860s and 1870s to curtail the contract system and to instead utilize prison labor as an opportunity for building skills and self-reliance, efforts were hampered by the financial depression of the 1870s. As markets for prison goods collapsed and numerous small and medium-scale prison contractors suspended production, discipline issues arose in institutions where inmates no longer had their familiar daily routines. The response of most states, now concerned about the ability of multiple, diversified contractors to survive future financial strains, was to dismiss prior discussion of abolishing the system and instead create an oligopoly run by a handful of larger businesses that contracted across multiple states.¹³ By 1880, large-scale convict labor contracts were employed throughout the country.

Briefly summarized here but discussed at-length by author Rebecca M. McLennan, four systems of prison labor developed as large-scale contracts were utilized. Under the prevailing prison factory system, the contract business paid the state government by the head and also supplied materials, machinery, and food and clothing for the inmates to work onsite at the prison. The piece-price system, which necessitated that the contractor request goods from the prison and supply the prison with needed materials, was first used in Pennsylvania and New Jersey state prisons beginning in the

¹² John G. Sproat, *The Best Men: Liberal Reformers in the Gilded Age* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), 204.

¹³ McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment*, 99-102.

early nineteenth century and was most popular in the 1880s before a steady decline in the early twentieth century. The third system, the convict lease, was used mostly in the South and allowed the contractor to take physical possession of the convicts, who lived in camps and worked in fields or factories owned by the contractor. Under the public account system, by contrast, inmates worked for and at the prison, with goods sold on the open market. In all four systems, the ultimate goal was production for profit and control of the convict:

Almost everywhere, the penitentiary system of government had been reduced to a mere instrument of private, commercial interests whose primary commitment was to the pursuit of profit. No longer the force lurking furtively 'behind the throne' of formal state authority (as Wines and Dwight had cautioned in 1867), the contractor, and with him, the imperatives of large-scale capitalist industry, had emerged from the shadows to be crowned 'sovereign' of the penal domain.¹⁴

Interestingly, but not surprisingly, even prison death was big business during the Gilded Age. As detailed by author Craig Brandon, money was at stake on the day of the first execution by electric chair, held in 1890 at the state prison in Auburn, New York. Convict William Kemmler's fate was of less interest to the country than the victory that Thomas Edison could claim if the chair transmitted the current successfully and that George Westinghouse could proclaim if his alternating current generators survived. Despite ample testing on animals over a period of years, businessmen involved in the venture worried that the prisoner's body might burn and create an unsightly scene for the public.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid., 136.

¹⁵ Craig Brandon, *The Electric Chair: An Unnatural American History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1999).

The Pennsylvania and Auburn Plans

The penitentiary model developed in England through the work of prison reformer (and former prisoner) John Howard, who extensively toured prisons in England and overseas and published his findings on their filthy and disease-ridden conditions from the 1770s through the 1790s. In addition to the physical maladies of these prisons, Howard was concerned about the lack of religious guidance provided to inmates, the idleness he observed even in those offenders who had been sentenced to hard labor, and the interaction amongst the incarcerated that allowed them to coordinate disorderly conduct and instruct one another in the art of crime.¹⁶

Howard's documentation, along with the inability of the English to ship their felons to the American colonies following the American Revolutionary War, led to adoption of a Penitentiary Act in 1779 in England. Responding to Howard's observations, the bill called for the creation of separate facilities for men and women, wherein prisoners would be in solitary confinement at night and supervised during the day, sentenced to hard labor to financially benefit the prison, and ordered to attend religious services.¹⁷ Although a national penitentiary was not built in England then, three physical layouts incorporating the penitentiary ideology were utilized during the nineteenth century: the rectangular, the circular, and the radial designs.

The circular will be briefly discussed here for its significance in the history of prison architecture internationally, if not necessarily in the United States, with the remainder of this section devoted to the popular radial plan and its two diverting

¹⁶ Norman Johnston, *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

management styles of the Pennsylvania and Auburn plans. Prison historian Norman Johnston attributes England's embrace of the circular prison design to the form's use in other European building typologies such as "amusement houses" for music and dining in England and Ireland and hospitals and mental institutions in Paris and Vienna.¹⁸ The most significant plan for a circular prison was introduced by philosopher Jeremy Bentham, in the Panopticon layout for a new penitentiary that he presented to the British Parliament in 1790. Bentham's multi-story penitentiary was proposed to hold 1,000 inmates, housed in tiers encircling a rotunda. Prison guards stationed at the center could easily observe the inmates without warning from this vantage point and were themselves obscured from view by screening, in what Bentham memorably described as "invisible omniscience."

Although Bentham's model met with only limited embrace in England, variations on the plan did appear in Europe in semi-circular layouts and in the United States as radial arms extending from a central rotunda. In asserting that the historical purposes of imprisonment have been torture, punishment, and discipline, noted French philosopher Michel Foucault asserted in recent decades that Bentham's goal of achieving "invisible omniscience" pervaded prison systems internationally and has influenced the design of numerous civic institutions.¹⁹

Methods of inmate management in America's nineteenth century penitentiaries generally followed one of two practices in the common radial layout. The first, the Pennsylvania plan (also referred to as the separate system), was fully realized upon

¹⁸ Ibid., 48-49.

¹⁹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

completion of Philadelphia's Eastern State Penitentiary in 1829. The Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia, which opened in 1776 and operated on the congregate plan, had assumed an infamous reputation for filth, overcrowding, and bloodshed as inmates intermingled and hardened the less violent offenders. Eastern State Penitentiary, in response, enforced complete solitude, day and night, as prisoners worked and slept. The system of total isolation, as later described by the building commissioners of the facility, supported their principle that, "good design is to produce by means of sufferings principally acting on the mind and accompanied with moral and religious instruction, a disposition to virtuous conduct, the only sure preventive of crime, and where this beneficial effect does not follow, to impress so great a dread and terror, as to deter the offender from the commission of crime in the state where the system of solitary confinement exists."²⁰

Designed by John Haviland, an Englishman who moved to Philadelphia and became a major architectural figure there, Eastern State Penitentiary featured seven cellblocks radiating from a central rotunda. Cells included a small skylight, a flush toilet, and a water tap. Exits along the outer walls led to isolated, walled exercise yards for ground-level cells, and the initially unanticipated addition of a second story necessitated that some adjacent cells be joined together internally to create a room for exercise and work on the upper floor. An open-air, exterior balcony encircling the central tower afforded prison guards a view of the exercise yards. Although Haviland's original plan called for the only interior access between the corridor and cells to be via an inspection peephole and a small hole for passing food and materials, the final product did include interior doors added later. Prisoners left the confines of their cells and exercise yards

²⁰ Johnston, *Forms of Constraint*, 69.

only for baths or medical attention, wearing masks and inmate numbers to ensure anonymity. The Pennsylvania system became controversial following a series of investigations at Eastern State Penitentiary that showed high rates of suicide and mental illness under the practice of total isolation. The system declined nationally beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century as overcrowding at many state penitentiaries required double occupancy in cells.

While the Pennsylvania plan dominated overseas, a contrasting management system began at a new state prison in Auburn, New York in 1816. At Auburn, prisoners were isolated in their cells at night but labored in silence together during the day. Cells were stacked back-to-back and accessed from floor-to-ceiling corridors that extended along the perimeter walls. Balconies on each tier were connected by steps at the end of the cellblock that allowed passage to the hallways below. Reverend Louis Dwight of the Boston Prison Discipline Society (a vocal advocate organization for the plan) remarked of the merits of the Auburn system:

At Auburn, we have a more beautiful example still, of what may be done by proper discipline, in a Prison well constructed...In their solitary cells they spend the night, with no other book than the Bible, and at sunrise they proceed in military order, with no other book than the Bible, and at sunrise they proceed in military order, under the eye of the turnkeys, in solid columns, with the lock march, to their workshops; then, in the same order, at the hour of breakfast, to the common hall, where they partake of their wholesome and frugal meal in silence. At the close of the day, a little before sunset, the work is all laid aside at once, and the convicts return in military order to the solitary cells.²¹

In addition to addressing concerns about the mental effects of total isolation, the Auburn model was cheaper and easier for states to build and operate than the

²¹ Michael Welch, *Punishment in America: Social Control and the Ironies of Imprisonment* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1999), 6.

Pennsylvania system. The cost to build a cellblock on the Pennsylvania plan was estimated to cost eight times more than that of an Auburn cellblock²² Furthermore, the practice of congregating prisoners for labor better facilitated the industrialized production of goods that replaced handcrafted work after the Civil War. Under the Auburn system, inmates could work collectively in prison factories under the management of private, profit-making prison labor contractors. The results, however, were often not as lucrative as contract holders hoped, with labor unreliable in skill set and productivity level.²³

The application of the Auburn principle was frequently lax at institutions other than Auburn itself due to variations in administration. Where Auburn maintained an atmosphere of quiet and organization by strictly preventing overcrowding, other institutions were too under-funded to afford an expansion, too understaffed to maintain control, or so desperate to enforce the code of silence that they resorted to brutality. Like the Pennsylvania plan, the need to house multiple prisoners in one cell due to overpopulation inevitably led to conversations in cells at night and on the workroom floor by day.²⁴ Both plans, and the penitentiary model as a whole, were under close scrutiny in the late nineteenth century as reformers contended that prisoners, particularly those who were young adults or of low risk to society, were not prepared for reentry or trained in the self-sufficiency that would be required to avoid future crimes.

²² McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment*, 63.

²³ G. Larry Mays and L. Thomas Winfree, *Essentials of Corrections*, (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2009), 44.

²⁴ David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2009), 97-99.

Reform Attempts

Efforts to improve conditions at correctional institutions, particularly at state-run facilities, were illuminated during the Progressive Era but were initiated in the Gilded Age with limited impact. In 1867, theologian and educator Enoch Cobb Wines and Columbia University law professor Theodore Dwight, responding initially to a request from the New York Prison Association to inspect the state's facilities, produced their far-reaching *Report on the Prisons and Reformatories of the United States and Canada*. The document asserted that rehabilitation, not punishment, should be the goal of each institution. Wines and Dwight stated that, at a minimum, state prisons should separate prison management from party politics, reorganize the use of convict labor to encourage rehabilitation, and establish a rewards system "so that the principle of hope shall act with even greater vigor than that of fear."²⁵

Wines and Dwight suggested more substantial reforms that would include construction of adult reformatories to rehabilitate the offender "by placing the prisoner's fate, as far as possible, in his own hands; by enabling him, through industry and good conduct, to raise himself, step by step, to a position of less restraint."²⁶ The concept of adult reformatories was first embraced at the Elmira Reformatory, which opened in 1876 in New York under the direction of warden Zebulon Brockway. Discussed more fully later in this chapter, Elmira rejected the hard labor, brutality, and marching utilized at prisons constructed on the Pennsylvania and Auburn plans.

²⁵ Enoch Cobb Wines and Theodore William Dwight, *Report on the Prisons and Reformatories of the United States and Canada* (Albany: Van Benthuyesen & Sons' Steam Printing House, 1867), 72.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Following publication of the report, and with managerial assistance from Wines, the First National Congress of Prisons was held in Cincinnati in 1870. Attendees included governors, prison directors, and prison chaplains and physicians, and the National Prison Association was formed at the convention. The National Prison Association adopted an elaborate "Declaration of Principles," chief among them that determinate sentences based on time served were wrong in principle and should be replaced by sentences based on reformation.

Distracted by financial woes during the Gilded Age, it was not until the turn-of-the-century that real prison reform would take root as part of the broader agenda of the Progressive movement. Prison industry was a booming private oligopoly by 1880, with women and children amongst the workers. Author James Ford Rhodes wrote of this difficult period:

These five years [1873-1878] are a long dismal tale of declining markets, exhaustion of capital, a lowering in value of all kinds of property including real estate, constant bankruptcies, close economy in business and grinding frugality in living, idle mills, furnaces and factories, former profit-earning iron mills reduced to the value of scrap heap, labourers out of employment, reductions of wages, strikes and lockouts, the great railroad riots of 1877, suffering of the unemployed, depression and despair.²⁷

The Possibilities of the Progressive Era

The Progressive Era arrived around 1894, as the depression of the 1890s, ongoing industrial monopolies, and tiresome political unrest led labor supporters and small business owners to seek government intervention and reform. William "Boss" Tweed

²⁷ James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850 to the Final Restoration of Home Rule at the South in 1877* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920), 7:52-53.

was busy siphoning off millions from the citizens of New York City, and tycoons such as Morgan and Rockefeller had consolidated smaller ventures and controlled most of American industry. The disputed election of President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1876 was followed by presidential assassinations in 1881 and 1901, and the unrest at the highest levels of government contributed to an already difficult period for the country. After Vice President Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican, assumed the presidency in 1901, the twentieth century began with reforms in the areas of class warfare, working conditions, and living conditions in America's crowded cities.

The most notable Progressive Era shift in the war of the classes was the uprising and self-empowerment of an urban middle class that had been largely dormant during the Gilded Age and had previously accepted policies that contributed to several periods of economic depression. Historian Richard Hofstadter outlined the rise of the middle class as Progressive Era leaders, which he contends was a reaction to the upheaval of normative patterns of deference and power during the 1890s.²⁸ Following the mid-nineteenth century advent of industrialization and the resulting definition of success as accumulated wealth rather than hard work, the Gilded Age model for achievement was measured against the unattainable status of the Vanderbilts, Rockefellers, and Morgans.

The economic depression of the 1890s severely shifted the balance of power as industry imploded and millionaires suffered financially. Hofstadter asserted that the middle class of the Progressive Era, still coming of age in the 1890s, was the first generation that had been raised in the midst of such a major status revolution and was

²⁸ Richard Hofstadter, "The Status Revolution and Progressive Leaders," in *Reform, Crisis, and Confusion, 1900-1929*, ed. R. Jackson Wilson (New York: Random House, 1970).

consequently seeking to regain control of their own experience. The Middle Class emerged in the early twentieth century to use government intervention when needed and to rally together a public following that had not existed on prior political platforms. Thus, the fear-based class divide of the Gilded Age was mended by a middle class that sought to return government to the people.

During the Progressive Era, workers rights attracted widespread attention in the factory and at the ballot box. Angered by decades of unexpected periods of unemployment, low wages, long hours, unsafe factories, and no benefits, workers began to unionize on the job and to seek help from the government as citizens. Organized unions of the nineteenth century collapsed or seriously weakened during the depression of the 1890s. When the financial woes lifted in 1897, however, American Federation of Labor leader Samuel Gompers reinvigorated union activity by negotiating industry-wide contracts and organizing strikes. With union membership rising to 2,073,000 by 1904, politicians such as Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson grudgingly accepted the legitimacy of the organizations.²⁹

Roosevelt, upon assuming office, took an active interest in increasing federal regulation of industry, and his efforts were continued by Presidents William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson. Although the Interstate Commerce Act had been passed in 1887 to regulate railroads and the Sherman Antitrust Act had been passed in 1890 to prevent monopolies, action utilizing these legislative tools was minimal to start. In 1914, passage of the Clayton Antitrust Act more substantively addressed industry pricing, mergers, and

²⁹ Ibid., 61.

competition. Under Taft, the U.S. Department of Labor was also established to improve working conditions and rates of employment.

Children's rights in the workplace were also improved after many youths had labored in industrial factories through the nineteenth century in a practice that had sadly become an institution despite ongoing efforts to abolish it. It was not until the twentieth century that a national reform movement organized and that the federal government became involved in legislative action to, eventually, bring a halt to child labor. Most prominent among the organizations calling for widespread reform, rather than a mere improvement of conditions, was the National Child Labor Committee, whose cofounder, Edgar Gardner Murphy stated:

More than a generation ago it was argued, for the system of slavery, that there were good plantations upon which the slaves were well treated. That statement was true, but the argument was weak. The presence of the good plantation could not offset the perils and evils of the system in itself, any more than the "good factory" can justify the system of child labor...There can be no "good" child labor and this system is monstrous, not only in principle, but in its results.³⁰

State laws regulating child labor were developed in a piecemeal fashion, and at the federal level, the Keating-Owen Act of 1916 discouraged child labor by setting age minimums for factory work and by restricting the number of hours that youth could work.³¹

Living conditions in America's urban areas, infamous for poverty, crime, and disease during the Gilded Age, also attracted reform in the Progressive Era. The

³⁰ Hugh D. Hindman, *Child Labor: An American History* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2002), 48.

³¹ It was not until the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 that the prohibition on child labor became truly effective on a national level.

prevalent emergence of social work in American cities occurred in the late nineteenth century, most notably with the founding of Hull House in Chicago in 1889, and gained in popularity during the early twentieth century. Settlement houses in urban areas offered health and recreational services, provided literacy and training classes, and assisted with legal issues. Social work during the Progressive Era was not an effort to proselytize, as many charitable works of the nineteenth century had been, but was instead a morality-based approach to self-betterment that combined material support, vocational training, and participation of the recipient in achieving self-support and improvement. This philosophy was described by author Barbara Levy Simon as:

Social workers of the early period who offered this kaleidoscopic range of concrete help did so in the belief that immediate aids and services were necessary and justifiable in themselves, simply because clients or neighbors made evident their need for them. They thought, furthermore, that immediate help, when provided in the context of a respectful and supportive relationship, engendered hope and catalyzed physical and mental development, healing, rehabilitation, and self-respect.³²

Like the advent of social work, penology shifted during the early twentieth century, focusing on the rehabilitation of the offender in preparation for a productive life rather than merely the incarceration – and profit-making potential – of inmates previously considered to be a static class.

Punishment in the Progressive Era

Punishment trends in the Progressive Era, in contrast to those of the Gilded Age, reflected broader social and political efforts to reform working and living conditions and to uplift the lower and middle classes. The Progressive Era correctional system of the

³² Barbara Levy Simon, *The Empowerment Tradition in American Social Work: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 74.

early twentieth century sought to rehabilitate the offender in an atmosphere of clean air, healthy food, and industrious and satisfying work, with late-era attempts to abolish the contract prison labor system. Penal developments in the early twentieth century were defined by the rise of the reformatory system and the Progressive Party's "New Penology" that called for a halt to the privatization of prison labor.

The Reformatory System

The adult reformatory model was embraced in the Progressive Era after the typology was first introduced in 1876 at the New York Reformatory at Elmira. The reformatory ideals of independence, productivity, self-improvement through education, and morality were a fitting companion to progressive ideology. Chapter IV provides a more substantial overview of how the reformatory model evolved during the Progressive Era, and this section will briefly discuss its beginnings. Author Alexander W. Pisciotta, in *Benevolent Repression: Social Control and the American Reformatory-Prison Movement*, wrote an exhaustive overview of Elmira's beginnings that serves as the resource for most of the following information.³³

As discussed in this chapter, the Gilded Age was a chaotic period in which all social, economic, and demographic norms were in upheaval amidst the struggle of the classes, periods of financial depression, and urban areas that had become overcrowded and unhealthy for America's poor. New York City is a salient example, with its streets teeming with prostitutes, gangs, and thieves whose arrival was attributed by New Yorkers to poor immigrant stock, laziness, lack of religious conviction, disease, and inherent

³³ Alexander W. Pisciotta, *Benevolent Repression: Social Control and the American Reformatory-Prison Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 1994).

immorality.³⁴ Faith in the state's criminal justice system was weak as police officers were poorly trained and accepting bribes and as judicial officers turned a blind eye when necessary due to their own political involvement. The effectiveness of the Pennsylvania and Auburn plans then in use throughout the Northeast was regularly debated, and Enoch Cobb Wines and Theodore Dwight began their tours of New York's correctional institutions as the basis for development of their broader *Report on the Prisons and Reformatories of the United States and Canada* in 1867.

Although the financial panic that began in 1873 slowed prison reform across the country, New York had already proceeded with construction of an industrial reformatory, authorized in 1869. The Elmira State Reformatory incorporated the recommendation from Wines and Dwight that self-sufficiency, industry, and good conduct could rehabilitate the offender. The state purchased 280 acres in Elmira, New York for the site, which was to cost \$500,000 and include 500 cells.³⁵ The Wines and Dwight report had been short on specifics about how to design and operate a reformatory, and the meeting of the First National Congress of Prisons in 1870 had similarly addressed issues of a broader new direction in penology. It was Elmira's first superintendent, noted penologist Zebulon Brockway, who defined Elmira's mission and the future institutions that would employ it as a model.

When construction was completed at Elmira in 1880, Brockway and the staff directed their attention to inmate care, deterrence, and rehabilitation. Elmira instituted a system of reward classification that placed new inmates in a trial classification, from

³⁴ Ibid., 9.

³⁵ Ibid., 11.

which they could move up with good behavior to earn additional privileges, including early release, or down with poor behavior to face penalties. In addition to religious worship, inmates engaged in courses on morality, received training in the vocational trades, studied art and music, and participated in recreation to strengthen minds and bodies. Brockway also experimented with biogenic research at Elmira, utilizing massage, calisthenics, and adjusted diets to "treat" those inmates whose physical anatomy ostensibly revealed an innate tendency towards crime. Despite the promises of reform, however, author Alexander W. Pisciotta contended that the facility's coercion and regulation of dress, speech, posture, thought, and action, was evidence that the old priority of repression, rather than rehabilitation, was still the central goal.³⁶

What Elmira accomplished (or not) might well have been contained within New York had Brockway not launched a public relations campaign at the end of the nineteenth century that included the distribution of annual reports and the opening of the site to visitors for tours. The facility attracted both national and international attention and spurred the creation of state reformatories across the United States during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. As Pisciotta described:

By 1899, dozens of correctional institutions across the country had embraced Elmira's penal philosophy (rehabilitation, treatment, and reform), theory of crime causation (multifactor positivism), diagnostic methods (medical model, prison science), correctional vocabulary ("hospital," "patients," "college," "students"), and treatment programs (academic and vocational education, labor, religion, indeterminate sentencing, mark and classification system, military drill, recreation, biogenic treatments, and parole).³⁷

³⁶ Ibid., 22.

³⁷ Ibid., 27.

As the Progressive Era began in 1901, Brockway and his new form of prison science were held in high regard and well-known throughout the country. Although Brockway retired as superintendent in 1900, he spent the remaining two decades of his life writing, lecturing, and serving on various boards.³⁸ When the American Prison Association met in 1921, one year after Brockway's death, a memorial passage for Brockway stated of his influence during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, "Z.R. Brockway was the dean of American penology, the outstanding figure in this field of endeavor, and the man whose vision was more than half a century in advance of his contemporaries."³⁹

The New Penology

The formalization of the Progressive Party, which was a conglomeration of progressive ideals that had been popularized by President Theodore Roosevelt, occurred in 1912. Roosevelt, whose term had ended in 1908, failed to garner the Republican nomination for a return to the White House four years later. He consequently established his own Progressive Party, also known as the Bull Moose Party, to support his unsuccessful candidacy. When the Progressive Party gathered for their convention in Chicago in 1912, their platform included a declaration to end the contract prison labor system and to instead substitute a system of providing convict-produced goods only to government entities. The practice that they envisioned, with the management of prison labor removed from hands of profit-driven, private contractors and redirected to sustain

³⁸ For a thorough discussion of Brockway's work at the Elmira Reformatory, see his own autobiography: Zebulon Brockway, *Fifty Years of Prison Service* (New York: Charities Publication Committee, 1912).

³⁹ *Proceedings of the Annual Congress of the American Prison Association* (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co., Printers, 1921), 123.

state and federal institutions, was consistent with the ideals of the reformatory model and with progressive initiatives to improve working conditions and help the lower classes move up.

The Progressive Party's position amplified a slowly growing sentiment of the early twentieth century, which was also trumpeted by the National Committee on Prison Labor. When the group formed in 1910, it attracted progressive prison administrators, women's groups, social scientists, trade union leaders, and members of both major political parties. Members sought to document the problem of convict prison labor and suggested reforms to include the abolition of remaining contract labor systems in state and federal facilities, the reconfiguration of prison labor to accomplish vocational training and wage-earning for the prisoner's family, and the utilization of other means of rehabilitation in addition to labor, such as physical exercise.⁴⁰

In an essay published in 1913, former President Roosevelt outlined tenets of the "New Penology," which espoused justice to the prisoner and to society. Of this "justice," Roosevelt wrote, "It is to the interest of both that the prisoner be secured his right to proper work, health, reasonable moral and mental training, and last, but by no means least, the right to rehabilitation so far as in him lies. Any prison system that does not give these rights fails to do its duty."⁴¹ In addressing a proposed new system for the employment of convicts solely to benefit *governmental* needs, Roosevelt advised that government entities become self-sufficient in their farming and industry needs. Of the necessity of abandoning contract prison labor, Roosevelt stated, "The protection of

⁴⁰ McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment*, 323-24.

⁴¹ Theodore Roosevelt, "The New Penology," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 46 (1913).

society is the primary purpose of imprisonment and the next purpose is reformation. The penalty must be wise and humane and the prisoner must be made, as far as possible, to be self-supporting...The state must find the money for the humane treatment of its prisoners."⁴²

Reform efforts continued through the 1920s, but the end of contract prison labor came in the 1930s, largely triggered by the Great Depression and increasing panic that private jobs would be lost to cheaper convict labor. Most notably, the 1935 Hawes-Cooper Act and the Ashurst-Sumner Act of 1940 outlawed interstate trade in convict-made goods. In 1934, the federal government established Federal Prison Industries, Inc., to produce goods for government agencies, with no access to the commercial market.

Conclusion

The association between our evolving culture and the built environment has been acknowledged often in architectural critiques. In 1892, architectural historian Barr Ferree wrote of the relationship between *why* and *what* in building form for *The Architectural Record*:

Even in primitive society, the influence of other ideas can be seen. As society progressed, as mankind spread out in fresh directions, as new conditions arose, the changed circumstances found their reflection in architecture. Architecture became in a measure, if not altogether, the product of the environment, grouping all external phenomena under this one head, acting through the mind of man...Culture and society have not always advanced simultaneously, but both have progressed towards one ideal; to an extent they are coordinate factors...Architecture expresses a human idea, a human thought, the state of society, and the progress of culture.⁴³

⁴² Ibid., 5-6.

⁴³ Barr Ferree, "What is Architecture?" *The Architectural Record* 1 (July 1891-July 1892), 203.

The preservation of historic buildings should include both the retention of physical, character-defining elements that impart cultural references and the interpretation of these sites for public education. As this study proceeds, three case studies will illustrate varying approaches to the reuse of historic correctional institutions, highlighting special challenges beyond the commonly-discussed preservation of exterior elements. The cultural context of historic buildings is holistic in nature, existing in exterior design and massing, in internal layout and finishes, in spatial relationships between primary and ancillary structures, and in the artifacts that document use.

Decision-making about the retention of elements of architectural and historical significance merits professional consideration for any historic building typology, but it requires a respectful heart and a gentle hand for correctional institutions, which have witnessed much pain and suffering. We must always be mindful that a significant feature altered or removed can be reconstructed, but that the essence of the place relies heavily on its authenticity and on its role as a witness to history. Thus, we should tread carefully – and kindly.

CHAPTER II ALLEGHENY COUNTY JAIL

This chapter examines the reuse of the Allegheny County Jail in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the exterior of which is protected as a city-designated historic structure. The building, along with the connected Allegheny County Courthouse, is an undisputed architectural masterpiece of Henry Hobson Richardson, but the jail's austere interior was described in a 1958 journal article on this "throbbing citadel" as "the tense containment of pulsating noise, the foul body odor, and the dangerous unrest of wasted manpower confined within a brutal filigree of iron bars."⁴⁴ When the building was to be converted to house the juvenile and family sections of the Common Pleas Court beginning in 2000, the County and its design team faced the daunting task of reconfiguring the layout for a new program while preserving Richardson's design intent, sharing the building's painful past in respectful deference, and making an austere building approachable for children and their families. The result, as discussed here, was a victorious and sensitive model for similar projects.

Introduction

The story of any building is ongoing from its inception – layering upon itself in folds, being evaluated by each observer in his or her own context of experiences, and

⁴⁴ William Huff, "Richardson's Jail," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 41, (1958): 41.

being reinterpreted by future generations who color the past with their own predispositions. Significance, in our professionally-accepted definition, organizes a hierarchy of essential features, dates, and people, parsing out those that are not central to a building's impact on history and prioritizing those that should be considered in future decision-making. Coupled with this significance, the "soul" of a building is an ever-evolving narrative in which every player has a part, no matter how small, and in which those stories are also deserving of conveyance. The adaptive use of correctional institutions should retain a "sense of place," both by preserving more obvious architectural significance and in evidencing the patterns of everyday life, especially when considering alterations to the interiors of these buildings.

John Ruskin's seminal *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, written in 1849, was an early declaration that the character of a building goes beyond the composition achieved at its completion and that, with time, buildings evolve. Ruskin asserted of this maturation over time that, "Therefore, when we build, let us think that we build for ever...For, indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, nor in its gold. Its glory is in its Age, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, or mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity."⁴⁵

When the utility of a building is altered, challenges arise in retaining the "voicefulness" of the structure. This is particularly vital for functional architecture, which is defined by the purpose that it originally served and by its ongoing use.

⁴⁵ John Ruskin, *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London: George Routledge & Sons Limited, 1849), 195.

American architectural theorist Charles Jencks, who authored a number of books on Modernism and Postmodernism, described the "signs" associated with architecture and their evolving meaning as follows:

This is perhaps the most fundamental idea of semiology and meaning in architecture: the idea that any form in the environment, or sign in language, is motivated, or capable of being motivated. It helps to explain why all of a sudden forms come alive or fall into bits. For it contends that, although a form may be initially arbitrary or non-motivated...its subsequent use is motivated or based on some determinants. Or we can take a slightly different point of view and say that the minute a new form is invented it will acquire, *inevitably*, a meaning.⁴⁶

Although exterior form relays crucial information, it is often the interior and its practical elements that make the experience one of emotion rather than merely observance. Exterior form is perceived in relation to the surrounding streetscape and other reminders of modern times, which change each day, while interior elements can be experienced in a more enveloping environment. It is these interior elements that communicate both the "voicefulness" of which Ruskin wrote and the "signs" that Jencks described.

We identify the library through its books and study cubicles, the school building through its desks, chalkboards, and lockers, the church through its choir box and pews, and the stadium through its seats, field, and scoreboard. These elements connect to our own perceptions, as we know well the smell of musty books, the screech of metal chairs across the classroom's linoleum floors, and the vibrations of the church's pipe organ. Simply seeing a stadium from the street may not be emotional, but the smell of freshly cut grass as we sit on the hard, fold-down seats inside may remind us of the games we

⁴⁶ Charles Jencks, "Semiology and Architecture," in *Meaning in Architecture*, ed. Charles Jencks and George Baird (London: Barrie & Rockliff, the Cresset Press, 1969), 11.

attended with our family as children. It is use itself that brings a functional building to life, and "every act, object and statement that man perceives is meaningful (even 'nothing')."47

In contrast to many functional building types, the correctional institution is sealed off from, and avoided at great effort by, the outside world. Thus, it is never internally experienced by most modern-day observers and presents unique challenges in conversion. First, as law-abiding citizens, we know of the interior of correctional institutions only through books and film or as employees of the system who are at liberty to come and go. As a result, how can one retain and express interior significance when the observer, and even the decision-making professional, is detached from any personal knowledge of the experience of being behind bars? Second, there are few uplifting messages to be gleaned from a correctional institution. How shall the "signs" of that interior significance be interpreted when they are sorrowful tools of constraint and suffering that do not complement the new use?

Nineteenth-Century Jails

The development of American jails during the nineteenth century has been somewhat unfocused in documentation, likely owing to the assortment of these structures by region and capacity, the literary attentiveness to prison development, and the often integrated history of general crime and incarceration trends. In one of the few summarizations on this topic, authors J.M. Moynahan and Earle K. Stewart described this variety in the early nineteenth century: "Jails in many places at the turn of the century housed those awaiting trial, those serving sentences, and in some locations those held as

⁴⁷ Ibid., 13.

material witnesses. Scattered among this population were children, debtors, slaves, and both the mentally and physically ill."⁴⁸ Although changes did occur in the handling of certain offenses, particularly those involving juveniles, debtors, and the mentally ill, Moynahan and Stewart noted the diversity of these institutions throughout the nineteenth century based on size, condition, population, management style, and the direction of local authorities who controlled the institutions.

The most notable physical change in jail design during the nineteenth century was a product of prison reform. The introduction of housing inmates in separate cells, eventually laid out on the Auburn plan in many of the jails and most of the prisons, replaced the haphazard, congregate confinement and corporal punishment that had plagued America's jail system since Colonial times. As described in Chapter I, the Auburn plan brought a sense of organization to jails and prisons while mitigating the misery and madness that solitary confinement in the Pennsylvania system supposedly wrought.

Little progress was made to improve the treatment of *jail* inmates, however, as most of the focus was shifted to *prison* reform and the manner in which long-term inmates would be productive through labor. Efforts at improving jails during this period focused mainly on providing humane conditions and solitary opportunities for reflection rather than any substantive attempts at rehabilitation or preparation for reentry. At the Allegheny County Jail, for example, it was reported in 1905 that the average number of days served that year was 10.06. Although it is clear that the jail also housed at least a

⁴⁸ J. M. Moynahan and Earle K. Stewart, *The American Jail: Its Development and Growth* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, Inc, 1980), 42.

few convicted prisoners (as suggested by the hangings in the courtyard), the chaotic decades of the Gilded Age and the social concentration on the "survival of the fittest" likely afforded little attention to the comfort and redemption of criminals incarcerated in jail approximately one week. More substantive changes to general incarceration standards would not arrive until the twentieth century. As Moynahan and Stewart stated, "There continued to be a lack of concern by most citizens with regard to conditions of imprisonment. Exceptions were some private social agencies and members of a few public boards that undertook to investigate jail conditions."⁴⁹

As one of those few interested reformers, Enoch Cobb Wines, produced model plans for jails in 1872, which he presented to the Illinois State Legislature. In 1879, he also wrote critically of the condition of county jails across the country and suggested improvements that reserved rehabilitative efforts for long-term facilities. Wines lamented in this latter document that the county jail system was, at that time, a "disgrace to our civilization...wasteful of time, wasteful of opportunity, wasteful of money; *and it does not reform.*"⁵⁰ Remarking on the lessons learned in jail, Wines wrote, "Thus this country has in its county jails about two thousand schools of vice, all supplied with expert and zealous professors."⁵¹

The remedy suggested by Wines called for a complete reconstruction of the county jail system rather than piece-meal improvements, with the focus on the county jail

⁴⁹ Ibid., 66.

⁵⁰ Enoch Cobb Wines, *The State of Prisons and of Child-saving Institutions in the Civilized World* (Cambridge: University Press, John Wilson & Son, 1880), 611.

⁵¹ Ibid., 612.

as a temporary house of detention that classified inmates in order to shield from corruption the innocent awaiting trial. Although his report had preached rehabilitation, this goal was largely reserved for long-term incarceration. The priority for jails would be to ensure that the innocent and the small-time crooks were not tainted by the more wanton offenders. It seems, however, that little meaningful progress was made on jail reform in this vein during the late nineteenth century. At the annual Congress of the National Prison Association of the United States meeting in 1907, Dr. H. H. Hart of the Russell Sage Foundation wrote:

It is a tremendous shock to a man's moral nature when he comes to realize that he has broken over the barriers of society and has fallen into the hands of the law. He says, 'If I can only get out of this trouble, I will never get in it again.' A great impression has been made. There is the moment of opportunity; there is the moment when he can be turned in the right direction. But what do we do? We thrust him into a jail. We put him in a cage, in view of the public. We force him into association with the vilest individuals that can be found. There, overwhelmed by shame, he finds himself surrounded by a body of men who ridicule his sentiment...the inmates come out worse than when they came in.⁵²

Whatever the poor interior conditions and their effect on the incarcerated, the exterior architecture of larger jails of the Gilded Age exuded the country's focus on urbanization, artistic appreciation, and cultural exchange with the outside world. In an era during which America struggled to rally together and sought the embodiment of nationalism through the architecture of civic buildings, many of the jails were prominently sited downtown, meticulous in their crafting, and designed by some of the great regional and national architects of the time.

⁵² Dr. H. H. Hart, "County Jails" in *Proceedings of the Annual Congress of the National Prison Association of the United States* (Indianapolis: Wm. B. Buford, 1907), 281.

Constructing the Allegheny County Jail

If an architect was destined for Pittsburgh, it was Henry Hobson Richardson. By the early 1880s, Pittsburgh was gritty, in motion, and flush with millionaires. Bridges spanned from one rocky embankment to another, and smoke rose from iron and steel factories along the river. Like many other industrial cities, Pittsburgh lacked zoning laws to segregate industry apart from residential areas and had yet to adopt any clean air or clean water regulations to control the polluted air and the contaminated, unfiltered river water. Although Pittsburgh drifted behind other major cities in innovative architecture, the climate here of power, frankness, and purpose was fitting for Richardson's style.

Richardson's own "Richardsonian Romanesque" style, typified by heavy massing at the base, rusticated stonework, round-headed arches revealing recessed entryways, squat columns, and a central tower as a focal point, was a novel interpretation of Romanesque elements in Italian, French, and Spanish architecture. Of Richardson's self-defining style, nineteenth century American architect Henry Van Brunt remarked, "Richardson poured into the antique mould such a stream of vital energy and personal force that the old types seemed transformed in his hands."⁵³

When Richardson won the design competition for the new Allegheny County Courthouse and Jail, he was at the peak of his career. By 1880, he was already a long-time Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and was an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Richardson had designed churches, libraries, bridges, railroad depots, stores, and private homes. Richardson's expression of function

⁵³ Henry Van Brunt, "Henry Hobson Richardson," in *Architecture and Society: Selected Essays of Henry Van Brunt*, ed. William A. Coles (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969), 178.

through form, his experience with designing prominent civic buildings, and his preference for austere architecture that would befit a jail made him a natural early choice for the Pittsburgh courthouse and jail.

Interestingly, the jail in particular is reminiscent of Richardson himself, who is shown in photographs to have been serious, fixed, and quite portly in size. In one of the frequently printed portraits, Richardson dons a monk's habit. Richardson biographer James F. O'Gorman stated, "These portraits of the architect as medieval monk represent Richardson's reluctance artistically to embrace the products of the Industrial Revolution...He shared this attitude, artistically if not politically, with Pugin, Ruskin, Morris, and others who championed medieval romance over modern expediency. The idea was not to go back in time but to bring forward the best of the past to ameliorate the worst of the present."⁵⁴

When the Allegheny County Courthouse burned in 1882, elaborate plans began for a new courthouse and jail. A competition was held in April 1883 to design the buildings, but Richardson, one of a hundred or so major architects invited to compete, did not respond. Later changing his mind, Richardson took the place of New York architect George Brown Post, who had withdrawn. Where other competitors proffered elaborate designs in the styles of Renaissance chateaus and heavily-ornamented Second Empire city halls, Richardson's design was simple, stately, and well-organized. Richardson's proposal was selected in January of 1884, plans were submitted that July, and builder Norcross Brothers of Massachusetts was selected for the construction.

⁵⁴ James F. O'Gorman, *Living Architecture: A Biography of H.H. Richardson* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 151.

The jail was completed in 1886, the same year that Richardson died, and opened to receive prisoners that September. The courthouse was finished in 1888. Richardson had worked tirelessly while ill for many years, impressively producing some of his most highly-regarded work while his physical health waned. Richardson is frequently quoted as remarking in his last days, "If they honor me for the pygmy things I have already done, what will they say when they see Pittsburgh finished?"⁵⁵ It is clear that he regarded the courthouse and jail to be great successes in his career. Judge J.F. White stated at the dedication ceremony for the courthouse that, "Standing on this eminence, like the temple in Jerusalem, it is the most conspicuous object in the city and the first to arrest the eye."⁵⁶

The courthouse and the jail were constructed of Milford granite with a pinkish-gray tone. The more elaborate of the two structures, the courthouse fronted on Grant Street (a change from Richardson's original design submission) and welcomed visitors into a grand stairway that led to courtrooms, judge's chambers, consultation rooms, and jury rooms designed in self-contained pods. A tower, rising 325 feet in height, was echoed by the shorter square towers at each corner, with additional smaller towers around the roofline of an open-air interior courtyard (fig. 1).

⁵⁵ Ibid., 181.

⁵⁶ Martin Aurand, *The Spectator and the Topographical City* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), 32-33.



Figure 1: Allegheny County Courthouse
[Photograph by author]

The jail's focal point from the air and inside the building is the octagonal tower and the rotunda directly inside. From the tower, three (now four) arms radiated in irregular depths to house reception areas and jail cells. Entered from Ross Street, the rotunda historically housed guard space and now serves as the entrance foyer. At the top of the rotunda's interior, a catwalk circles the perimeter. Light enters through a handful of small, arched windows beneath the domed ceiling. Piers at the ground level support slim granite columns that end in soaring arches at the rotunda's dome. The interior spaces of the radiating arms rise sixty feet in height and are flooded with sunlight.

Richardson's original cells of brick walls and steel bars measured 8' deep by 5' wide and faced outward towards the grand windows. Richardson's cells were replaced between 1904 and 1908 by the steel cells of architect Frederick J. Osterling, enclosures

that measured 7'-8 1/2" deep by 6' wide. Between 1912 and 1913, Grant Street and Ross Street were lowered, thereby increasing the height of the Ross Street entrance by over eight feet. The rotunda would likely be even more visually powerful today were this grand space entered through the more squat, horizontal opening that Richardson originally designed rather than vertical entrance that exists now (fig. 2).



Figure 2: Allegheny County Jail, Ross Street entrance [Photograph by author]

The oppressive mass of the jail is highlighted by the few arched openings into the façade, all of which are immense in size and appear to shoulder the weight of the structure above. The exterior battered walls of the jail slope slightly outwards and increase in thickness as they descend, further accentuating the building's credence. The jail's exterior also features a tall granite chimney in the jail yard to serve boilers in the basement, iron bars over many of the windows, and an imposing stone wall (moved from

its original location to accommodate additions to the jail) that surrounded exercise yards for men and women. An elevated and enclosed stone footbridge connects the jail to the courthouse over the street (fig. 3). This secure passageway enabled the transfer of inmates between the jail and the courthouse for trial. Known as the "Bridge of Sighs," it is rumored to refer in name to the bridge in Venice, built in 1602, that connects the prison to the interrogation rooms in the Doge's Palace.



Figure 3: Bridge of Sighs [Photograph by author]

Where ornamentation on the courthouse is present but reserved, the jail is much more simplistic in nature. This functional expression and overt masculinity has attracted considerable attention to the jail, with many critics considering it the better of the two buildings stylistically. Richardson biographer Jeffrey Karl Ochsner wrote of this preference that, "Modern architects and historians...have tended to regard the jail more

highly than the courthouse, probably as a result of its plain outline, functional appropriateness, and lack of almost any historically derived detail."⁵⁷

Post-Construction Changes

The first notable impact on the courthouse and the jail was not to either building directly but to their awe-inducing presence as mammoth structures dominating the downtown streetscape. Upon completion of the two buildings, Pittsburgh's skyline was mostly punctuated by relatively low-lying buildings sited on small lots, save for a few churches and government buildings that popped up. Author Martin Aurand noted, however, of the courthouse and jail that, "Richardson's buildings were about as big as they could be. There was no *temenos* this time – the buildings' footprints matched the limits established by the grid, abutting streets and sidewalks on all sides, even while bridging a street to encompass a second block...Load-bearing stonework could not be piled much higher. A building complex of this scale – like a cathedral or a castle – was envisioned to be the exception, a site among mere parcels."⁵⁸ Images of the two structures soon after construction are indeed captivating and almost mythical, with little else to capture one's attention in the skyline (fig. 4).

⁵⁷ Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, *H.H. Richardson: Complete Architectural Works* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982), 326.

⁵⁸ Aurand, *The Spectator and the Topographical City*, 35-36.



Figure 4: Allegheny Courthouse and Jail, undated [Allegheny County]

The Richardson buildings, however, were soon swallowed by an ever-developing downtown. Of immediate impact on Richardson's building was the fourteen-story Carnegie Building, located one block away and constructed in 1895 utilizing the steel-framed skyscraper technology that was increasing the verticality of major cities across the country. Next, and more importantly, the Frick Building, constructed of steel encased in limestone, was built directly across the street from the courthouse building in 1901. Designed by Daniel H. Burham for millionaire industrialist Henry Clay Frick, the Frick Building was built in close proximity to Carnegie's structure. The Frick Building's twenty-one stories cast a long shadow, ostensibly a show of defiance resulting from their deteriorating business relationship. The Frick Building also surpassed Richardson's courthouse in height, its sophisticated urban lines seemingly an affront to the medieval Richardsonian Romanesque style that waned after Richardson's death. Although

certainly still forbidding from the ground, Richardson's great masterpieces were soon lost in the vertically climbing streetscape (fig. 5).



Figure 5: Development in downtown Pittsburgh
[Photograph by author]

Although the cost of the courthouse and jail reached over \$2 million, the utility of the jail was insufficient in its capacity just over ten years after opening. This overcrowding occurred as early as 1899, according to literature from the building's jail museum. A report published by the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* in 1905 found conditions at the jail to be tolerable despite these numbers, describing the building as "clean and sweet and well ventilated. The guests of the Pittsburgh hotels might almost be envious of the superior sanitary attractions of the

jail."⁵⁹ In 1916, when the luxurious William Penn Hotel was built by Frick just a few blocks from the courthouse, it seems unlikely that the jail's conditions would have been held in such high regard by tourists.

The same report includes statistics provided by the warden at the time, Mr. E. Lewis, on the jail population. Most of the charges were for violence, burglary, drunkenness, disorderly conduct, suspicious persons, and trespass. The average age of the confined (which included both men and women) was 30.5. However, of the 13,305 persons reported as incarcerated during 1905, 930 were under the age of 18. Common laborers accounted for 7,100 of the detained, and another 3,367 prisoners were skilled laborers. Professionals accounted for only 75 of the prisoners, and "schoolboys and girls" numbered 279. Seven executions were conducted by the warden that year, and prisoners were hanged in a small courtyard within the walls of the jail (executions at the jail ended in 1911).

Richardson's three-corridor layout for the Allegheny County Jail was relatively fleeting as the rapid increase in jail population quickly necessitated an increase in space in the early twentieth century. Architect Frederick J. Osterling had designed a number of buildings in Pittsburgh including Allegheny High School (1889), the Bell Telephone of Pennsylvania Building (1890), and the First Methodist Church (1893). Osterling was also well-known for remodeling Clayton, the Pittsburgh mansion of Henry Clay Frick, in 1892. Osterling was commissioned for an expansion of the jail, which was completed in

⁵⁹ *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 25, (January-June 1905): 204.

1908. Osterling's proposal also included an unrealized plan to add an additional story to the courthouse.⁶⁰

Osterling's additions extended the north and east cell blocks from Richardson's design and also inserted a new wing, extending on the diagonal from the central tower, between them. On the interior, Osterling also designed the multi-story, freestanding cage system of steel cells that replaced Richardson's brick and steel enclosures. Rising five stories in height and placed back-to-back, the cell blocks opened towards Richardson's massive windows. The cell blocks were separated from the stone walls to create a substantial drop of some thirty-five feet to the floor below, awaiting any inmate who tried to escape. The freestanding cells extended down the jail's arms, visible from the guard booths in the central tower. The effect created a remarkable juxtaposition between the apparatus of incarceration and the visually sacrosanct, open rotunda. It reflected the quintessential intention of authoritative omniscience found in Panopticon-inspired prison design.

The End of an Era

Beginning in 1924, the Allegheny County Jail faced several unrealized serious threats of demolition. During the 1920s, the Allegheny County Planning Commission recommended removal of the jail from its site, with plans and appropriations following to construct a seventeen-story office and prison building. The Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Institute of Architects responded with a suggestion to remove Osterling's

⁶⁰ This proposed portion of the work faced criticism from *The American Architect and Building News* at the time, and several resources have also suggested that Henry Clay Frick threatened legal action.

extensions, recapturing Richardson's original layout and repurposing the building to store County records. These plans faded away, and the jail remained in use without further threats until 1954, when it was rumored that Conrad Hilton was considering the construction of a hotel on the site. A small group of citizens, known as the "Friends of the Ross Street Prison," rallied to save the building and fought off the plans. The jail was listed as a city-designated landmark, along with the courthouse, in 1972, and the two structures were listed together as a National Historic Landmark in 1976.

Although any enthusiast of American architecture today would shudder at the ongoing attempts to raze Richardson's jail through much of the twentieth century, we would likely attribute these attempts to the larger interests during those decades of downtown development and sprawl at any cost. However, it would not be off base to note that the demolition and replacement of institutional buildings, unlike residential and commercial structures, has long been a "natural" part of our history as social attitudes have changed. Richardson's Allegheny County Jail, for example, was the County's third, having replaced the first structure, which was deemed too decrepit for continued use, and the second, a grand Greek Revival building. This is just one of many stories of correctional institutions that have been replaced multiple times over the generations, and indeed, this same pattern can be seen in other functional buildings such as schools, hospitals, stadiums, churches, airports, office buildings, and libraries.

The last, and ultimately successful, attempt to close the jail came in 1976, when Neighborhood Legal Services, a legal service organization, filed a class-action lawsuit against the Allegheny County Board of Prison Inspectors on behalf of the jail's inmates. The prisoners claimed that constitutional violations occurred regarding their living

conditions, medical treatment, censoring of mail, the use of restraints, the inadequacy of access to legal materials, and restrictions on the use of telephones and receiving visitors.

Following a series of trials during the 1980s and 1990s regarding jail conditions and overcrowding, an agreement was made before U.S. District Judge Maurice B. Cohill, Jr., to close the jail given the major cost of upgrades. In 1983, Cohill ordered a cap on the inmate population to ease overcrowding, in which any excess prisoners who could not make bond were freed on what came to be known as "Cohill bonds." The jail's population at that time included inmates who were convicted but awaiting sentencing, committed for misdemeanors for relatively short sentences, or on a work-release program. The jail also housed some federal prisoners awaiting trial or sentencing, along with state and federal prisoners from other institutions testifying in pending state and federal cases. In 1990, a Federal Court Order stated that no more prisoners would be accepted at the old jail, and the County was ordered to submit plans for a new facility. Construction got underway on a new Allegheny County Jail in 1992, and the old jail was vacated in the mid-1990s when the new complex opened.

New Life for an Old Jail

When Richardson's Allegheny County Jail was shuttered, the Courthouse remained in service. The County had already begun discussions with Pittsburgh architecture firm IKM, Inc., to brainstorm new uses for the old jail, talks that produced such ideas as a hotel or shopping mall. The courthouse and jail were still, of course, connected via the Bridge of Sighs, making a related use between the two structures logical. During the 1990s, the Allegheny County Family Courts Division, which was distributed between two buildings downtown and a juvenile court across town, was

overcrowded and seeking a new space that could address privacy concerns, cramped quarters, and accessibility issues. A century-old jail, especially one so grave in character, would not seem to be the most sensible location, but the costs of renovating Richardson's masterpiece were less than constructing a large new complex to consolidate the various divisions.

Financing of the project, which would eventually cost \$34 million and which would require special legislation from the State of Pennsylvania, was creatively achieved through a lease-back structure that enabled completion of the project with cash revenue. The County, having recently completed the new jail facility, was unable to float additional bonds to secure funding. It was decided to seek a builder who would assume the role of developer in a design-build deal. The builder-developer leased the vacant building from the County and then subleased the completed building back to the County, with certificates of participation in the sublease sold by the builder-developer's trustee. The County pays its lease through appropriations, and management company Grubb & Ellis Management Services Inc., handles day-to-day care of the building. Work was underway in December 1998, with IKM, Inc., and Mascaro Construction Company as the design-build team.

Alterations to the exterior of the building, protected by its local landmark designation, were minimal. They included new aluminum windows, which matched the dimensions and profile of Richardson's arched wood windows, restoring and repointing the masonry, roof sheathing and repair, the installation of historically accurate copper gutters, and the construction of an additional arched entry into Richardson's stone wall for access across the courtyard to the street beyond (fig. 6).



Figure 6: Aluminum windows, with faux double-hung sash, replacing Richardson's original wood windows. [Photograph by author]

It was in the interior of the jail that substantial alterations were needed in addition to major systems upgrades. Once the five-story, freestanding cage system was removed, the building was largely left without floors. The work required the construction of four new floors in each wing of the jail to create five stories of usable space for the family courts, along with a plan for demolishing or reusing the ninety-foot-tall octagonal rotunda. On the upper floors, accessible to the public and utilized by families in emotional crisis each day, the architects ingeniously designed a "building within a building" that would honor Richardson's intent, include deference to Osterling's additions

and alterations, and still provide an atmosphere of calm and approachability to complement the new function of the building. The first challenge was to create a floor system inside a shell that contained only a basement and a roof, all while being cautious not to disturb the subway system tunnel that ran beneath a portion of the jail. Steel framing, in addition to being difficult to maneuver and raise inside the building, would have necessitated support from Richardson's granite walls.

The solution selected was post-tensioned concrete floors, in which concrete was poured on a form supported by jack posts from below for a cast-in-place application. High-strength steel cables (tendons) were encased inside the concrete and protected from bonding with concrete as it dried. The cables remained exposed at the ends of the slabs, where they were tightened once the concrete had cured to create a sturdy slab for each floor. The floor structure is supported on a new foundation, creating the "building within a building" structure that did not pierce the stone walls.⁶¹

The attic, which still displays Richardson's original truss system, is reserved for mechanical equipment. A small door, through which one must crouch for passage, leads from the attic out onto the original catwalk at the rotunda's ceiling. The jail's basement and the building's connection to the courthouse via the Bridge of Sighs provided a practical holding area for those awaiting trial across the street at the courthouse. In this use, much of which is not visible to the public, the jail still serves its original purpose.

The basement level includes separate holding areas for men and women, further divided

⁶¹ According to the Post-Tensioning Institute (www.post-tensioning.org), the benefits of post-tensioned concrete floors include: a reduction in the amount of concrete and steel needed; thinner structural members that reduce load; increased structural integrity from continuous tension cables; and wider column spacing to allow more open interior areas.

by juveniles and adults. Space is also provided for court records, a small amount of office space, mechanical and elevator equipment, and electrical vaults.

Two exterior courtyards, formerly the separate exercise yards for men and women, are accessible through the new arched opening on Fifth Avenue and the original arched opening on Diamond Street. Both courtyards have been minimally, but attractively, landscaped with exposed aggregate concrete patios, granite benches, and areas for sod and plantings. They provide the opportunity to quietly observe the exterior architecture of the building devoid of views to the street. On Forbes Avenue, just off Diamond Street, a secured courtyard holds a functioning sally port, guard station, and loading dock.

The family courts needed approximately 200,000 square feet of space to accommodate hearing rooms, waiting areas for defendants, victims, and witnesses, secure passageways and elevators, and chambers for the judges. The publicly-accessible family courts facilities were arranged on the upper floors, predominantly on the second, third, and fourth floors. On these levels, visitors can access waiting areas, meeting rooms, and juvenile courtrooms. Portions of these floors, along with all of the fifth floor, are reserved for office use by the judges, their staff, and security personnel. Secure corridors, accessible only by code-restricted elevators, allow judges and defendants to move between hearing rooms and offices without access by the public.

The rotunda became a spectacular entrance foyer for the building, providing a staging site for visitors to pass through the metal detector before proceeding on to elevator banks in the radial arms. With the new post-tensioned concrete floors terminating at, rather than crossing, the rotunda, a barrier was needed for safety. A waist-

high railing on each floor may have worked in some applications, but it would not seem prudent to leave open to the floor below these levels used by children and by persons who may be in heated conflict with one another. To provide security, a glass curtain wall, supported by steel framing, was installed around the periphery of Richardson's granite columns at the termination of the new slabs. Like the floor structure, the curtain wall was designed to be freestanding from the original structure (fig. 7).



Figure 7: Rotunda [Photograph by author]

Clearly visible from the rotunda is the building's jail museum, situated off to the left from the entrance. The immediate visual is powerful, as several of Osterling's steel cells are stacked to provide the "front wall" of the museum (fig. 8). The atmosphere, as

one walks around to the side of the small, inward-facing museum for access, is pointedly one of seclusion from the daily activities beyond. A bank of display windows showcases memorabilia, documents, and information. Through a passage directly ahead of the museum entrance is a long wall of brick cells that were constructed inside the museum to replicate Richardson's cells using bricks from these enclosures in the reconstruction. A short hallway, running alongside these cells, displays black and white photos from the jail in its original use and a biography of Judge Cohill. This portion of the museum is also sited on particularly painful ground as it is located in the former courtyard that was used for hangings, a fact made more salient by the exposed granite wall and skylight above (fig. 9).



Figure 8: Visual approach to jail museum from rotunda [Photograph by author]



Figure 9: Reconstructed Richardson cellblock in jail museum [Photograph by author]

Evaluation

The architects and the County worked closely with the Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission to minimize exterior changes to the building. The relatively minor changes that were made – window replacement and the addition of the arch (which utilized stone from other parts of the building) on the Fifth Avenue elevation – do not affect the character of the site. Other exterior work such as masonry restoration, roof repairs, and the replacement of gutters and downspouts, was restorative in nature and admirably enabled this structure to remain serviceable for years to come. It was inside the building,

of course, that alterations would be required to meet both the programming needs and the message of the family courts division.

A fair amount of literature has been written on evaluating and retaining interior significance, though much of it has focused on residential properties such as historic house museums and on decorative elements such as wallpaper, fabric, furniture, and millwork. The interior significance of a correctional institution may include fixed locations such as common areas for eating or exercising, hallways, and load-bearing cell blocks. There may also be removable building features such as freestanding cell blocks, other tools of restraint, and furnishings that serve observation, administrative, and transportation needs. The adaptive use of a correctional institution for any function other than as a museum logically necessitates alterations to or the removal of interior features that we identify to be "signs" of the buildings identity. Retaining interior architectural and historical significance therefore requires that a hierarchy of these elements be decided upon in the planning stage and that the overall meaning of the building be shared and respected in the new use.

Charles E. Fisher's article, "Behind the Façade: Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings," provides practical considerations.⁶² Fisher advises involved parties to begin their work with the identification process, which should investigate seven important aspects of the building: historic association, floor plan, primary spaces, secondary spaces, architectural features and materials, systems and fixtures, and finishes and furnishings.

⁶² Charles E. Fisher, "Behind the Façade: Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings," in *The Interiors Handbook for Historic Buildings*, ed. Charles E. Fisher, III, Michael Auer, Anne Grimmer (Washington: Historic Preservation Education Foundation, 1988), 1-163-68.

Of these, identifying the floor plan and primary and secondary spaces were of immediate importance to the reuse of the Allegheny County Jail.

As Fisher remarked of interior plans, "The importance of trying to preserve the major elements of the building plan can not be overemphasized. Moving the ground level lobby of a building, shifting stair locations, and/or relocating hallways and principal room divisions changes the relationship of the building's rooms, public spaces, and circulation areas and usually results in considerable loss of historic building material and often of decorative finishes..."⁶³ In this vein, Fisher stated that primary spaces most notably reflect the building's historic character, while secondary spaces can be further subdivided into those of little significance (unfinished basements) and those that collectively help convey character.

While the post-tensioned concrete floors selected for the reuse of the Allegheny County Jail were easier to install than steel framing, they also allowed for a detached interior fit-out. The result, which admittedly does construct floor levels where none existed, honors Richardson's and Osterling's design intent in that it is – theoretically, if not practically – removable. One can envision the granite walls beyond as undisturbed and "hugging" this new function within.

Two important interior features, decidedly at the top of the hierarchy of significance, were thoughtfully preserved. Both the soaring rotunda and the two evolutions of jail cells are the first visual "signs," of which Charles Jencks wrote, for visitors to the building. The rotunda was and is the focal point of the building's interior, but it would have been simple and tempting to construct partition walls to obtain

⁶³ Ibid., 1-163.

additional work areas in this open space. However, the rotunda's walls are thoughtfully left open, leading to views beyond, through the employment of the glass curtain wall. This preserves, as Fisher recommends, the general relationship between the rooms, public spaces, and circulation areas.

Once a building's most significant interior spaces and features are identified, Jo Ramsey Leimenstoll's essay, "An Interior Perspective on Design Review," is helpful in suggesting that a familiar approach to evaluating exterior alterations can be applied to planning for interiors.⁶⁴ Leimenstoll reflects on the commonly-accepted preservation principles of form, proportion, rhythm, scale, light, materials, finish, and detail as applicable to assess the compatibility of interior alterations.

The curtain wall is a clear juxtaposition of old and new, with the streamlined, rectilinear lines of the glass panels set against the grand, arched openings at the ceiling. The composition, however, speaks to the past as the steel framing of the curtain wall, set apart from the granite columns, is certainly evocative of the old jail cells in its form, proportion, rhythm, and scale (fig. 10). From this central point, a view like the one that the jail's guards would have experienced allows observation. The rotunda's visitor can see the catwalk around the periphery of the ceiling, observe movement behind the curtain wall and down a portion of the radiating arms, and even catch a few views into courtrooms in session.

⁶⁴ Jo Ramsey Leimenstoll, "An Interior Perspective on Design Review," in *The Interiors Handbook for Historic Buildings*, ed. Charles E. Fisher, III, Michael Auer, Anne Grimmer (Washington: Historic Preservation Education Foundation, 1988), 1-13-16.



Figure 10: View of curtain wall, arches, and dome [Photograph by author]

If the rotunda itself seems as sacrosanct as critics have found it to be since its inception, it still allows the encompassing awareness of being surrounded by the daily workings of the building. One is separated from these activities by the transparent curtain wall, and the resulting sense is that one is being watched from above as much as one is observing.

In an essay by David J.T. Vanderburgh, "The Hangman's New Clothes: Three Histories of Prison Reuse," Vanderburgh notably references the writings of nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche.⁶⁵ In his book, *On the Advantage and*

⁶⁵ David J.T. Vanderburgh, "The Hangman's New Clothes: Three Histories of Prison Reuse," in *Changing Places: Remaking Institutional Buildings*, ed. Lynda H. Schneekloth, Marcia F. Feuerstein, Barbara A. Campagna (Fredonia, NY: White Pine Press, 1992), 137-57.

Disadvantage of History for Life, Nietzsche writes of history, "History belongs to the living man in three respects: it belongs to him so far as he is active and striving, so far as he preserves and admires, and so far as he suffers and is in need of liberation. To this triplicity of relations correspond three kinds of history: so far as they can be distinguished, a *monumental*, an *antiquarian* and a *critical* kind of history."⁶⁶

A "critical" view, according to Vanderburgh, is the urge to edit history in an effort to eliminate painful reminders of the past. This view may facilitate, for example, the demolition of a site whose record is particularly heinous. Here, the demolition is a release for those who have been directly affected, and the building's reuse would likely be untenable. The "antiquarian" view makes little attempt to categorize significant features and instead propels along the details of history for a transitory period of time; this might be best seen in the use of correctional institutions as museums. The "monumental" urge, by comparison, selects what is most obviously "historic" about the building, discarding the rest and recycling the building for its new use. The best course of action, as seen in the Allegheny County Jail reuse, may be in the gray area between the latter two views.

Richardson's rotunda, along with the exterior of the building, is arguably "monumental." It is a space that is characteristically Richardson, and the rotunda displays an interior aesthetic beauty not commonly associated with jails. It would have been easy to retain this principle space and to tout the building's history as solely an iconic architectural masterpiece by Richardson. Wisely, however, the project also considered the everyday life of the jail and its prisoners – the "antiquarian" view of

⁶⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*, trans. Peter Preuss (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980), 14.

history – along with the changes that Osterling made, which are themselves now over a century old.

A choice, whether purposeful or not, was made to place the jail museum in a location that is both visually apparent and easily accessible. It could have been tucked away, perhaps on an upper floor where visitors would have stumbled upon it or would have been forced to inquire about how to reach it. Instead, it is blatant, the steel cells perceptibly providing an early message that this is a sober space for sharing and learning. The minutiae of the building's everyday past coexists intimately with Richardson's rotunda.

There is nothing playful about the museum – no prison uniforms for children to humorously don, no invitation to have a photo taken inside a cell, and no attempt to stage any of the recreated cell areas with memorabilia other than cots and toilet facilities. The jail museum is straightforward and mature, and the informational handouts present lists of facts rather than spinning an imaginative tale of life behind bars. It makes no attempt at ostentation and does not seek to commercialize the building's past, save for a list of the movies that have been filmed onsite. The space is deferential, thoughtful, and informative.

In a statement that announces no desire for the "critical" view of history, the jail museum's brochure begins, "The Old Jail is an architectural wonder, one of the treasures of the world – but a place where overcrowding and inhumane treatment did occur." The building's story successfully exists in the gray area between Richardson's "monumental" legacy and the "antiquarian" sense of how things used to be. However, as children walk

by, hand-in-hand with their parents towards refreshingly bright and convivial hearing rooms and waiting areas, it is clear that the building has also moved on.

Conclusion

On an extensive guided tour of the jail in the Spring of 2009 with Roger Hartung, AIA of IKM, Inc. and Kevin Clarke of building management company Grubb & Ellis Management Services Inc., I was gratefully flooded with information on the project and shown numerous spaces normally reserved from public view. Although the distractions were many during this exciting walk-through, the frenzied pace contributed to the "voicefulness" of the building.

A return to the building that evening after business hours, despite being quiet and focused, was somehow less meaningful. Gone were the long security line with the busy guard and the unloading of bags and pockets, the hustle and bustle between the rotunda and corridors, the light trickling in and bouncing off Richardson's grand columns, the views to the courtrooms with justice in motion, the chatter echoing down the hallways, and the understandably tense visitors who were intimidated by the process if not by the building. The building had been "alive" that morning with cues that this was a serious place of business, and it had taken on the "motivation" of which Jencks wrote on the theory of signs. It had been given life by the people and by the wheels of purpose turning. On an elevator ride that morning, a woman entered who had visibly been crying earlier and another frantically relayed directions to a man just beyond the closing elevator doors. Left at night was only the kind guard at the front entrance who welcomed me. Otherwise, there was no one in sight.

Had the use of the Allegheny County Jail been different – a flashy hotel with guests tucked away from view in their rooms or clinking martini glasses in the lounge, or residential units with sleek leather furniture in the lobby and partition walls that sealed off the long view down the corridor from the rotunda, or maybe a cheery shopping mall cluttered with perfume counters and neon signs, the scene would not have been quite right. No one here, during the day nor later that evening, was prohibited from leaving (except those awaiting trial in the basement holding areas, of course), and no harm would come to any of us within the walls of this building. However, there was a respectful trepidation amid the chaos of the day and an understanding of the majesty of this place.

This is not to suggest, however, that the building is unwelcoming. On the contrary, it is a place of government business that is more pleasant than most and the intimate courtrooms of which are certainly sensitive to the overwhelmed children and their families who visit each day. It is, as it should be, a story that does not desperately push itself upon you, but instead, when informed of its past of both prestige and pain, speaks to you in a meaningful way.

CHAPTER III

SOCKANOSSET TRAINING SCHOOL FOR BOYS

The Chapel View adaptive use project, formerly the Sockanosset Boys Training School, in Cranston, Rhode Island involved demolition of more than half of the remaining structures, alterations to circulation routes, extensive new construction, the replacement of much of the green space with paved parking lots, and a change in use from a reformatory for child offenders to an upscale "lifestyle center." The site now includes limited evidence to afford an analytical understanding of the original Sockanosset campus layout. However, this chapter argues that, in cases of substantial demolition and new construction, a "sense of place" can still be achieved through less obvious clues coupled with informative interpretation about historic spatial relationships.

Introduction

Maintaining significant spatial relationships in the historic built environment – be it a farm, a downtown streetscape, or a campus setting – can potentially accomplish two results. The first is the analytical comprehension of historic building footprints and circulation routes through the retention of these elements. The second is the emotional recognition of and appreciation for the site's past (the "sense of place" to which we often refer). While the former may be achieved by simply preserving these spatial relationships *in situ*, the latter relies on a broader understanding of the historical context of the era, locale, associated persons, and building typology to be successful. In

discussing the organization of space as a social product, Postmodern political geographer and urban planner Edward W. Soja asserted that, "Space in itself may be primordially given, but the organization, and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation, and experience."⁶⁷

These two stages of perception are often achieved together, with the latter visceral reaction a more advanced level of understanding than merely observing a site's layout. Is it possible then to achieve the more evolved "sense of place" when the basic compositional elements of the site have been altered? At Chapel View, it is difficult to argue that the development conveys to the *uninformed* visitor a clear representation of its historical significance as a juvenile reformatory designed on the "cottage plan" popular in the late nineteenth century. However, this site is ultimately successful in reestablishing, if not in retaining, a "sense of place" that allows an *informed* visitor to appreciate how the complex was historically used.

Apart from the larger and more obvious preservation goal of retaining and reusing historic structures, there also exist several less apparent planning decisions that could have contributed to the strength of this success and also a few opportunities going forward that could still convey more emotional meaning. With the employment of these suggestions, in retrospect, this could have been a model for private development at similar sites. However, with stronger interpretation, it could still be a very positive example.

⁶⁷ Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 79-80.

Nineteenth-Century Development of Juvenile Penal Institutions

The treatment of "wayward" youth (a common term of the era that continues in use today), along with societal understanding of what behavior actually merited this label, evolved dramatically during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Five changes of particular consequence to this thesis occurred, resulting in the development of a juvenile correctional institution building form unlike the physical layout found in jails and prisons of the time. These shifts included a new theory on the cause of juvenile delinquency, the classification and specialized treatment of offenders, a reform-minded approach to the incarceration of youth, the assumption of responsibility for child offenders by local and state governments, and the transition from congregate living to the "cottage plan" at most facilities. These will each be discussed briefly, with emphasis on the cottage plan layout used at the Sockanosset Training School for Boys.

First, as discussed in Chapter I, Gilded Age theories on adult crime somewhat paradoxically focused on a complicated combination of environmental vices (such as drinking, gambling, and prostitution), the supposed inborn tendency of lower classes to lead immoral lifestyles, and a perceived dearth of Christian teaching. This was likewise the theorized cause of juvenile delinquency through much of the nineteenth century, with an additional opinion developed later that century and during the early twentieth century that heavily blamed parental influences on the poor behavior of children.

The Society for the Prevention of Pauperism was created in New York City in 1817 to respond to downturns in the country's economy, an influx of immigrants, and the industrialization of America's cities. Connecting poverty with juvenile delinquency,

the Society's wealthy members upheld their own morality as model behavior. From this early organization, the first House of Refuge was founded in New York City in 1825 to shelter both criminal and destitute youth. Behind a veil of religious intentions and in concert with the social context of the era, the upper class activists feared social unrest but had little desire to uplift the lower classes. Instead, they sought social order in a period of chaos. New York's House of Refuge and other similar facilities in major cities relied on physical punishment, solitary confinement, labor, and rigorous organization of time and activities to manage the deviant child.

During the 1850s, the focus of juvenile delinquency included prevention as the "Child Savers" movement took a somewhat more optimistic view towards the redirection and reformation of troubled youth. Reformers were active in lower class neighborhoods to feed, shelter, and clothe children, and their objectives were rooted in a call to Christianity and the sanctity of family life over institutionalization. The mission of prevention endured throughout the nineteenth century, and Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr founded Hull House in Chicago in 1899 (an idea that quickly spread) to provide recreation and education programs to susceptible youth. However, theories of innate evil tendencies lingered through much of the nineteenth century.

During the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, poor home life joined urban vices (and now less-so inborn tendencies) in the accused downfall of youth. In 1914, George B. Mangold, Ph.D. authored a book, *Child Problems*, on the causes of juvenile delinquency and the state of institutions for unruly youth. Consistent with the multi-pronged theories of the era, Mangold blamed environmental vices, innate tendencies towards crime, and street trades (i.e. newspaper boys) for delinquency in

male youth. However, he first faulted weak home training, parental incompetence, neglect, and family dynamics. Specifically, Mangold warned of the dangers of second marriages, single mother households, drinking by the father, and the rebuke of corporal punishment in the home in favor of "soft effeminate indulgence by parents of the idlest humors of their children."⁶⁸

Second, classification of inmates by age and offense contributed towards the formation of juvenile reformatories. Early attempts at classification occurred prior to the Gilded Age, most notably at the Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia. Constructed in 1773, the jail first utilized the common layout of large rooms with intermingling inmates, the result of which was rampant drinking, the incarceration of men and women together, and a lack of authority on the part of the staff. The Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons formed in 1787 and in 1790 achieved reforms at the jail that included some separation of prisoners, construction of a penitentiary house onsite with sixteen cells for the worst offenders, and instructions on the trades.

Even when removed from adult facilities to juvenile institutions, children were still intermingled amongst themselves with no separation based on offense. Similarly, non-criminal youth who were guilty only of truancy were placed in reformatories amongst youth offenders of all types rather than in separate truant schools. In the 1870's, states began to further classify youth offenders by addressing the needs of the older teen to young adult population of first-time offenders in separate reformatories.

⁶⁸ George B. Mangold, Ph.D., *Child Problems* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1914), 226.

The New York State Reformatory at Elmira was established in 1877, soon followed by the Massachusetts Reformatory for Men in 1884 and other state reformatories.

The concept of child labor in its most regimented form is synonymous with the industrialization of America during the nineteenth century. Thus, it was natural that unruly children, especially those who were poorly supervised in the home, would be directed towards a combination of work and schooling in juvenile institutions with the goal of releasing them to lead productive adult working lives. Children labored long and hard before this time, helping their parents in the home and particularly on the farm as agrarian families struggled to be self-sufficient. This early employment of child labor was also seen as a form of education, in which the work was supervised by a parent and purportedly trained the minor for a productive adult life.⁶⁹ Apart from the more romanticized vision of children working alongside their parents on the family farm, pre-industrialized America also included forced child labor by indentured servants and by the children of slaves.

With the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, the widespread industrialization of America and the influx of immigrants increased the demand for factory workers to produce goods for consumers across the country. Between 1870 and 1900, children ages ten to fourteen constituted between five and six percent of the American workforce, numbering 1.75 million in 1900.⁷⁰ As children labored in the country's factories, around them America's cities housed the poor and offered numerous enticing vices. Factory life, for adult managers and laborers, took parents away from the

⁶⁹ Hindman, *Child Labor*, 14.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 31-32.

home as they worked long hours and had less time to supervise children. The arguably obsessive concentration on growth and prosperity during the mid to late 1800s also afforded limited attention to the health and well-being of children as a separate and special class. By the time substantial reforms arrived during the Progressive Era, child labor was an institution of its own and the performance of regimented, manual labor by minors acceptable.

Beyond the work of private charitable institutions and a general sense of public responsibility to prevent and manage juvenile delinquency, it became necessary to legally empower state governments to act on behalf of the interests of minors. The concept of *parens patriae* ("parent of the nation") dates to early English common law, in which English royalty exercised almost limitless authority over minors. Sociologists Barry Krisberg and James F. Austin cite two legal cases in Pennsylvania as key to refining state authority over minors in this country during the nineteenth century.⁷¹ In *Commonwealth v. M'Keagy* (1831), Pennsylvania courts considered whether a minor could be committed to the Philadelphia House of Refuge based on a parent's argument of general unruliness. Here, the courts affirmed the right of the state to remove a child from his/her home based on vagrancy or crime. In *Ex parte Crouse* (1838), the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court denied the petition of a father to obtain release of his child from the Philadelphia House of Refuge through a writ of habeas corpus. Here, the court found that *parens patriae* responsibilities of the state allowed restraint of the minor over the wishes of the parent.

⁷¹ Barry Krisberg and James F. Austin, *Reinventing Juvenile Justice* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1993), 18.

The first state reform school, the State Reform School in Massachusetts, was established in 1846 and replaced in 1886 by the Lyman School for Boys near the same site.⁷² A newspaper article on the State Reform School in Massachusetts from 1859 indicates that financial support from the boys' hometowns or from their own parents was not forthcoming and that juveniles were being committed to the institution without review by the court system. The article also alleges that the commitment of older boys was a poor influence on younger children and that overcrowding at the school prevented productive work and poor behavior. The solution proposed was to require that towns and parents contribute fifty cents per week to the child's care, that commitment be at the bequest of a judge, that the school house younger and fewer offenders, and that the facility be expanded.⁷³

A similar facility to the reform school in Massachusetts was constructed in Ohio in 1857 to remove juveniles from adult prisons. The Ohio Reform School (later renamed on several occasions) instituted the "open system," which allowed the boys to move about the campus relatively freely. Students divided their days between working on the school's farm, learning trades, and receiving schooling. They participated in activities such as military marching and band practice. Corporal punishment was allowable, though offenses generally lengthened their stay as a form of punishment. By the end of the nineteenth century, most every state had publicly-supported reform school with separate facilities for boys and girls.

⁷² This followed the creation one year earlier, in 1845, of a municipal reformatory for boys in New Orleans.

⁷³ "The Massachusetts State Reform School," *New York Times*, Oct. 14, 1859.

Most relevant to the architectural and historical significance of correctional institutions in this case was the development of the cottage plan layout. This concept of small group, family-style living at juvenile facilities began in Europe. Christian socialist Johann Hinrich Wichern founded the *Rauhe Haus* ("Rough House"), a home for orphaned youth, in 1833 near Hamburg, Germany. At the *Rauhe Haus*, an open campus replete with trees and walkways, children lived in a collection of small frame cottages close to a chapel and under the supervision of an adult theological student. Rather than laboring as punishment or merely for the sake of keeping the complex running, the children also received vocational training in farming in the school's gardens and in tailoring, spinning, and baking in workhouses on the site. Their routine also included several hours of classroom time each day and an opportunity for play.⁷⁴

In France, the Mettray Penal Colony was founded in 1840 by Frederic-Auguste Demetz. Located outside the city of Tours, this private reformatory housed delinquent male youth in cottages where they both lived and worked. Like the *Rauhe Haus*, Mettray situated these cottages around a central square abutted by a chapel. The children were supervised in their cottages by a young male and an assistant, trained onsite. The complex was replete with nature and included stables, a farm, and a quarry. While the younger males received several hours of schooling each day, the schedules of older youth were mainly devoted to demanding manual labor and in some cases to vocational training. Author Philip Smith wrote of Mettray that it was not an unfriendly bastion of rules, but a place where "disciplinary techniques with their associated instruction and

⁷⁴ John de Liefde, *Six Months Among the Charities of Europe* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1865), 3-15.

work were underwritten by a republican ethos, Arcadian mythologies, and charismatic asceticism."⁷⁵ The facilities sought not to tame, but to impress upon the youth a sense of responsibility and self-sufficiency.

The congregate plan, in which children were housed collectively in one or more large, institutional buildings, was prominent in American juvenile facilities through most of the nineteenth century. However, the cottage system, particularly favored in institutions for the delinquent child, rather than those children who were merely dependent upon the state, became the prevalent layout late in the nineteenth century. Juvenile reformatories, unlike homes for orphaned or destitute youth, were generally fully or overly populated and thus located outside city centers where ample land could be found. Given the availability of public funding, in part or in whole, for these larger institutions to house delinquents, the more expensive cottage system of multiple buildings was achievable.⁷⁶

A 1910 survey by the Russell Sage Foundation, an extant organization devoted to research in the social sciences, studied fifty juvenile institutions across the country, of which half were for delinquent children and half were for dependent children. At the institutions for delinquent children, the cottage plan was utilized instead of the congregate plan at most of the facilities. However, at the institutions for dependent

⁷⁵ Philip Smith, *Punishment and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 80.

⁷⁶ The number of institutional homes for dependent youth also dwindled as many children were relocated through "placing-out" in temporary or permanent homes where they could receive short-term care or perhaps be adopted.

children, the congregate plan was used in most of the facilities.⁷⁷ The familial layout of the cottage plan at institutions for delinquent youth was emphatically supported at the White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children, organized in 1909. The theme of the conference – opposition to the institutionalization of dependent and neglected children – also encouraged employment of the cottage plan when children were removed from the home.

Juvenile correctional institution building forms differed markedly from the jails, prisons, and workhouses of the Gilded Age. Facilities for youth endeavored to create the stability that might have been lacking at home, to treat children as a separate class from adults, to prepare youth for a productive adult life, and to act as a minor's guardian when necessary. As a result, these facilities were generally open and green with relatively free access for the children within the campus. Children's lives were structured to include time for daily chores, play, schooling (including vocational training), and opportunities for mentoring by adults in a small-group, cottage environment.

With juvenile reformatories largely self-supporting through the cultivation of their own food and the maintenance of the campus provided by teachers and pupils, they became microcosms of the outside world that allowed children to live, work, and play away from the city's evils. However, the ongoing ability of these institutions to transfer incoming and existing residents to a jail or a workhouse of adult inmates is evidence that the worst offenders in this separate class of minors still intermingled with the masses in some sense.

⁷⁷ Hastings Hornell Hart, *Cottage and Congregate Institutions for Children* (New York: Charities Publication Committee, 1910), 28.

The Howard Reservation

Rhode Island's early incarceration of juvenile offenders in houses of correction and county jails was not unlike the approach taken by states across the country to manage unruly children. The responsibility for the poor and criminal lay with individual towns, and there was little emphasis on rehabilitation. However, social theories on the influence of environmental factors were present in the state during the early nineteenth century, and, like other states, Rhode Island was home to child welfare advocates who were active in seeking separate correctional facilities for children. The desire for separate facilities and the failure of the school system to retain students joined with the view that labor by minors was productive and could enable institutions that housed them to be largely self-sufficient.

In 1847, the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers petitioned the city council of Providence to establish a juvenile institution for study, play, and work. Rhode Island's General Assembly authorized the construction of a reform school to receive both youth offenders and children over the age of five who were held at the request of a parent. Funding for the reform school was provided by the state to cover costs associated with housing children from all counties, and the facility opened in 1850. Although the primary purpose of the school seemed to be the separation of child offenders from adult inmates, the school's trustees still reserved the right to transfer incoming or already accepted students to the county jail or the state prison if their behavior necessitated more severe punishment.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Henry J. Crepeau, "Rhode Island: A History of Child Welfare Planning" (Ph.D. Diss., The Catholic University of America, 1941), 220-1.

By 1868, the reform school in Providence was under fire, receiving criticism for inadequate facilities and poorly-trained trustees overseeing the school. A formal bill of charges presented to the Providence City Council that year alleged a lack of reformation, cruel punishment, and intolerance that did not allow students to follow their religion of choice. Additionally, the school was accused of apprenticing out students across the country and far from their parents, and changing children's names to prevent identification by families.⁷⁹ No formal personnel actions took place as a result of an investigation by the Board of Aldermen, but policy changes during the 1870s did improve some aspects of juvenile incarceration.

The reform school in Providence was a financial burden on the city and the state from the beginning, and the city of Providence refused to contribute further funds beginning in 1879. The state, responsible for having committed the majority of the youth offenders at the school, received official transfer of the facility and its young wards the following year. Plans were quickly underway to make more permanent future plans for the school, and the General Assembly authorized relocation of the school to the existing "state farm" in Cranston, Rhode Island. Known as the Howard Reservation, the site was Rhode Island's response to state responsibility for the sick, poor, insane, and criminal – a campus-like setting removed from the ills of city life and conversely shielded from public view.

A state Board of Charities and Corrections was created in 1869 with the mission of creating a system to care for the unlawful in a manner that would alleviate the financial burden felt by local governments. Along with approval for the board to begin planning,

⁷⁹ Ibid.

the General Assembly authorized construction of a state workhouse for the poor and deviant (remanded for offenses such as drunkenness and prostitution), a house of correction, an asylum for the mentally insane, and an almshouse for the poor and disabled. The General Assembly sited the facilities together on farms acquired from Thomas Brayton and William A. Howard. The asylum was constructed first and received patients beginning in 1870. The workhouse and house of correction followed in 1872, built as two halves of the same structure. A state prison and county jail opened on the site in 1878. Stone buildings replaced many of the early, original frame structures at the Howard Reservation during the 1870s and 1880s.

Sockanosset Training School for Boys

In 1882, two juvenile reform schools built on the cottage plan were opened at the Howard Reservation. The Sockanosset Training School for Boys and the Oaklawn School for Girls (since demolished) both lay several miles from the adult facilities and approximately one mile from each other. The request for a separate state school for girls was made by the Women's Board of Visitors to the Penal and Charitable Institutions, and construction of Oaklawn may have been the state's response to these ongoing pleas.⁸⁰ Offenses worthy of commitment included criminal acts, vagrancy, and disorderly conduct, and the schools still reserved the right to transfer students to the state workhouse or the house of correction at the Howard Reservation. In July of 1882, twenty girls arrived at Oaklawn, followed by 130 boys placed at Sockanosset that December.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Ibid., 228.

⁸¹ Ibid.

The boys of Sockanosset provided the labor to construct their six dormitory cottages between 1881 and 1895 (fig. 11). The combination stone chapel and infirmary building (the most highly regarded of the buildings on the site architecturally) was constructed in 1891 to the designs of noted Rhode Island architecture firm Stone, Carpenter, and Wilson. Other notable Rhode Island designs by the firm included the Providence YMCA Building (1887), the Ladd Observatory at Brown University (1891), the Rhode Island Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago (1893), and the Providence Public Library (1900). Sockanosset also received a gymnasium building in 1898, an industrial building for vocational training in the trades in 1914, and several ancillary structures to support farming work at the school.



Figure 11: Cottages, undated [Photograph from the collection of the Providence Public Library]

A site plan prepared in the early 1990s shows that the campus was loosely divided into three areas of live, study/work, and play (fig. 12). Two entrances accessed the

campus from Sockanosset Cross Road, with a third entrance marked "old entrance" near New London Avenue. One entrance from Sockanosset Cross Road curved past service-related buildings such as the boiler house, stables, the old gymnasium, and the Industrial Building where vocational classes were held. The other entrance immediately abutted the Administration Building before curving past the six dormitory cottages. The chapel was placed prominently across the green from the cottages. Both entrances eventually reached the new gymnasium and the basketball and baseball fields. An atlas of surveys of Providence County, recorded in 1895, shows a similar layout, though the twentieth century buildings (the Industrial Building, the "new" gymnasium, and the Administration Building just off Sockanosset Road) had not yet been constructed (fig. 13).

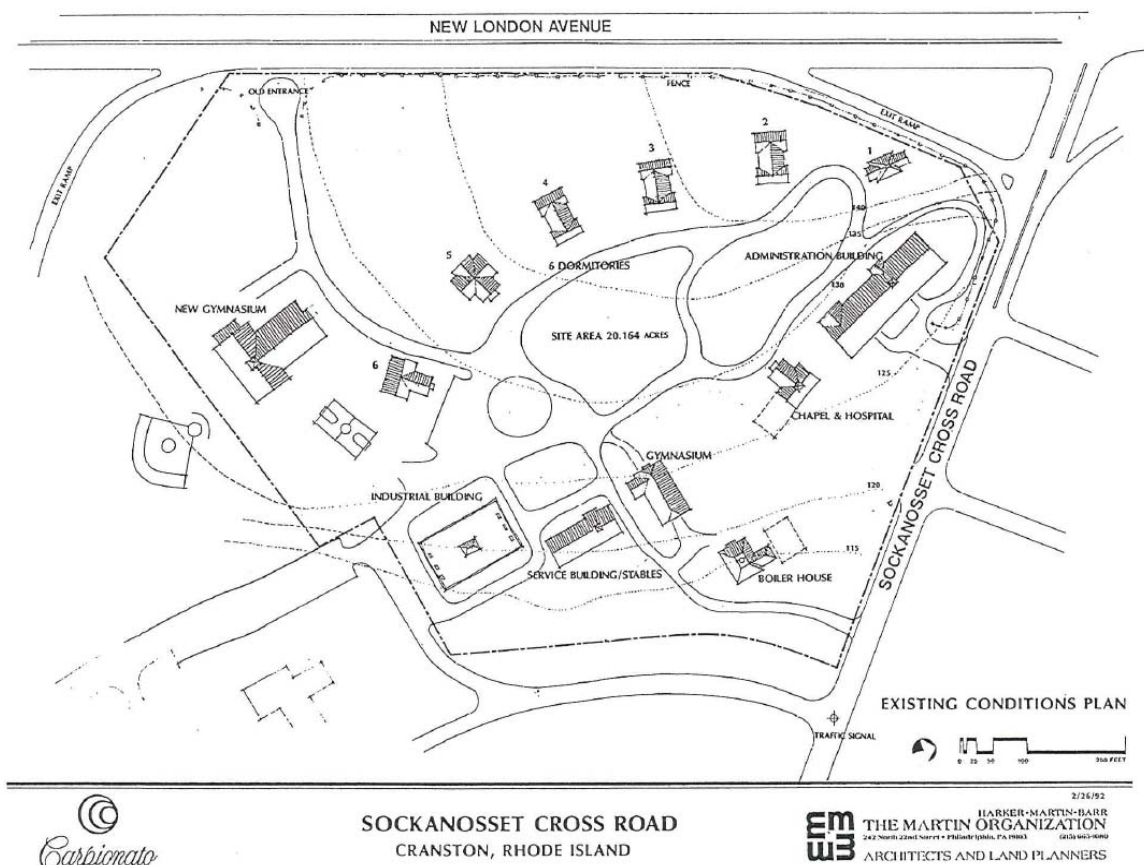


Figure 12: Existing Conditions Plan, 1992 [Courtesy Carpinato Properties]

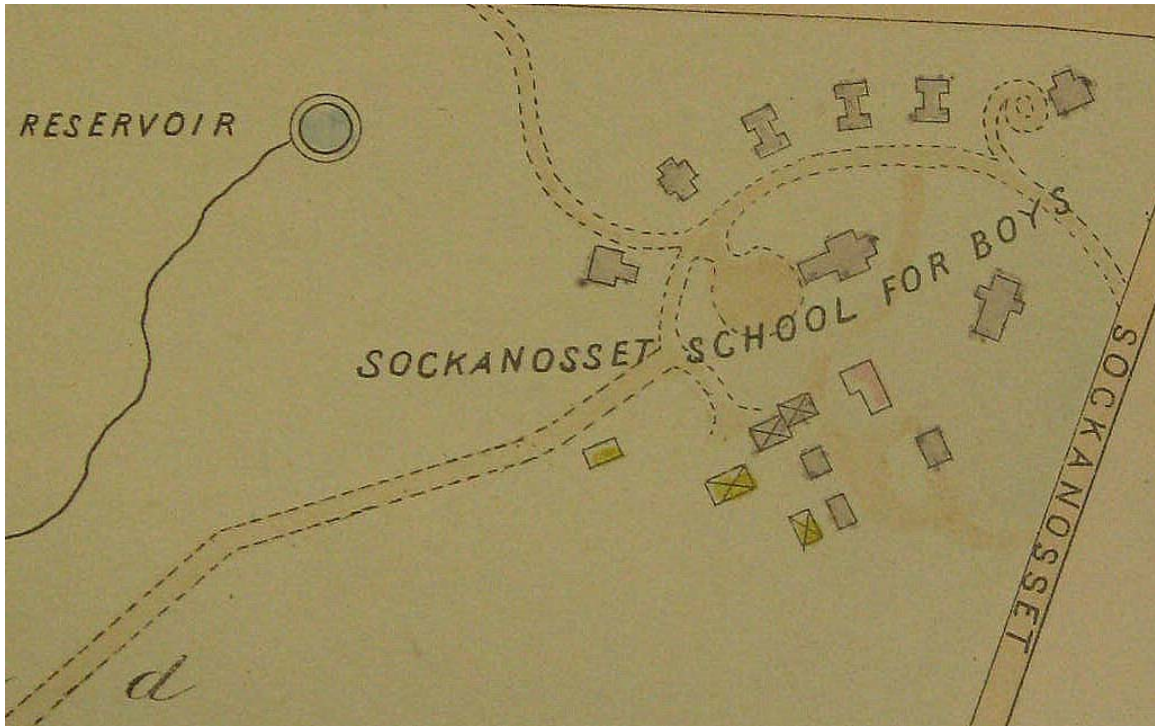


Figure 13: Topographical Atlas of Surveys of Providence Co., Rhode Island, 1895. Published by Everts and Richards of Philadelphia [Available at the John Hay Library at Brown University. Photograph by author]

The buildings of Sockanosset combined stone construction, hipped roofs, brownstone quoins, dormers, and Stick Style porches. The buildings turned inward, enveloped by a low stone wall around the perimeter. The site, both nurturing and intimidating, was described by architectural historian William H. Jordy as, "Although still formidable, the 'cottages' vainly attempt to disguise the institutional scale of the operation by their medium size, with the barest domestic gestures of gabled and dormered roofs and gabled entrance porches embellished with a lattice of cross bracing. Even in village dress, however, Victorian agencies for reform and charity usually manage an assertive image of authority."⁸²

⁸² William H. Jordy, *Buildings of Rhode Island* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 181.

Jordy held the architecture of the chapel above other buildings at Sockanosset (fig. 14). Of the chapel, Jordy wrote, "One senses an effort to balance severe Romanesque with healing Arts and Crafts, as though the combined styles were meant to convey a subliminal admonition to the inmates: 'Choose your path.' Unique, with decided character and even touching aspects were it shown some care, of all the buildings it at least merits conservation, which may be hard to come by."⁸³



Figure 14: Chapel following restoration and reconstruction of infirmary wing (on the right) [Photograph by author]

Two resources provide helpful social information on the daily routines at the school, which clearly required the students to utilize the entire campus each day. First, in 1924, the Sockanosset School Press self-published a brief brochure entitled, "Some Facts Concerning Sockanosset School for Boys." Prepared by Superintendent Roy L. McLaughlin, the booklet begins by asserting that "juvenile delinquency is a social,

⁸³ Ibid.

economic and educational problem, not a penal one, and that this institution is, accordingly, primarily a BOYS' SCHOOL."⁸⁴ Of the 487 boys committed during the previous year, it was noted that the majority were between twelve and sixteen years of age. Most (193 boys) were recorded to have spent between one and five months at the school, with 90 spending less than one month and 90 spending between five and ten months. Only three boys had been at the school for over fifteen months, one of whom for over twenty months.

Schooling consisted of an eight-grade elementary school (with hopes to add a special class for "the more retarded boys") and vocational training. The brief time most of the boys spent at the school was noted to preclude substantial instruction in the trades, but all were given manual work and many commenced vocational education at Sockanosset that aided in future careers. Classes were given in carpentry and painting, machine shop practice, plumbing, printing, blacksmithing, sewing and cooking, cobbling, and farming. Recreation included swimming in the school's pond, time at the playground located at each cottage, organized baseball and football teams (which played games with outside teams), and scheduled swim meets. The brochure reported that the military-like organization of the school required frequent marching and that "the chief purpose of our drill is to make them stand properly with head up and shoulders back, and acquire a carriage and bearing that will give them self-respect and a pride in their appearance that they do not possess when they reach us."

⁸⁴ Roy L. McLaughlin, *Some Facts Concerning Sockanosset School for Boys* (Howard, RI: Sockanosset School Press, 1924), 1.

The school's social worker at the time employed the "Whittier Scale of Grading Home Conditions" to study the home life of fifty boys on the basis of necessities, neatness, size, parental condition, and parental supervision.⁸⁵ Of those fifty boys, only six were found to come from "good" homes. The majority came from "fair" or "bad" homes, and five had no home at all. Consistent with late nineteenth and early twentieth century interest in familial influence on juvenile delinquency, the social worker's tabulations also assess the "strength" of the parents. Both the father and mother were considered to be "weak" or "bad" in the majority of cases.

It was the frequent marching of which Dr. Henry Jones took note early in his more subjective report of 1943 entitled, "The Dark Days of Social Welfare at the State Institutions at Howard, Rhode Island," which is the second source that lends particularly helpful information on Sockanosset's history.⁸⁶ On his first visit to Sockanosset, scheduled for a Sunday evening and open to the public, Dr. Jones observed the weekly band concert and parade by the boys (fig. 15). As the flag was lowered and the band played its final song, the boys filed into line on command and dispersed to their cottages. The concert followed a Sunday schedule of chores, church services in the school's chapel, and Sunday school. Dr. Jones reported that weekdays were occupied with duties assigned by "cottage masters," including laundry, preparing food, farm work, road building, coal handling to heat the buildings, making shoes for the school's horses and oxen in the blacksmithing shop, and making furniture in the carpentry shop. In addition

⁸⁵ The "Whittier Scale of Grading Home Conditions" was first introduced c. 1916 by J. Harold Williams, Ph.D. Williams was Director of Research at the Whittier State School, a juvenile reformatory in California, at the time.

⁸⁶ Henry A. Jones, Ph.D, *The Dark Days of Social Welfare at the State Institutions at Howard, Rhode Island* (Providence: Department of Social Welfare, 1943).

to regular schooling, the boys also prepared and printed a newspaper about the various institutions at the Howard Reservation. Jones also stated that disease was frequent, with a contagious disease hospital constructed in the style of a long barracks building, later destroyed by fire.



Figure 15: Band members march in front of what appears to be Cottage #5 on Existing Conditions Plan [Photograph from Asylum Projects website]⁸⁷

Although the boys were removed from adult institutions and their own facility located apart from others at the Howard site, Jones observed that interaction between the youth and adult offenders from the jail and prison did occur. These exchanges often happened when available hands were needed to empty coal cars, with jail inmates in particular, many of whom had been committed to Sockanosset in their youth, regaling the boys with stories of persecution by the police. Boys with discipline issues were transferred to the jail, which Jones asserts furthered their advancement in the "School of Crime."

⁸⁷ Asylum Projects, <http://www.asylumprojects.org/tiki-index.php?page=Rhode%20Island> (accessed December 17, 2009).

In addition to the intermingling of incarcerated adults with the youth offenders, Jones also expressed concern about the lack of mental classification among the boys at Sockanosset. Those boys found to be detrimental to the advancement of others in their cottage could be transferred to the State Almshouse at Howard, which Jones stated was where the "imbeciles and idiots" were housed. Jones concluded by deeming Sockanosset and other juvenile reformatories to be an improvement over nineteenth century practices of sending youth offenders to jail or prison, noting, "One of his heroic moments was to be handed a shovel at the coal car on the prison siding and there cheek by jowl he worked and listened amid profanity and vile stories of sexual orgies from the hardened criminal who...sealed their partnership for future crimes."⁸⁸

Although substantial progress was made during the twentieth century in addressing the special needs of juvenile offenders and treating them with sensitivity, an aura of infamy about the school continued in the media. The *Providence Journal* carried frequent articles on Sockanosset during the 1920s to 1940s, chronicling a change in rules to allow smoking by the boys and accusations by legislators that the boys were causing riots and assaulting guards. A lengthy piece published in 1935 by the *Providence Sunday Journal* summarized a six month investigation by a reporter who was stationed at the school.⁸⁹ Obviously expressing surprise at the findings, the subhead read, "Human Emotions That Abide There Showed Themselves to Her Quite Frankly."

⁸⁸ Ibid., 68.

⁸⁹ Lavinia Walsh, "In Six Months a Person Can Get to Know Sockanosset," *Providence Sunday Journal*, January 13, 1935.

Chapel View

Site use at Sockanosset between the 1960s and mid-1990s is not well-documented, but the campus was unused as a reformatory for several decades and was vacated by the state in 1995. During the late 1960s, the Rhode Island Training School was built nearby and included separate campuses for boys and girls, with the school for boys again planned around a series of cottages. Some parts of the original Sockanosset campus remained in use from the 1960s on, particularly athletic facilities, but the main functions of the school transferred over to the new site, which has since been relocated.

By the 1990s, some of the buildings at Sockanosset were in a state of decay and the site was terribly overgrown, as evidenced by photographs of the property before construction. Buildings were inhabited by bats and were accessible to outsiders who removed some architectural elements. During this period, Carpionato Properties, a development firm based in Johnston, Rhode Island, assembled parcels of the campus in a purchase deal with the state. The developer initially planned to level the campus but later agreed to work with both the Cranston Historic District Commission and the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (the State Historic Preservation Office) to consider alternative treatments. These reviews were discussed at multiple public hearings and through correspondence during the mid-1990s and early 2000s.

Change over time at the site, coupled with economic demands of the new development, resulted in a challenge to preservation of the site's layout. Early buildings had been damaged and never rebuilt, had been replaced, or were already in poor condition when planning for the development began. Additionally, the campus was not designated locally or nationally at the time of its purchase. Thus, preservation reviews

were not mandated, and the project was not a candidate for federal tax credits based on inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.⁹⁰ As a result, there were few financial incentives for the developer to retain and restore all (or any) of the campus buildings. The economic viability of the project and structural issues with some buildings led to a plan to integrate four of the structures into the new development and to demolish the remainder. Referencing the existing conditions plan prepared before construction, the razed buildings included the Administration Building, the Industrial Building, the old and new gymnasiums, service-related buildings such as the stables and boiler house, playfields, and three cottages.

Five changes relevant principally to this discussion took place during development, which is estimated to cost around \$90 million: restoration, infill between three remaining cottages, new construction, changes to circulation patterns, and the introduction of a new use. The most impressive element, from a preservation perspective, was the restoration of the chapel, which has been reused as a nearly 5,000 square foot restaurant with both indoor and outdoor seating. The chapel's missing infirmary wing, destroyed by fire, has been reconstructed and incorporated into the new use. The craftsmanship evidenced on this portion of the project is remarkable, and the chapel's sweeping views are a beautiful feature. In addition to restoration of the chapel, another notable task was to reposition and reconstruct the stone wall encircling Sockanosset using granite from the campus.

⁹⁰ Furthermore, the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credit was not yet established.

Three of the cottages were retained and fully restored with minimal changes to their exterior. Rehabilitation work included masonry repair, slate replacement, window replacement, and porch restoration. The cottages, measuring approximately 3,100 square feet each, were also joined together via two infill pieces (measuring 6,193 square feet and 9,873 square feet) that provide additional space in a three-level structure to house retail, office space, and residential condominiums (fig. 16). The infill construction, which exceeds the size of the cottages and mimics the stone construction, quoining, hipped roofs, and Stick Style porches of the original cottages, attaches to the historic buildings via connecting elements that are set back from the front elevation of the infill.



Figure 16: Infill [Photograph by author]

New construction at the site includes a stand-alone restaurant near the development's entrance off Route 2, where Cottage #5 once stood (fig. 17). An expansive one-story grocery store connected to multi-story retail and office space took the place of the new gymnasium, baseball diamond and basketball court, Cottage #6, the Industrial Building, and the stables (fig. 18).



Figure 17: Stand-alone restaurant [Photograph by author]



Figure 18: Grocery store [Photograph by author]

The original chapel is flanked by a three-story stand-alone office and retail building (not yet constructed as of March 2009) where the boiler house and old gymnasium were located, and by a substantial five-story structure that houses additional retail, office, and condominium space where the Administration Building once stood (fig.

19). All new construction at the site, like the cottage infill, has taken design cues from Sockanosset's mix of Gothic, Romanesque, Stick Style, and Arts and Crafts architectural styles. The condominium units are estimated to cost between \$300,000 and \$1.5 million, and the 240,000 square feet of retail is being marketed for its proximity to upscale neighborhoods, additional retail at the Garden City Shopping Center, and the site's proximity to major roads and highways.



Figure 19: Retail, office, and condominium building
[Photograph by author]

Circulation patterns were altered during development, both at points of entry/exit and within the complex itself. The site plan for Chapel View shows a reopened entrance off Route 2 (New London Avenue) close to old entrance shown as closed down on the Existing Conditions Plan (fig. 20). The site still includes two entry points from Sockanosset Cross Road, one in close proximity to the original entrance near the Administration Building and the other at the far corner. A third entrance/exit from Sockanosset Cross Road leads directly to the Garden City Shopping Center across the

street. Inside the campus, the long, winding driveway that snaked through Sockanosset has been replaced by a more direct, two-lane thoroughfare that leads from Sockanosset Cross Road to Route 2. The road diverts to a series of above-ground parking areas positioned in close proximity to the buildings and offers 1,314 spaces in all.



Figure 20: Site plan for Chapel View [Courtesy Carpcionato Properties]

The gracefully curving green spaces between the cottages, chapel, and Administration Building have been reduced to a small, rectilinear median strip that houses a 150-year-old beech tree, smaller vegetation plots sited amidst the parking areas, and planting space in front of the chapel. Preservation of the beech tree, which had been flagged by the city, was not originally included in the developer's plan. However, the city advocated for the tree's conservation after a subcontractor bulldozed most of the other trees on the site in 2002. At a cost of \$25,000, the developer enlisted a tree surgeon

to protect the beech during construction and to provide stewardship as the tree was returned to health after decades of neglect (fig. 21).



Figure 21: The site's 150-year-old beech tree [Photograph by author]

The most salient change to the complex was in its use, which is advertised by the developer as a "lifestyle retail and mixed-use development," a concept that began with construction of "The Shops of Saddle Creek" in Germantown, Tennessee in 1987. The "lifestyle center" moniker is still somewhat undefined in planning jargon, but a number of newspaper articles in the last few years have covered this burgeoning model of a reimagined downtown shopping experience. *USA Today* described the idea as, "The open-air design is normally dotted with fountains and benches. There are usually table service restaurants and adult-friendly bookstores. And instead of hulking, concrete parking garages, the parking spaces are often right by the stores. The atmosphere seems as much about ambience as it is about retail. But retail is the point."⁹¹ Retailers and

⁹¹ Lorrie Grant, "Shopping in the Great Outdoors," *USA Today*, August 3, 2004.

developers attribute the success of this new model to a reduction in construction costs (lifestyle centers are generally about half the size of an indoor mall), lower operating costs, and an upscale clientele that spends less time browsing and more money, on average, per trip. *Slate* magazine wrote of the traditional shopping mall, "All of these malls turn their backs to the surroundings and concentrate activity in an on themselves. By contrast, lifestyle centers gesture towards their environments. With their street grids and sidewalks, they convey a sense of being out and about in the world. Developers hope that, by emphasizing convenience and entertainment, people will visit lifestyle centers more often and stay there longer."⁹²

Some media outlets have been critical of the model, citing a failed attempt at replicating the authenticity of a downtown streetscape. In *Retail Traffic* magazine, Mark Carter noted that, "Like their interior predecessors, they float in a sea of parking, and are predominantly straight spines that dead-end into anchor stores: the old dumbbell mall plan. Rather than streets, linear parking fields would be a more accurate term to describe their role."⁹³ Carter does suggest, however, that lifestyle centers could achieve a more believable "sense of place" and authenticity by considering the unique character of the buildings rather than pulling from stock designs, by producing streetscapes that respond to the specific traditions and climate of the region, and by incorporating the principles of sun, shade, and shadow that are typically found in streetscapes developed organically over time.

⁹² Andrew Blum, "The Mall Goes Undercover," *Slate*, April 6, 2005, <http://www.slate.com/id/2116246/> (accessed December 17, 2009).

⁹³ Mark Carter, "Where's the Architecture in a Lifestyle Center?" *Retail Traffic*, May 1, 2005.

Evaluation

Special challenges – and resulting flexibilities – apply when a historic correctional institution is neither designated for protection under local preservation laws nor in continued use by the city/county/state. When these sites are acquired for private development, economic viability and marketability of the project can be a hurdle to integrating existing buildings into the finished product and maintaining the character of the institution in its new use. Likewise, the control maintained by the city/county/state over the site can be lost or weakened by the sale of the building. It is often, and understandably so, a long process of negotiation when preservation concerns *are* considered by the developer, and the retention of any portion of historic fabric can be a victory when demolition was the first approach.

However, lessons can still be learned and suggestions made, whether preservation considerations were mandated by law or not. The Chapel View development lends itself well to an evaluation of how the retention of spatial relationships in the historic built environment affects our ability to understand the past. This evaluation will not consider the more complicated and understandably important question of economic viability and profitability, but will instead assess the final product as it pertains to the question of how significance can be retained. This evaluation will consider the five site changes at Chapel View discussed above – restoration, infill between three remaining cottages, new construction, changes to circulation patterns, and the introduction of a new use – and will provide suggestions going forward for strengthening the "sense of place" when much of the historic fabric has been lost or altered.

The most successful preservation project was the restoration of the chapel and the reconstruction of the building's missing infirmary wing. The chapel was long surrounded by larger structures, such as the Industrial Building, the Administration Building, and the new gymnasium. As a result, the chapel was not the most visually prominent building at Sockanosset in its massing when the institution closed, though the chapel was and is held in high regard by architectural historians for its design. The history of growth over time at Sockanosset was typical at many correctional institutions during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as treatment approaches changed, capacities were exceeded, and buildings suffered from deferred maintenance. The chapel itself was not constructed until 1891, six years after the first dormitory, and the site's administrators added dormitories and support buildings as needed to accommodate increases in residents or damage to early structures. Thus, the addition of new construction on the site is not incompatible with historical development patterns at the campus. On the contrary, it is consistent with the evolving nature of this building type, and preservation goals should seek not to create a static environment but to ensure that new construction on the campus is deferential to significant historic structures.

On this point, it is difficult to argue that the remaining structures assume a prominent position. New construction at Chapel View, which includes buildings numbered as two, four, five, six, and seven on the site plan, all approach or exceed in size the remaining cottages and the chapel. This overwhelming comparison is made more severe by the replication of design elements such as fenestration patterns, materials, and the rhythm of rooflines and projections. Rather than achieving a harmonious relationship that clearly differentiates between old and new, the new construction relies on a

contemporary building typology of the one-story "strip mall" and over-sized buildings devoid of a successful breakdown in massing to define infill.

This is most obvious when considering the juxtaposition between the mixed-use new construction building looming over the chapel to the right and the cottage to the left. The design makes some attempt to relieve the massing on the elevation closest to the chapel, but its overpowering size, imitation of nineteenth century architectural elements, and vertical proportions achieve neither a successful contrast in design nor a contextual relationship that enriches the perception of continuity with the past. Compatible replication of historic styles is challenging in many instances, as attention is directed to a less consummate standard of modern craftsmanship that does not accomplish a proportionate level of detailing found on the historic building(s).

The three remaining cottages face a similar struggle, as the infill between these buildings exceeds their size. This relationship is balanced somewhat by the employment of recessed connections that provide "breathing space" between old and new, but here, the replication of materials, rooflines, and overall design make it even more difficult to decipher the differentiation between new construction and the historic buildings. The lack of quoins and front porches are the most obvious clues. This relationship could have been more successful by lowering the rooflines of the infill additions below those of the historic cottages rather than simply reversing the roofline from a side gable to a front gable, by choosing materials that were compatible but differentiated in color and composition (such as all stone construction, frame construction, or a combination of the two), by differentiating fenestration patterns, and by setting the infill additions behind the face of the front elevations of the cottages.

Changes in circulation patterns at the site are consistent with the aspirations of "lifestyle center" design. The main thoroughfare between Sockanosset Cross Road and Route 2 provides easy access from main roads and diverts into parking lots that are convenient to each building in the complex. One multi-story, above-ground parking garage would not have been preferable in this case given its inevitable visual intrusion, nor would it have proven expedient given the size of the campus. Underground parking at various locations across the site would have been preferable, but surely expensive and potentially damaging to delicate, remaining structures. The above-ground parking lots, which cover much of the preexisting green space at Sockanosset, presented an opportunity to configure this modern land use in smaller clusters. The pedestrian-unfriendly lots themselves could have been visually demarcated by a change in materials (pavers, for example) on vehicular roadways to suggest sidewalk material.

What is notably missing from the Chapel View development is a central plaza, a space where residents and visitors could gather for rest, a quick meal, or socialization and where visual focus could be directed. The site's interior serves parked cars, with points of interaction relegated to the buildings themselves. The median strip holding the beech tree is small in size and situated along the main road through the development, which makes reaching it safely rather precarious and enjoying a respite there unlikely. To better replicate the circulation patterns of Sockanosset, a larger plaza (in the spirit of a parade ground), replete with benches, could have been sited between the cottages and the chapel. Research shows that this concept of gathering was important in Sockanosset's history, as the young residents came together for band practices and performances and for marching at the center of the campus.

Neither the young offenders housed at Sockanosset nor the administrators who supervised their work and care would have referred to the campus as a "lifestyle center." However, this specific mixed-use is quite compatible with the historic use of the campus and their shared inclusion of live, work, and play facilities in the same site. It is unlikely that Chapel View is self-sufficient for those who live there in that they probably work outside the complex and depart the site for most shopping and recreational needs. However, the aspiration, in character if not in practice, to provide an all-encompassing campus is consistent with the ideals of Sockanosset. An array of other uses could have been proposed for the site, including an office park that would have been vacated evenings and weekends, a retail or residential-specific development that would have been deserted during the day most weekdays, or an institutional use that (though arguably compatible) would have made the campus largely inaccessible to the public. By offering these three uses, the site is "alive" at all hours, is self-contained, and can be experienced by the public. It is this use that is Chapel View's greatest success and its best attempt at retaining a "sense of place" in spite of numerous alterations to the physical layout of the Sockanosset campus.

With so much of the historic fabric removed, it is difficult for a visitor passing through to conceptualize the historical layout of the campus. Likewise, this information is not readily available to the more invested researcher, as no comprehensive document (such as a nomination for local or national designation) was ever published. The research compiled for this chapter relied on myriad resources, many of them out-of-print. This lack of analytical information onsite, which could bolster the "sense of place" that is on the cusp of success, would be uncomplicated to remedy with three solutions.

The first suggestion is to provide wayfinding signage, which should be placed in pedestrian-friendly areas of the development. Signage, placed at the entrance to each building – old or new – along the sidewalk's edge could provide a magnified view of that area on the original site map, photographs of the building(s) sited there historically, general information on the historical use, and related, personal narratives about persons of significance. The second suggestion, which incorporates the concept of wayfinding signage, is to prepare a brochure, available online and at locations throughout the development in hard copy, that shares the history of the site in its physical layout and social history. Because Sockanosset has not been well-documented, especially with regard to changes over time, the compilation of this otherwise inaccessible research would likely be of interest to Chapel View residents and visitors.

The third suggestion, which would require a redirection in strategy by the developer, is to alter or expand marketing materials for the site (www.chapel-view.com), which offer little information on Sockanosset other than touting the importance of the chapel. The existing marketing materials produced for interested retailers provide information on the composition of the trade area, other nearby retail offerings, and several conceptual-level drawings of Chapel View's buildings. Not included is any meaningful discussion of the site's historical use (which is often a marketing boon in reuse projects), the architectural significance and "flavor" of the historic buildings that remain to encourage appropriate signage and storefront displays, or historical imagery other than a flashing photograph included in the website's introductory animation.

Other reused correctional institutions have more strongly capitalized (appropriately or not, in some cases) on the history of their sites through the inclusion of

small museum spaces, the production of brochures and signage, and the thematic division of contemporary space according to historic use. This is a missed, and easily remedied, opportunity at Chapel View that could contribute to the "sense of place" at a site that has lost historic fabric not only through modern-day planning but also due to the normal passage of time.

Conclusion

The site visit to Chapel View was rained out my first full day in Rhode Island during the spring of 2009, but a glimpse had been afforded the night before during dinner at Ted's Montana Grill, the stand-alone restaurant positioned close to the entrance to Chapel View. The dimly lit view opened of a strip mall, asphalt parking lot, a European-style row of shops in the old cottages, and a massive new building next to the chapel. The atmosphere was contemporary, and the "campus" layout was difficult to decipher. The second day eventually brought snow and an afternoon in the chilly basement of one of Brown University's libraries, but the clear morning did afford an opportunity for a tour with Carpionato Properties and a solitary and slow walk to photograph the site.

When the trip concluded and the train sped back to Washington, it was questionable what I would write. The feeling lingered, well into that summer and fall, as more research was conducted. This site was quite different in both historical and contemporary contexts from the Allegheny County Jail in Pittsburgh. Here at Chapel View, the site was not a celebrated architectural masterpiece apart from its social importance, the campus had been sold for private development, no historic designations or related tax credits for restoration were present, and the financial solvency of the

project had demanded new construction. The question was whether the site had retained its historical significance and a "sense of place" despite these changes.

The clues, though not readily apparent, were there: the chapel with its sweeping views, the cottages turning inward to the site's center, the low stone wall neither keeping in nor keeping out, the old beech tree standing watch, a layout of new construction that was much like that of Sockanosset, and a diversified use that allowed visitors to traverse the campus in much the same way that Sockanosset's young boys had made use of all the acreage in their daily routines. It was not, however, until the research for this chapter had been completed that these pieces of the puzzle came together and the remnants of the site's "cottage plan" became obvious.

The sad news for preservationists is that significant buildings were lost, for whatever reason. The good news for preservationists, however, is that enough fabric remains and sufficient information exists in the bowels of libraries to piece together the rest of the story. With additional research, onsite tools of interpretation, and an embrace of the site's development over time, a "sense of place" could be just around the corner. The lesson in this case study is that *successfully* retaining historical significance requires *sharing* it.

CHAPTER IV LORTON WORKHOUSE

The craving for an interpretation of history is so deep-rooted that, unless we have a constructive outlook over the past, we are drawn either to mysticism or to cynicism.

- Sir Frederick Maurice Powicke, Oxford University (1955)

Although this final case study falls last both sequentially and chronologically, it will be treated as a "prequel" of sorts that addresses philosophical, rather than physical, challenges of reusing historic correctional institutions. Correctional institutions are a contributing building typology to the broader collection of America's institutional architecture, but the reuse of correctional facilities is a decidedly more delicate operation than most. We must contend with a history of violence and suffering within their walls and a receiving audience that we hope can enjoy these structures for everyday use. In the rush to reuse, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and to forego careful consideration of how to honor their complicated histories, especially when those stories have evolved over time.

The Lorton Workhouse Arts Center, which opened in late 2008 and is still under construction, faced the unenviable challenges of being one small part of a much larger and more complicated land-use initiative, of interpreting a history that was, in its last decades, rife with stories of violence and escape, and of utilizing a site that would not seem on its face to be inspirational or approachable as a place for creativity and calm.

Introduction

When the Lorton Arts Foundation received permission to use the former Lorton Workhouse, they inherited a facility that began its life in 1910 as a model example of President Theodore Roosevelt's pastoral vision of a "New Penology" reformatory to strengthen the human mind and body. As the Lorton Workhouse closed its doors, however, it had become a cluttered, chaotic, and infamous prison that had strayed far from Roosevelt's Progressive Era principles. With building alterations and new construction spanning over eight decades, the reuse necessitated difficult choices about what part of the story to tell in physical form and how to honor the remainder through interpretation. The result, a product of much professional guidance and community input, honors Roosevelt's intent and the ideals of the Progressive Era reformatory model by retaining the spirit of the place in its physical character and in its ongoing use as a place to rejuvenate the human soul.

This chapter will provide an overview of the reformatory model, continuing where the first chapter concluded, followed by a summary of the rise and fall of the Lorton Workhouse, and a synopsis of the reuse project. A portion of the chapter will be devoted to a general discussion of special challenges that arise in structuring a painful past for consumption. The chapter will conclude with an evaluation of the flourishing Lorton Workhouse Arts Center project, presenting lessons that may be beneficial to other organizations during the important, early phases of considering the reuse of a correctional institution.

The Popularity of Rehabilitation

The rehabilitative principles of Zebulon Brockway's Elmira Reformatory gained steam and a political platform, courtesy of the Progressive Party, during the Progressive Era. The reformatory aspirations were a perfect fit for the progressive ideals of social justice, regulation of big business, citizen empowerment, and conservationism. In this new approach to incarceration, the prisoner was involved in his own reformation and provided with skills and knowledge at a self-sufficient and pastoral site removed from the city's tempting evils. Here, a prisoner could be prepared for reentry into society with the hope that he would contribute productively to his community upon release and not regress to deviant behavior.

As the new century neared and Elmira Reformatory attracted national and international attention (thanks in large part to Brockway's marketing campaign), the basic principles of Elmira's rehabilitative model were employed at new state reformatories in Michigan (1877), Massachusetts (1884), Pennsylvania (1889), Minnesota (1889), Colorado (1890), Illinois (1891), Kansas (1895), Ohio (1896), Indiana (1897), and Wisconsin (1898). Some, like the Pennsylvania Industrial Reformatory in Huntingdon, followed the management of Elmira quite closely. Others, like the Minnesota Reformatory and the Colorado Reformatory, largely embraced the goal of Elmira to prepare offenders to be contributing members of society, but varied somewhat in their methods. Reformatories in Michigan and Massachusetts, as outlined by historian Alexander W. Pisciotta, substantively diverted from the Elmira model in their emphasis on profit-making labor.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Alexander W. Pisciotta, *Benevolent Repression*, 82-86.

When the Michigan State House of Correction and Reformatory opened in 1877, little attempt was made to classify or treat prisoners who arrived at the facility for crimes ranging from drunkenness to murder. Devoid of age requirements or restrictions on accepting repeat offenders, young, first time deviants mingled amongst older, professional felons. Unlike Elmira, the Michigan facility offered no early release for good behavior, provided no post-release assistance or supervision, and prioritized profit-making labor above vocational training. Although Michigan sought to deter future crimes through hard work as Elmira also endeavored, the means included punishment, discipline, and little consideration of the individual background or needs of each prisoner.

The Massachusetts State Prison, which became a reformatory in 1884, adopted a more free-form approach that combined elements of the programs at Elmira and Michigan. Like the Michigan reformatory, the Massachusetts facility set no limits on the age or composition of the offenders that it would house. However, Massachusetts somewhat aligned with Elmira by using the contract labor system but de-emphasizing the importance of profit. Additionally, inmates at the Massachusetts institution received rewards for good behavior and were provided with educational training.

Female reformatories also arose as a special subset during the Progressive Era. Between 1900 and 1935, seventeen state reformatories for women were constructed, and many state boards of charity and prison reform organizations included committees of women who surveyed the institutions. Although the basic principle of rehabilitation used at men's reformatories was incorporated at women's reformatories, prison reformers and numerous women's groups contended that the deviance of females merited special treatment and the management of women's facilities by female staff.

The principle of separating female offenders from male inmates pre-dated the Gilded Age and was included in the "Declaration of Principles" adopted at the First National Congress of Prisons in 1870. Women joined the National Prison Association and the National Conference on Charities and Corrections and became active in calls for inspections of prisons to survey the treatment of women and for the creation of new facilities managed by and housing only females. Warden Eliza Mosher, for example, first joined the women's reformatory in New York in 1877 as doctor and was concerned in her early years about the severe treatment of women incarcerated for venereal disease, drug addiction, and the birth of illegitimate children.⁹⁵ When Mosher became superintendent of the reformatory in 1880, she established a new merit system and hired staff to provide educational opportunities for the women.

During the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, a movement of female institution building contributed to the development of clubs for women that included the rights of female offenders among their social concerns. Women's organizations formed in hundreds of towns and cities during the Gilded Age, until the number was large enough that an umbrella group, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, was established in 1890. The Federation included one million women by 1910, and the vocal membership redirected the emphasis of women's clubs from socializing to civic reform.⁹⁶ Women reformers of the Progressive Era placed gender discrimination high on the list of social ills, but they were also engaged in combating female "hygiene" problems such as

⁹⁵ Cyndi Banks, *Women in Prison: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 13.

⁹⁶ Estelle B. Freedman, *Feminism, Sexuality & Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 26.

prostitution, loose sexuality, and venereal disease. The reformatory setting was used as a treatment location for correcting these moral lapses, with most women's reformatories of the Progressive Era modeled on the "cottage plan" used at the Sockanosset Training School for Boys and other juvenile reformatories. Situated in rural areas, the facilities included dormitories, holding twenty to fifty women, which surrounded a central administration building. The homelike setting of the cottage plan was thought to appeal to the female sensibilities and remove inmates from the city ills that had supposedly contributed to their deviance.⁹⁷

Constructing the Lorton Workhouse

The ideal of prisoner rehabilitation was not foreign to the citizens of the District of Columbia during the Progressive Era, especially with "New Penology" advocate President Theodore Roosevelt in residence at the White House from 1901 to 1909. The president's role in improving Washington's correctional system, however, was not based solely on personal interest or proximity. At the time of Roosevelt's presidency, the District of Columbia was under the oversight of Congress and was governed by a three-member Board of Commissioners appointed by the President. As author Robert Harrison summarized the influence of the federal government on the fate of Washington during the Progressive Era:

The District was a laboratory in which the federal government itself could perform legislative experiments for the enlightenment of the national as a whole...Here it held plenary power, serving as national, state and municipal authority in one. Here, unencumbered by the rival claims of other governmental

⁹⁷ Todd R. Clear, George F. Cole and Michael D. Reisig, *American Corrections* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2009), 294.

authorities, it was free to formulate its own social and municipal policy as a model for emulation by the cities and states."⁹⁸

Considering the far-reaching arm of the federal government in Washington's affairs for most of the twentieth century, it is not surprising that a District reformatory and workhouse constructed during the Progressive Era would honor the tenants of Roosevelt's "New Penology."

Authorization

In 1908, President Roosevelt appointed a Penal Commission to investigate the deplorable conditions of Washington's correctional institutions, which at that time included a jail and a reformatory. The Commission's report on their finding suggested the following five methods of managing the District's offenders:

First. There should be a jail to be used only as a house of detention, never as a place of confinement for those under sentence.

Second. A probation system for those cases which may be safely dealt with without sending the offender to any place of confinement.

Third. A reformatory for all who must be sentenced to confinement and who nevertheless are hopeful cases.

Fourth. A workhouse for those who must be confined and who are not proper subjects for reformatory treatment, and yet whose offenses are not such as to require that they be sent to a penitentiary.

Fifth. A carefully guarded parole law for prisoners in these various institutions who may safely be released upon conditions.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Robert Harrison, *Congress, Progressive Reform, and the New American State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 127.

⁹⁹ Subcommittee of House Committee on Appropriations, *District of Columbia Appropriation Hearing*, 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911.

In 1909, Congress honored the request of the Penal Commission, which suggested that two separate tracts of land in Virginia or Maryland be purchased for the new reformatory and workhouse, by appropriating \$100,000 for the land purchase and assembly. An additional \$10,000 was appropriated for the preparation of plans.

The first tract, which would serve the Workhouse, was located along the Occoquan Creek in Fairfax County, Virginia, about seventeen miles from Washington. The Workhouse location was reported to have elicited a mixed reaction from neighboring property owners in its early years, though without major incident. One neighbor sued the District of Columbia, alleging that the facility was a nuisance, and other adjoining property owners raised the market rate of their land three-fold when the District expressed an interest in acquiring additional acreage. By contrast, some neighbors welcomed the site, even employing discharged prisoners from the workhouse as laborers on surrounding farms.¹⁰⁰

The Reformatory, which the appropriation required to be situated quite some distance away from the Workhouse, was located in Fairfax County northeast of the Workhouse. The Reformatory's location was in an area judged to be sufficiently far from the Mount Vernon Estate so as to appease the concerns of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association and the public regarding respect for the President Washington's former home.¹⁰¹ In its early years, the site included temporary structures such as detention cells, a hospital, bakery, blacksmith shop, carpenter and carriage shops, and three cottages.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 11.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 12.

The Reformatory opened in 1916 to receive transferred prisoners from federal prisons in Leavenworth and Atlanta.

"Reformation Not Vindictive Punishment"

When the Workhouse first opened on July 1, 1910, its appearance differed significantly from what it has become today. The Virginia State Board of Charities and Corrections reported in 1911 that the new facility included one-story frame buildings designed by the superintendent of the workhouse, W.H. Whittaker, and erected by the prisoners using lumber cut and sawn onsite. The Workhouse site featured an administration building, two dormitories, and a recreation hall that included a kitchen and dining room, and a library and reading room where the inmates could peruse the daily newspaper and play checkers. The Workhouse provided sleeping space for about 450 men at a time, and within just over a year of its opening, it had housed a total of 3,000 inmates staying for varying durations of time ranging from fifteen days to two years. A separate workhouse facility for women, since demolished, was located in close proximity and opened in July of 1911 to house about one hundred female offenders at a time.¹⁰²

The Workhouse was a model of the "New Penology" in its early years. In keeping with the workhouse motto, "Reformation Not Vindictive Punishment," the early inmates were tasked with productive labor that improved the site and were trusted to go about their chores in what was an "open" facility devoid of cells and chains. Male prisoners cleared and graded the land, laid out parks for recreation, constructed dirt and gravel roads, cultivated the farm, and built plants for crushing stone and making bricks.

¹⁰² State Board of Charities and Corrections, *Third annual report of the State Board of Charities and Corrections to the Governor of Virginia* (Richmond, 1911), 82.

Prisoners at the women's facility cooked, cleaned, made clothing for themselves and the male inmates, and worked outdoors.¹⁰³

One guard monitored and directed the work of twenty male inmates each day, and about half of the overseers on staff carried pistols (though this practice was discouraged by the superintendent). All work was conducted in silence, and any refusal to work was punished by solitary confinement with only bread and water to eat until such time as the prisoner requested forgiveness and elected to return to work. Given the expanse of the site, inmates often labored out of view of guards; sixty escape attempts at the men's workhouse during the first year resulted in twenty successes.

In honoring President Roosevelt's call for an end to contract prison labor, the Workhouse inmates labored to maintain operation of the facility and to manufacture goods available only to the District of Columbia for use at other public institutions. Superintendent Whittaker predicted that the Workhouse would be fully self-supporting by its third year, as inmates constructed all buildings and laid roads using materials collected onsite, raised farm animals fattened with scraps leftover from meals, and grew their own food on a farm fertilized with manure brought down the river on barges. Any surplus earnings were directed to prisoners, for use in supporting their families, replacing any stolen property that might have necessitated their incarceration, or providing for themselves briefly post-release.

¹⁰³ The since-demolished women's facility is most well-known for having housed suffrage advocates from the National Woman's Party, who were arrested during White House protests beginning in 1917. The inmates included Lucy Ewing, niece of Adlai Stevenson, Vice President under Grover Cleveland. Treatment of the suffragettes at the facility was poor and became highly publicized.

A More Permanent Place: 1920-1961

During the 1920s and 1930s, the initial, temporary buildings of the Workhouse and the Reformatory were replaced with refined, yet restrained, brick structures. The new buildings represented the intent of these two "open" facilities, reflected the popular architectural style of the time, and used inmate labor for construction in keeping with the site's goal of autonomy. The appearance of the Workhouse today principally reflects the designs of Albert L. Harris, Municipal Architect of the District of Columbia from 1921 until his death in 1933. Harris also completed the plans for the Reformatory, which were developed by Harris's predecessor, Snowden Ashford. For both the Workhouse and the Reformatory, which are quite similar in style and in layout, the architects selected the reserved and orderly Colonial Revival style that was popular in the 1920's. Bricks and other materials for the structures were prepared onsite, and inmates provided the labor.

At the Workhouse, a wide, one-story, gabled roof brick building was constructed in 1928 to serve as a kitchen and dining hall for inmates. The dining hall was prominently sited at the eastern edge of the Workhouse's central block, facing onto a long quadrangle and visible from Ox Road beyond (fig. 22). Along the quadrangle, the architect designed two flanking, brick arcades with arched doorways leading out to the grassy pavilion (figs. 23 and 24). The arcade provided covered access to a series of ten, one-story, brick buildings, constructed between 1925 and 1930, that served as dormitories with barracks-style sleeping arrangements in bunk beds (fig. 25). Outside the residential-based core of the Workhouse, buildings of the 1920s and 1930s included two additional dormitories, a gymnasium building, and auxiliary structures including a locomotive house, barn, farm equipment repair building, creamery, heating plant, and slaughterhouse.



Figure 22: Dining Hall, right [Photograph by author]



Figure 23: Arcade, interior view [Photograph by author]



Figure 24: Arcade, exterior view [Photograph by author]



Figure 25: Dormitories [Photograph by author]

Additional buildings were added to the site during the 1940s and 1950s, the more formal of which extended the Colonial Revival style (fig. 26). These included a two-story dormitory building positioned opposite the quadrangle from the gymnasium, a control building, and a number of sheds. By 1960, the Workhouse was large in land area,

robust in production, and replete with formal structures and utilitarian support buildings that suggested a college campus atmosphere more than a correctional institution.



Figure 26: The Workhouse, as viewed from the air, circa 1960 [Courtesy of the Workhouse Museum]

Difficult Years

Beginning in the 1960s, the Lorton Workhouse suffered a decline that diverted from its original intent in operation and cluttered much of the remaining open land with unremarkable buildings. Together with the Reformatory and with a walled penitentiary complex that had been constructed as a division of the Reformatory in 1930, the Workhouse sadly assumed an infamous reputation for violence that spread far beyond the surrounding area.

The downfall began with the "Easter Decision" of March of 1966, in which the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that public intoxication should be treated and managed as a

public health problem rather than as a crime.¹⁰⁴ Until that point, many of the men and women incarcerated at the Workhouse facilities had been brought in on charges of public drunkenness.¹⁰⁵ As a result of the decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals, inmate populations at the Workhouse fell sharply. In 1966, the women's Workhouse closed, as did most of the men's, with the buildings transferred to the Department of Public Health for use as alcohol treatment facilities. Two dormitories at the men's Workhouse were retained briefly by the Department of Corrections for minimum-security inmates before closing as well. Much of the agricultural production at the site was terminated without a labor force to continue the operations.

The Reformatory was reorganized as the Central Facility for the Department of Corrections, and the Penitentiary became a maximum-security prison. The populations at both facilities rose beyond the sites' capacities, leading to overcrowding and idleness. Riots at the Central Facility in the late 1960s damaged some buildings, and a protracted hostage situation at the Penitentiary on Christmas Day of 1974 made local news. The beleaguered and shorthanded guards gradually lost control over the inmates, and the facility was plagued by reports of escapes, assaults on fellow inmates and staff, and drug problems. In response, public officials from Fairfax County and the State of Virginia filed a series of unsuccessful lawsuits that sought closure of the entire Lorton complex or its transfer to the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

¹⁰⁴ *Easter v. District of Columbia*, 361 F.2d 50 (U.S. Ct. App. 1966).

¹⁰⁵ Information in this section is taken largely from the National Register of Historic Places nomination: County of Fairfax, Department of Planning and Zoning, *District of Columbia Workhouse and Reformatory National Register Nomination* (Fairfax, 2005).

The 1960s through the 1980s were also a period of physical transition and change at the Workhouse. Three hundred acres of Workhouse property were diverted for use as a landfill in 1973, and the brick plant serving both the Workhouse and Reformatory was largely demolished in 1983 when the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority leased two hundred acres for their use. The Workhouse returned to prison use in the 1980s, and the increased level of security required the installation of a security fence and guard towers that still could not prevent a fiery and violent riot at the site in 1986. Most every inch of open land in and around the central core of the site was used for new office space, an administration building, a maximum-security "separation unit," and a number of ancillary, utilitarian structures. The previously pastoral setting had become foreboding in spirit and muddled by buildings that were incompatible with the character of the more restrained architecture of the 1920s through the 1950s (fig. 27).



Figure 27: The Workhouse, as viewed from the air, 1996 [Courtesy of the Workhouse Museum]

Art for All

Although it would be logical to assume that the Lorton Workhouse, Reformatory, and Penitentiary were eventually closed as a direct response to what was obviously a chaotic existence in their last years, the decision was actually included in the National Capital Revitalization Act of 1997. The Act was an attempt to improve the financial standing of the District of Columbia, and it ordered that the Lorton facilities be closed by the end of 2001.

In October of 1998, Congress passed the Lorton Technical Corrections Act, which authorized transfer of the site to Fairfax County and required that a reuse plan be developed prior to sale to outline proposals for open space, parkland or recreation. Also in 1998, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted a Comprehensive Plan that included language pertaining to Lorton. A citizen task force was appointed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in 1999 for the purposes of developing the reuse plan, and the task force worked closely with the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning to reflect the intentions of the Comprehensive Plan in their proposal.¹⁰⁶ The last prisoners were transferred from Lorton to out-of-state facilities in November 2001, and in July of 2002, Fairfax County received title to 2,324 acres of the Lorton site.

Laurel Hill

The history of developing a master plan for the Reformatory and Penitentiary is long, extremely complex, and still underway. Briefly, the Reformatory and Penitentiary sites are now referred to in planning documents as "Laurel Hill," which recognizes the

¹⁰⁶ See "Adaptive Reuse Planning Task Force Recommendations," <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/laurelhill/recommendations.htm>.

significance of an eighteenth century house on the site that belonged to Revolutionary War patriot William Lindsay. The Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Citizens Task Force, appointed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to guide planning for this portion of the overall site, completed their work in 2004 and provided their recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Summarized, the task force advocated for the preservation of the central, historic core of buildings, the minimization of taxpayer burden in the reuse, socially positive new uses that complimented the history of the facilities, transparency in the development process, and an "exciting and uplifting" new life for Lorton. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors accepted the recommendations of the task force and created the Laurel Hill Project Advisory Committee to move forward with the planning. The Alexander Company, a private company specializing in urban development and historic preservation, has been working on a master plan, a revised version of which was presented to the community and has been in a comment period.¹⁰⁷

In 2001, the General Services Administration entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) executed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to identify contributing and non-contributing structures at the site and to require that the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board (ARB) review any proposed work at Lorton.¹⁰⁸ In

¹⁰⁷ See "Revised Master Plan," http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/laurelhill/master_plan.htm.

¹⁰⁸ Listing a property, or a collection of properties, on the National Register of Historic Places is a largely honorific designation that does not prevent inappropriate alterations or even demolition. For this reason, local preservation laws, which generally do contain provisions to address alterations and demolition, are an important tool for cities that want to protect historic properties. In the case of Lorton, the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) allowed the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board to review projects at the site with the same authority that the Board reviews locally-designated historic districts.

March of 2006, the "District of Columbia Workhouse and Reformatory Historic District" was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a designation that facilitates the receipt of federal tax credits for preservation-related work at the facilities. Additionally, architecture firm David H. Gleason Associates, Inc. was commissioned by Fairfax County to prepare architectural guidelines and standards for the site, which were approved in concept by the ARB in 2007.¹⁰⁹

Planning for the Workhouse

The Lorton Arts Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, formed for the purposes of advancing a proposal to convert the Workhouse into a cultural arts center. Rezoning of the a fifty-five acre portion of the site was approved by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in 2004. Construction work at the Workhouse Arts Center has progressed in phases, with the first phase of the project and operations through 2010 estimated to cost approximately \$39 million. The financing structure for this phase consists of industrial revenue bond financing to provide \$19 million, \$5 million in federal rehabilitation tax credits, a matching grant from Fairfax County to support maintenance costs of \$1 million per year through 2010, and \$10 million in private donations and grants.

The first phase has included restoration of the historic structures at the Workhouse and the fit-out of the space for new artist galleries, work studios, and classrooms for art, dance, and photography (fig. 28). Demolition has included the removal of structures that are not "contributing" features of the designated "District of Columbia Workhouse and Reformatory Historic District," which defines the period of significance as extending

¹⁰⁹ See "Draft Architectural Standards and Guidelines," http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/laurelhill/lorton_draft_02.07singlepg-reduce.pdf

from 1910 to 1961. This period has therefore assigned significance to the early brick structures designed by Albert L. Harris and constructed with inmate labor during the 1920s and 1930s. Also included are structures completed in the 1940s and 1950s, which reflected Harris and Ashford's design intent and thoughtfully and minimally expanded the site's operations. Special permission was granted by the ARB to demolish an early contributing brick structure, previously sited in the current parking lot off Ox Road. The building was constructed in 1920 as a heating plant and redesigned internally and externally in the 1940s to serve as a workshop for vocational training and the repair of equipment used at the Workhouse.



Figure 28: Lorton Workhouse Arts Center Site Map [Courtesy of the Lorton Arts Foundation]

Artist studios, galleries, and a dance studio, all of which are located in the long, dormitory buildings that face the quadrangle, are currently open to the public. Two of the dormitories have been reserved for future museum space, which will interpret the heritage of both the men's and women's facilities at the Workhouse. The former dining hall will soon become an events center, with the buildings just behind it (formerly dormitories) to be used to study culinary arts. Restaurants will open on the north side of the campus, just off Lorton Road, with future plans including the creation of artists' residences, a music center in the Workhouse barn, and 300-seat performance theater in the building that was formerly used as the gymnasium.

Repairs and alterations of the historic Workhouse buildings have progressed under the "Draft Architectural Standards and Guidelines," which are based on *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and *The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Summarized briefly, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* assert that changes to defining characteristics of a historic building or site should be minimal in adapting a site for a new use and should endeavor to retain distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques that characterize a building. Any deteriorated features should be repaired, rather than replaced, and, if replacement is warranted, should replicate the original. The *Standards* do recognize that most historic properties change over time and recommends the preservation of alterations that have acquired a significance in their own right. The *Standards* recommend that any new additions or new construction at a historic site be differentiated from the old but be compatible in massing, size, and scale.

In keeping with these objectives, with further guidance provided by the ARB, and in conjunction with the receipt of federal rehabilitation tax credit, alterations to the Workhouse have been minimal and work has been largely restorative in nature. As mentioned, structures deemed to non-contributing were removed, as were most of the later security-enhancing alterations at the site that supported its use after the "open" concept of movement was abandoned. Some new construction is planned, the design of which will respect the existing historic buildings, and minor site changes to support the new use have included the addition of parking lots and vehicular circulation routes, the installation of lighting, signage, fencing and sidewalks, and landscaping.

Structuring History

Like the Allegheny County Jail and the Sockanosset Training School for Boys, the Lorton Workhouse expanded its physical plant over time by adding onto existing buildings and constructing new buildings to accommodate programming and population changes. In the case of the Allegheny County Jail, this included a substantial enlargement of the facility in 1908 by architect Frederick J. Osterling. At the Sockanosset Training School for Boys, new buildings provided additional work, classroom, and office space. At the Lorton Workhouse, new construction continued through the 1990s. With change over time and a painful past to share, there are several challenges about which preservationists, site owners, and public officials should be observant.

History as Truth

The consumption of history may be achieved through an experience that is exhaustive in information-sharing, such as a museum, one that relies on both a "sense of place" and opportunities onsite for interpretation through artifacts and records, such as at the Allegheny County Jail, or through the creation of an "aura" that relies on clues that may not be readily apparent to the consumer, such as at the Chapel View development. Author Diane Barthel wrote of the "aura" that, "This aura is not intrinsic to the object, but extrinsic, located in the relationships people form with goods that they, individually and collectively, consider special."¹¹⁰ The "aura," therefore, relies heavily not only on the visitor's personal experiences but how the visitor prioritizes those experiences in their collective memory. Thus, relying on a "sense of place" alone for interpretation may be inadequate in the hope of imparting history as truth.

In considering the marketing of truth, Barthel wrote of the "American Immigrant Wall of Honor," at Ellis Island. There, the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation sold spots on the "Wall of Honor" to descendants of immigrants who had passed through Ellis Island. The "truth" in the intent seemed to slide considerably, however, when descendants could add their own name if they could not recall the name of their immigrant ancestor and when the honor of adding an ancestor's name came at a cost of one hundred dollars. An inevitable controversy developed over history as "truth" in this example, where the past was being rewritten through the inclusion of those with good memories and money, and through the exclusion of those immigrants who entered the

¹¹⁰ Diane Barthel, *Historic Preservation: Collective Memory and Historical Identity* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 134.

country through other ports or whose descendants could not afford the honor or were unaware of the project. This example is important in sharing the lesson that factors beyond the well-meaning actions of a preservation professional – money in particular – can guide decisions on how to market a site and unfortunately distort the truth.

History as Pain

Not all historic buildings come with a flowery history that is emotionally uplifting such that owners wish to broadcast the past and consumers are elated to visit. The scale of history as pain has many gradations, including the death of a significant person in a historic house, the general function of a building as a mental institution, the historical use of farmland as a battlefield on which American blood was spilled, and the abhorrent employment of Japanese internment camps in this country. Where these gradations fall on the scale is partly dependent on the consumer, who brings with him or her life experiences that may connect to one aspect of social history more powerfully than another. However, the preservation professional, in structuring the history of the site as a reference in future considerations on alterations for its reuse, must make some educated decisions about how to interpret a painful past.

Historians J.E. Tunbridge and G.J. Ashworth detailed the challenges of interpreting a painful past, which they contend can be one area of heritage interpretation that is likely to cause "dissonance." Although the authors specifically addressed more egregious atrocities such as the Holocaust, the framework for their arguments is helpful in considering the difficulties of sharing and marketing the sorrowful history of correctional institutions, which themselves certainly fall at various points along the scale

of pain and suffering. The reasonable assumption would be that users would avoid such depressing places, but as Tunbridge and Ashworth stated:

The curiosity of people about the suffering of their own kind appears to be insatiable, and motivated by empathy, excitement and other psychological stimuli of varying worth. Thus the tourist appetite for sites and artifacts relating to tragedy is substantial. The discovery by Madam Tussaud that horror was a highly saleable commodity can be combined with the well-meaning intention that lessons can be learned about the avoidance of future atrocity through the presentation of previous occurrences.¹¹¹

Among the difficulties in interpreting painful sites, the authors include intended and received messages and atrocity as entertainment. Messages conveyed by the producer of interpretation are selected and packaged in a manner that will inevitably differ from the message received. The audience, experiencing their own internal and unconsciousness dissonance, struggles between a visceral reaction of repulsion and an attraction to certain aspects of human unpleasantness that may provide a thrill. The significance for preservation professionals is that no matter how well-intentioned and thoughtfully expressed, the messages being projected may not anticipate the motivations, expectations, or personal experiences of the consumer. Thus, there can inevitably be a dissonance between message relayed and message received.¹¹²

The passage of time may affect the public's interest in a painful heritage site just as much as the level of the atrocity. The elapse of time may soften the events themselves but can also change the response of visitors who have no personal connection to the time period and thus do not struggle with internal conflict about their interest in the site. The authors fittingly bring up the comparison of a castle dungeon and a modern-day prison, in

¹¹¹ J. E. Tunbridge and G. J. Ashworth, *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* (Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), 94.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 112.

which the former can be reduced to a computer game experience while the latter is so fresh and "real" that it is difficult to digest. This is an important area of danger for preservation professionals, who may be tasked with deciding whether a site's history is far enough removed from modern times to justify its marketing for entertainment. Tunbridge and Ashworth address this issue, noting, "If such healing is a matter of time then when does atrocity become acceptable entertainment and for which groups? Are these recreational developments to be welcomed as a sign of a healthy emergence from a barbaric past which can now be viewed with detachment, or are they to be condemned as in doubtful taste giving offense to some and dehumanizing all?"¹¹³

Evaluation

At the Lorton Workhouse, the many players involved in reuse planning for the facility were presented with the unenviable task of deciding what to keep, what to remove, and how to share the whole story with a public audience that had spent the recent decades reading of bloodshed, gunfire, and fiery riots by volatile prisoners. Long gone was the more romanticized vision of good young men led astray, brought to a country landscape where they could get back on track. Unlike the Allegheny County Jail and the Sockanosset Training School for Boys, whose physical plants had changed but had maintained the same use over time, the Lorton Workhouse had gone from housing low risk inmates to dangerous prisoners and had spent the 1970s through the 1990s in varying states of being forgotten completely, being feared, and being a disgrace. Considering the aforementioned challenges of retaining truth in history that is used as a marketing tool, trying to anticipate audience reaction when individual recipients color the experience

¹¹³ Ibid., 115.

with their history, and working to avoid dissonance between intended and received messages, the task was difficult.

There were, in essence, two choices in deciding what story to tell, which would ultimately be translated as the "period of significance" for the purposes of the National Register of Historic Places – save everything, warts and all, or revert the site to a physical representation of its original intention. It could be argued here that the unremarkable buildings of the post-Easter Decision era, which cluttered the previously-open quadrangle and surrounded the central core of the Workhouse, had assumed a significance of their own such that they should merit preservation in accordance with the *Standards*. However, there are three failures in this argument.

First, the significance of the Lorton Workhouse and Reformatory rests on their creation as Progressive Era responses to the desire to rehabilitate inmates and prepare them to reenter society rather than merely keeping them off the streets and instilling fear. As facilities that epitomized the intent of the "New Penology," the Workhouse and Reformatory were sited in a rural area away from the city's evils and provided agricultural work that improved skills building and promoted productivity. They rebuffed the concept of prison labor as a commodity by operating the facilities on a self-reliant basis that provided any extra goods produced to other public institutions and gave surplus profit to the prisoners. The site's use as a drug rehabilitation facility in the 1960s and as a prison during the 1980s and 1990s diverted from this original intent and has not yet assumed a significance of its own.

Second, the ability of changes over time to assume significance should rely on their development as having been at least somewhat well-considered in the totality of the

site. At the Allegheny County Jail, for example, Frederick J. Osterling's addition of 1908 to Henry Hobson Richardson's original masterpiece extended the original architect's design in a manner that did not overwhelm the massing of the site. Likewise, at the Sockanosset Training School for Boys, buildings constructed after the initial cottages incorporated similar stylistic influences and materials in their composition. At the Lorton Workhouse, however, structures placed haphazardly in the center of the original quadrangle or unimaginatively thrown together responded to the uncertainty of the site's use and the disregard with which the District of Columbia handled the preservation of this site's physical composition and layout.

Third, there is inevitably the question of consumption in reuse projects, which necessitates that decisions consider whether the character of the site will lend itself to eager enjoyment by the public such that the facility can be economically viable. The use of the Workhouse as a cultural arts center certainly supports the return of the site to its physical representation during the early decades. A gritty, overbuilt, sinister campus might have struggled to attract artists in search of creativity. It is also important to note that the reuse of the Workhouse as an arts facility is likely the best use imaginable given the similarities between its original intent and its present use as a place for working with one's hands, learning new skills, and showing one's wares onsite.

The decision, therefore, to demolish the post-1960 buildings and remove later security alterations at the site was justifiable. The challenge came then in how to provide history as truth and history as pain when several decades of that past had been removed. Use of the Lorton Workhouse, Reformatory, and Penitentiary from the 1960s forward is significant in educating the public on the overall history of the sites, no matter how

haphazard resulting alterations may have been or how infamous these years were for nearby residents and Washingtonians. The history as truth at this site will rely on a careful and thorough accounting of the post-Easter Decision years and resisting an urge to create an "aura" of respite that finds no room for honesty. History as pain at the Lorton Workhouse faces a challenge of taste, wherein the scintillating details of riots and gunfire can become a form of intrigue and entertainment.

The success of the project will depend in no small part on the Workhouse Museum, which has yet to be built. The small, temporary museum is very promising and includes numerous photographs, artifacts, and documents from across the Workhouse's history, along with educated docents to provide additional information. When a permanent space is built, the museum should receive ample funding, community support and enthusiasm, and informed professional advice in hopes that, like the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center, it can be a banner project and a model for other correctional institutions.

Conclusion

As authors J.E. Tunbridge and G.J. Ashworth warned, I brought with me to this case study my own personal expectations and personal experiences. The Allegheny County Jail and the Sockanosset Training School for Boys were totally new to me, and I was lacking in any frame of reference to color their history with my own perceptions. The Lorton facilities on the other hand, located just south of the District of Columbia, where I was raised and currently live, had a mystique all their own. I cannot say that I passed them by car or that I was even in the nearby vicinity and realized it, but their infamous "aura" certainly pervaded Washington in my formative years during the 1980s

and 1990s. I wondered, as I am sure many did, why anyone, particularly an arts center, would find joy and inspiration at such a place.

What I did not know, until this study was well underway, is how special historic correctional institutions are for their social history and how truly spectacular their architecture often is. Walking around the Lorton Workhouse on multiple site visits, it was the latter attribute that surprised me most. The open quadrangle, quietly reserved architecture, symmetrical arcades with arched openings, and prominently sited dining hall were more reminiscent of a distinguished college campus than a correctional facility. It was clear here, in Pittsburgh, and in Cranston, that their architects had cared enough to use their skills for great design and that the governments commissioning these architects had cared enough to select the very best, to fund these projects generously, and to be considerate in immediate changes to the sites. The decades of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era were truly the waning days of great civic architecture, and the correctional institutions of this era should be embraced, protected, and used by future generations.

CHAPTER V GOING FORWARD

This study has thus far examined the adaptive use of correctional institutions constructed during the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, and our separation from this time period has afforded a useful perspective. We can assess these buildings in the broader context of their development by considering the events that preceded and followed these decades. As we judge the significance of historic correctional institutions, we also color the analysis of these sites with our own contemporary philosophies on crime, punishment, and incarceration. We find them to be "painful" places both because they held offenders who instigated suffering and also because we, as a society, have adopted more humane treatment standards for incarceration. However, we also acknowledge the necessity of these structures as we continue to imprison those who break the law. This building typology, in broad terms, remains a part of our civic institution vocabulary and thereby makes palatable our reuse of these structures for residential, commercial, and ongoing institutional use.

This chapter poses a question for which there is not yet an answer: will correctional institutions constructed in modern times one day merit preservation, and possibly reuse, by future generations? We cannot know now how our descendants will evaluate these structures given their own attitudes. As we have seen, the history of corrections follows a pattern of ebbs and flows in policy that is destined to continue.

Additionally, we cannot forecast *when* future generations will be forced to assess the significance of these buildings and engage in decision-making about the future of these structures. If the turnover of today's new correctional institutions occurs in ten, twenty, or thirty years based on economic influences, ongoing facility overpopulation, poor construction, or shifts in management style, the next generation may lack the perspective to evaluate these buildings in a larger historic context. What we can do now is offer predictions, and there is no better correctional institution type to examine in this framework than prisons.

Introduction

At present, the United States has the highest total documented prison population in the world. The Bureau of Justice Statistics, a division of the Office of Justice Programs in the U.S. Department of Justice, reports that an estimated one of every fifteen persons will serve time in a prison during their lifetime if recent incarceration rates remain unchanged. Prison reform at the state and national levels has been a hotly debated topic during these early years of the twenty-first century, encompassing an array of subtopics ranging from budget constraints to healthcare to safety, all of which are connected to management methods and the manner in which these institutions are designed and constructed.

In 1970, one year before a prison riot at Attica Correctional Facility in New York resulted in the deaths of thirty-nine inmates and correctional officers, author Daniel Glaser optimistically wrote of the future of prisons, "In the prison of tomorrow, there will be much concern with utilizing the personal relationships between staff and inmates for rehabilitative purposes...The prison of the future, clearly, will be a part of society in

which rationality is institutionalized, and goodness, truth and beauty are cardinal goals."¹¹⁴ Glaser, in his vision of "tomorrow," could not have predicted the tough legislative stance on crime and drugs that would arrive in the 1980s and the record overpopulation of America's prisons during the last three decades. Contemporary prison construction, by and large, has adopted "fast and cheap" as cardinal goals rather than Glaser's hope for "goodness, truth and beauty." As sociologist Mary Bosworth ponders of the federal prison system, "The question remains, however, whether, with current rates of overcrowding and an ever-increasing population, any buildings can be designed to make the most of the prison experience."¹¹⁵

This chapter begins with an overview of major markers in prison development and operation between the close of the Progressive Era in the 1920s and today. The last eight decades in prison history have included a noteworthy retreat from rehabilitative ideals and the reemergence of a correctional institution building form that instead internally affords and outwardly reflects the goals of incapacitation, deterrence, and retribution. A section on trends in contemporary prison construction discusses four interwoven commonalities across these institutions, followed by an assessment of how these similarities may affect their preservation and potential reuse by a future generation.

¹¹⁴ Joycelyn M. Pollock, "Looking Toward the Future," in *Prisons: Today and Tomorrow*, ed. Joycelyn M. Pollock (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc., 2006), 297.

¹¹⁵ Mary Bosworth, *The U.S. Federal Prison System* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2002), 43.

Decline of the Rehabilitative Ideal

With the close of the Progressive Era in the 1920s, prison management shifted from the reform ideals of the "New Penology" to mid-twentieth century psychoanalytical treatment priorities to the late twentieth century rebuff of rehabilitation that continues today. Roosevelt's policies of the Progressive Era sought to address economic and social strains by improving working conditions, providing expanded opportunities for education, and ending corruption in government. Likewise, the "New Penology" platform of the Progressive Party espoused the prisoner's right to work, health, training, and rehabilitation. Roosevelt's successors, however, were preoccupied by America's involvement in World War I and post-war struggles to assimilate the millions of soldiers returning from battle. Strikes and race riots peppered the country, and Warren G. Harding's inauguration as president in 1921 promised a "return to normalcy" that closed the Progressive Era by diverting attention to issues such as post-war isolationism.

The 1930s marked an important era in federal prison reform, due in part to the inauguration of Herbert Hoover as president in 1929. A former Secretary of Commerce, Hoover espoused government intervention through "economic modernization" practices and upheld principles of the Efficiency Movement to combat waste through research and professional expertise. In 1930, Hoover created the Federal Bureau of Prisons within the U.S. Department of Justice, which centralized management of the eleven federal prisons then in operation.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ The first federal prisons were authorized by Congress in 1891 under the Three Prisons Act, a response to a prohibition, in 1887, against using federal prisoners for the lucrative practice of contract labor in state prisons.

Herbert Hoover's pro-regulation activities also included expanding civil service coverage, closing tax loopholes, and arresting notable gangsters of the era (Al Capone in particular) for tax evasion and other crimes. The 1920s and 1930s were a notorious period in American crime, with the government in pursuit of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow and the gangs of John Dillinger and Lester Gillis ("Baby Face" Nelson). Their escapades made for salacious headlines during the Great Depression. This era of organized and barefaced crime was made even more sensational when the American government acquired the military prison on Alcatraz Island from the United States Army in 1933. Opening in 1934 and situated within the San Francisco Bay, this foreboding federal prison of "last resort" housed Capone, James "Whitey" Bulger, and George "Machine Gun" Kelly, becoming famous in its twenty-nine years of operation for its big-name inmates and escape attempts.

The 1930s also brought significant restrictions on the use of convict labor at federal facilities. Unemployment rates skyrocketed in the United States during the Great Depression, particularly in cities that relied on industry. Trade unions and manufacturers' associations consequently became critical of the government's use of convict labor for public works projects and factory work that the unions contended should be directed to free citizens.¹¹⁷ The federal government responded with legislation that prohibited convict labor for projects receiving federal aid and made it a federal offense to import convict-made goods for commercial purposes.

The United States Supreme Court upheld the prohibition of convict labor as a contributor to the commercial market in a 1935 ruling in *Whitfield v. Ohio*, which author

¹¹⁷ McLennan, *Crisis of Imprisonment*, 462.

Rebecca M. McLennan described as lending, "both moral authority and the full force of law to the century-old argument of American workers (joined somewhat belatedly by manufacturers) that placing prison labor in competition with free workers was socially deleterious and immoral."¹¹⁸ Prison labor remained in use at federal facilities, though the audience for its products was tightly restricted. Created in 1934 and still in existence, UNICOR (also known as Federal Prison Industries, Inc.) produces goods for federal agencies. The program is voluntary in nature for inmate participation, has no access to the commercial market, and is financially self-sustaining.

Although the ideals of the Progressive Era were incorporated into the early mission of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, mid-century inmate rehabilitative efforts soon diverted. Where early federal efforts had utilized the morality-based justification for rehabilitation common in social work of the 1920s and 1930s, a new approach assumed a scientific methodology akin to medical diagnosis and treatment. The "Medical Model" of prison management was most popular from the 1950s to the 1980s following the success of post-World War II psychological and social work intervention with returning soldiers.¹¹⁹ Author Edgardo Rotman also attributed this post-war public and legislative comfort with treatment-based rehabilitation to the relative prosperity of the 1950s, during which crime and murder rates declined.¹²⁰ The model's emphasis on diagnosis,

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 464.

¹¹⁹ Peter M. Carlson and Judith Simon Garrett, *Prison and Jail Administration: Practice And Theory* (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc., 2006), 15-16.

¹²⁰ Edgardo Rotman, "The Failure of Reform: United States, 1865-1965," in *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*, ed. Norval Morris and David J. Rothman (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1995), 169.

evaluation, and treatment led to the placement of new diagnostic centers in many state and federal prisons in an effort to develop a "case history" of each inmate and to treat the emotional disturbances believed to be contributing factors in the commission of crimes. One of the earliest federal institutions to utilize the "Medical Model" was the Federal Correctional Institution at Seagoville, Texas, which operated as a prison for women from 1940-1942 and reopened in 1945 to serve only male inmates.

The treatment-oriented approach to corrections was not limited to the United States in its popularity. In 1955, at the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, the United Nations adopted "Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners," which were suggested principles and practices for member states to consider in the care of prisoners and the management of institutions. Articles 58 and 59, included in the guiding principles for sentenced prisoners, stated:

58. The purpose and justification of a sentence of imprisonment or a similar measure deprivative of liberty is ultimately to protect society against crime. This end can only be achieved if the period of imprisonment is used to ensure, so far as possible, that upon his return to society the offender is not only willing but able to lead a law-abiding and self-supporting life.

59. To this end, the institution should utilize all the remedial, educational, moral, spiritual and other forces and forms of assistance which are appropriate and available, and should seek to apply them according to the individual treatment needs of the prisoners.¹²¹

The most noteworthy prison layout during this period was the "telephone-pole" (also known as "pavilion") plan, in which a lengthy corridor was flanked by cellblocks and rooms for dining, worship, classes, work, medical care, and administrative functions.

¹²¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners* (Geneva: UNOHCHR, 1955).

The layout better enabled facilities to incorporate new treatment and work programs by providing easy access to each of the functional wings. The telephone-pole plan was first utilized in a United States prison at the Minnesota State Prison at Stillwater (1914), following its use in Europe at Wormwood Scrubs (1874) in Great Britain and at Fresnes Prison (1898) near Paris. At the state prison at Graterford, Pennsylvania, which was built between 1927 and 1933, the telephone-pole plan's signature "spine" corridor connected to flanking cellblocks, a laundry building, a chapel, and a dining room.¹²² The configuration was also adopted at nonfederal prisons in Maryland, California, and Utah during the 1930s and 1940s.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the federal government employed the telephone-pole plans at several prisons, including new federal prisons in Oklahoma, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Texas. The United States Penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania was designed by Alfred Hopkins, an architect who had visited the facility at Fresnes and a number of institutions in Europe. His first prison, which opened in Wallkill, New York in 1932, was a modified version of the telephone-pole plan. Hopkins's design for Lewisburg featured two telephone-pole arrays flanking a central corridor, which provided access to cells, dormitories, and a hospital. Lewisburg was an early model for the inclusion of separate security classes within the same institution; the facility included maximum-security inside cells, medium-security outside cells, dormitory rooms, and "honor rooms."¹²³

¹²² Johnston, *Forms of Constraint*, 141.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 142.

Policy-making of the 1960s and 1970s concentrated principally on civil rights issues and involvement in and opposition to the Vietnam War, and these political initiatives and associated protests contributed to the degeneration of the "Medical Model" and a shift in focus towards supervision and control. The bloody riot at the New York State correctional facility at Attica in 1971 occurred just three years after widespread civilian riots following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968. Authors Peter M. Carlson and Judith Simon Garrett attribute this decline in interest and confidence in the rehabilitative ideal to the public's search for order during turbulent times, rising crime rates, chaos in the criminal justice system resulting from thousands of civil rights lawsuits alleging unconstitutional inmate conditions, and concerns about prison overcrowding and safety.¹²⁴

Sociological theories on punishment were widely read in this period of increased attention to the problems of violent crime and drugs. In 1974, sociologist Robert Martinson published a provocative article entitled, "What Works – Questions and Answers about Prison Reform," in *Public Interest* magazine. Based on an extensive survey of offender rehabilitation studies conducted over a period of twenty years, Martinson stated (and coined the term) that "nothing works" in efforts to rehabilitate offenders. Additionally, penal philosopher Andrew von Hirsch advanced the "just desserts" premise of punishment, in which the offender merits a sentence that fits the crime based on the degree of the act's seriousness and the level of the criminal's

¹²⁴ Carlson and Garrett, *Prison and Jail Administration*, 18-19.

culpability.¹²⁵ This tougher stance on incarceration was also strengthened by President Richard Nixon's declaration of a "War on Drugs" in the 1970s and his contention that increasing the country's conviction rate would do more to decrease crime than would alleviating poverty.¹²⁶ In 1975, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, which had been employing the "Medical Model" at many of its facilities for nearly fifty years, adopted the "Balanced Model" of corrections. This new approach echoed the emphasis on control that was prevalent in the 1970s by contending that rehabilitation was *not* the paramount goal of incarceration but was instead a *co-equal* with punishment, deterrence, and incapacitation.¹²⁷

Policy and economic changes in the criminal justice system during the 1980s continue to affect contemporary prison administration and problems. Beginning in the early 1980s, Congress revisited the efficacy of parole, bail, and indeterminate sentencing by enacting a series of laws that drastically affected federal sentencing requirements. These included the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984, which abolished parole for federal inmates and established a federal sentencing commission to develop mandatory federal sentencing guidelines. With these obligatory requirements, federal judges could no longer mold (and possibly permit leniency in) the duration and nature of the sentence as a reflection of the individual offender and his/her crime. At the state level, Three Strikes

¹²⁵ See Andrew von Hirsch, *Past or Future Crimes: Deservedness and Dangerousness in the Sentencing of Criminals* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1985).

¹²⁶ Christian Parenti, *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis* (New York: Verso, 1999), 8.

¹²⁷ Bosworth, *The U.S. Federal Prison System*, 94.

laws adopted by a number of states mandated prison sentences for prior offenders convicted of multiple felonies.

Theories abound as to why crime rates have decreased over the last twenty years, but passage of tougher sentencing laws has arguably contributed to the significant overpopulation of America's prisons. The rate of incarceration *increased fivefold* between 1980 and 2005, rising from 329,821 to 1,525,924 during that period and increasing the per capita incarceration rate per 100,000 American citizens from approximately 110 in the mid 1970s to 461 by the end of the twentieth century.¹²⁸

The United States has arrived at an important moment in prison design and construction, at which the pressure to build prisons quickly and affordably to accommodate overpopulation has necessitated the availability of prototypes and mechanized means of construction. Additionally, prevalent developments in this field are greatly influenced by public disinterest in the rehabilitation of criminals, the abandonment of moral rehabilitative efforts and the treatment ideal popularized mid-century, and budget constraints. It is questionable whether contemporary facilities will endure (structurally or viably) into the future, and if so, if anyone on the receiving end will even care. The next section examines "trends" in prison design from the 1980s forward, evaluating whether the prisons of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries will merit preservation and feasible reuse in the future.

Trends in Contemporary Prison Construction

As discussed in Chapter I, any examination of the *what* of correctional institution building form must also incorporate the contextual *why* of new construction. These two

¹²⁸ Mays and Winfree, *Essentials of Corrections*, 12.

linchpins of decision-making incorporate four intertwined commonalities that include management style, siting, design standardization and prefabrication, and the inclusion of private prisons in local, state, and federal systems. Although these trends are the norm but not the rule, their prevalence in contemporary correctional systems is ominous for any hope that these structures will be appreciated by a new generation.

Management Style

Beginning in the mid 1970s, and most prevalent from the 1980s on, new trends in facility layout and inmate management diverted from the conventional Auburn and Pennsylvania plan layouts of long, linear cellblocks with corrections staff separated from the inmate population by numerous security barriers. Instead, "podular" (also know as "modular") facilities employ self-contained "pod" housing units that hold approximately fifty inmates and are monitored by one or more corrections staff members. Cells are often arranged in a triangle around a shared, central dayroom where prisoners gather for games or to watch television or listen to music.

Within a podular facility, inmates may be managed through the "remote supervision" model, in which the corrections staff is stationed outside a dayroom and its surrounding cells in a more customary manner of secure separation. Interestingly, however, the facility may instead utilize a "direct supervision" style, in which the design abandons physical and communication barriers that separate inmates from staff and also foregoes the traditionally-used, vandal-resistant materials. Although utilized most often in jail settings, the podular, direct supervision model can also be found at some state prisons and is particularly germane to a discussion of possible reuse of these facilities for the potential it may hold in enticing new and unexpected functions.

The direct supervision model expresses the *expectation* of good behavior and cooperation by stationing corrections staff inside the inmates' living unit and by utilizing upgraded furnishings and amenities. The physical character of direct supervision facilities diverts from traditional models by employing more spaces accessible to staff and inmates, more numerous amenities and increased independence, and "commercial" fixtures and furnishings not typically found in institutional settings. Rather than subdividing larger "pods" of living units into smaller groupings accessed through a series of electronic locking systems, direct supervision pods are internally open to allow circulation by staff and the voluntary gravitation of inmates into small, compatible gatherings rather than forced, and perhaps volatile, groups.

In direct supervision facilities, corrections staff may have a desk in the dayroom, enabling frequent interaction with inmates and immediate response time to any unstable situation that may arise (fig. 29). Officers are generally locked inside the pod, with no ability to personally operate exit points from the unit, in an effort to avert assaults on guards. This seems counterintuitive to preventing violence against staff, but the approach contends that a guard unable to personally facilitate escape from the pod is at less risk of being threatened than one who can control movement in and out of the unit (somewhat akin to the "don't bother" mentality of signage announcing that delivery truck drivers do not carry cash). Direct supervision facilities offer upgraded amenities such as inmate-controlled lighting in cells, carpeting and windows in the dayroom, moveable (non-bolted) furniture, and more television sets, game tables, and exercise equipment. Fixtures and furnishings are standard and "soft" rather than the vandal-resistant, "hard" fittings and decor typical to correctional institutions (fig. 30).



Figure 29: Direct supervision "pod" at the Lincoln County Jail in Oregon [Lincoln County Sheriff's Office]¹²⁹



Figure 30: Direct supervision "pod" at the Lew Sterrett Justice Center Complex in Dallas County, Texas [*Dallas Morning News*]¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, <http://www.lincolncountysheriff.net> (accessed December 18, 2009).

¹³⁰ Kevin Krause, "Dallas County Officials: New Jail Tower Showing Construction Defects," *Dallas Morning News*, September 18, 2009.

During the 1970s, the Federal Bureau of Prisons opened three, short-term Metropolitan Correctional Centers, in New York, Chicago, and San Diego, designed on the direct supervision model. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, local facilities also adopted the layout at many institutions, such as the Manhattan House of Detention in New York, which replaced the infamous "Tombs." At the local level of incarceration, the medium-security Airway Heights Corrections Center in Airway Heights, Washington attracted positive attention when the facility opened in 1992 on the direct supervision layout. A newspaper article published by the *Spokesman-Review* in 1998 stated that there had been no riots or escape attempts for several years after the facility opened but that recent overcrowding and the receipt of a number of transferred, violent offenders had caused the atmosphere to change. Prior to the upsurge in behavioral problems, the facility had attracted numerous applications for employment and promoted an atmosphere of common courtesy and shared responsibility.¹³¹

Within the direct supervision model, there are often variations on and extensions of the basic intent to meet the specific needs of inmates and the overall atmosphere of the institution. For example, direct supervision is still used at the Northern New Hampshire Correctional Facility, which opened in 2000 to hold medium-security inmates. Corrections and counseling staff at the facility have expanded beyond the personal interaction encouraged by the direct supervision model. They are trained in the Therapeutic Community concept, which relies on confronting negative behavior in other inmates and establishing a trusting environment of mutual self-help to address behavioral

¹³¹ Julie Sullivan and Karen Dorn Steele, "The Prison Next Door," *Spokesman-Review*, June 17, 1998.

and substance abuse issues. The method, used often in the treatment of incarcerated drug addicts, was based on the 1950s work of psychiatrists and psychologists who advocated for democratization, communalism, reality confrontation, and peer group influence as a means of rehabilitation.¹³² The "living learning" Therapeutic Community concept was first used in a correctional setting at the U.S. Federal Prison in Marion, Illinois in 1969, an era, as discussed, that approached rehabilitation as "treatment."

Siting

The frequent selection of rural landscapes for today's large prison complexes affords an interesting comparison to similar siting trends of the early twentieth century, especially because some of these new facilities have actually replaced Progressive Era prisons and marketed the location under a different ideal. Roosevelt's "New Penology" and the facilities that adopted this initiative in their design espoused the benefits of working the open land, breathing fresh air, and eating wholesome food to achieve productivity and regeneration. The movement advocated pre-industrial, agricultural and vocational trades and rebuffed the vices of city life, both of which necessitated rural siting for the reformatories and workhouses of the era. It is now common for contemporary prisons to be located in rural towns, often in counties that are suffering financially and experiencing a high rate of unemployment. Although the location may be the same, the modern-day reasoning is quite different in its motivations than it was a century ago and reflects the deterioration of the rehabilitative model.

¹³² David M. Day, "Applying Social Psychology to the Criminal Justice System" in *Applied Social Psychology: Understanding and Addressing Social and Practical Problems*, eds. Frank W. Schneider, Jamie A. Gruman and Larry M. Coutts (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2005), 279.

The symbiotic relationship that developed between new prisons and rural communities during the 1990s can be attributed to perceived economic factors. Author Michael Jacobson wrote that, during the 1990s, rural America suffered as manufacturing jobs migrated to the South and out of the United States, as agriculture consolidated from small farms to large businesses, and as military bases closed across the country. The overpopulation of America's prisons necessitated new construction, and in 1996, states collectively spent \$1.3 billion to build new prisons, doubling what was spent in 1990; by 2000, that expenditure had risen to \$2 billion.¹³³ The larger complexes require cheap, open land, and, unlike urban areas, many rural towns welcome employment opportunities that might come with a new prison.

There has been, over the last two decades, much dispute on whether a significant, causal relationship exists between prison construction in rural communities and economic and unemployment recovery.¹³⁴ In 2003, the Sentencing Project, a national organization that promotes reforms in sentencing law and practice, published a report that assessed the degree to which new prisons had buoyed economic recovery in rural counties over a period of twenty-five years. The report found no significant difference between rural counties that hosted a prison and those that did not; furthermore, the report found no significant increase in employment advantages associated with prison construction in

¹³³ Michael Jacobson, *Downsizing Prisons: How to Reduce Crime and End Mass Incarceration* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 71.

¹³⁴ There has also been debate about the ethics of a mostly minority prison population being located far from their families and guarded by a mostly white population of prison guards in rural communities. A chapter on this topic can be found in *Class, Race, Gender, and Crime: The Social Realities of Justice in America* (eds. Barak et al).

these areas.¹³⁵ The latter, the report argued, resulted from the inability of some residents to qualify for prison jobs due to skill sets or union requirements, the number of employees who lived in other counties, and the failure of tertiary businesses to provide enough services to keep money in the locality.

Prison construction in rural communities does have its champions, many rural residents, public officials, and prison officials (the Federal Bureau of Prisons included) among them. Author Janet M. Fitchen described the competition among rural towns to receive a new prison:

For local government politicians and officials, 'winning' a prison is viewed as enhancing reputations, their own and that of the community...County economic development directors routinely refer to a prison as a 'clean industry,' with 'no smokestacks and no environmental pollution.' They tout a prison as a 'safe industry' that is 'recession-proof,' is not subject to foreign competition, and will not 'pull up stakes and leave town.'¹³⁶

Design Standardization and Prefabrication

The Gilded Age ushered in a desire for all things refined and cultured, and a sense of nationalism pervaded the country after the difficult post-Civil War years. Cities, states, and the federal government spared no expense on the construction of civic buildings, which brought together the country's great architects and landscape architects, regional materials crafted by skilled tradesmen, and style and magnificence that reflected national pride in all that Americans could accomplish. Although the grandeur of the Gilded Age was tempered somewhat during the Progressive Era, correctional institutions

¹³⁵ Ryan S. King, Marc Mauer, and Tracy Huling, *Big Prisons Small Towns: Prison Economics in Rural America* (Washington: The Sentencing Project, 2003).

¹³⁶ Janet M. Fitchen, *Endangered Spaces, Enduring Places: Change, Identity, and Survival in Rural America* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1991), 218.

of the early twentieth century still exhibited thoughtful design and, particularly in the case of the workhouse and reformatory models, a connection between rehabilitation and incarceration that endeavored to provide an atmosphere of regeneration.

Correctional institutions constructed during the nineteenth and early twentieth century were certainly reflective of one another by replicating layouts considered to be beneficial to their priorities, working with similar genres of architectural style, by employing architects who had designed other facilities, and by including tools of modernization such as upgraded heating and plumbing systems that were first used at other facilities. However, the exterior expression of architecture ultimately differed from facility to facility, with some (like the Allegheny County Jail) vividly evidencing the stylistic preferences of the architect behind the design, reflecting the character of the locality, and utilizing regional materials in the construction.

It is difficult to argue that contemporary prison design approaches, meets, or exceeds the level of consideration, craftsmanship, and pride evidenced in the correctional institutions of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era. The rate of overpopulation at America's prisons has resulted in a rapid rise in facility construction as states and the federal government build new prisons hastily and with limited funding. Consequently, prototypes are often employed and design elements are prefabricated.

The American Correctional Association (ACA) has adopted regularly-updated administrative standards that allow correctional institutions to apply for ACA accreditation in order to improve quality or better market the facility to potential employees. The standards by and large address service and operational issues such as fiscal controls, staff training, emergency procedures, sanitation, and discipline, but they

also provide some guidance on the physical plant. In considering the ACA standards and basic principles of design for these facilities, authors Todd S. Phillips, Stephen A. Kliment, and Michael Griebel asserted that, "The realities are stark. Many hundreds of people may be housed for many years in the same building(s). Interior conditions, like proper sanitation and a balanced diet, are facts of life that must meet the levels required for safe habitation."¹³⁷ The authors provided suggestions for acoustical control and access to natural light, further stating that a minimum-security "normative design" may introduce carpeting, more access to daylight and views, moveable furniture of a higher grade, and a variety of colors and finishes, including wood.

Over the last century, the standards of aesthetic design and material quality at America's prisons have fallen, and facilities are often constructed using cheap materials unloaded *en masse* and assembled in a short period of time. Author Robert M. Freeman described the "prototype prison" as a broadly employed, "innovative" strategy in which a new facility uses a design that has already been used at another site.¹³⁸ The benefits, Freeman asserted, involve saving time and money by following previously tested building plans that have already been adjusted to solve any prior construction problems.

Prefabricated building elements, which are assembled and numbered offsite, shipped to the construction site, and connected at predetermined points are also marketed as saving time and reducing present and future costs. Various sources describe

¹³⁷ Todd S. Phillips, Stephen A. Kliment and Michael Griebel, *Building Type Basics for Justice Facilities* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003), 143.

¹³⁸ Robert M. Freeman, *Correctional Organization and Management: Public Policy Challenges, Behavior, and Structure* (Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999), 117-18.

prefabrication as also beneficial to easily increasing or decreasing the size of a prison as the inmate population rises and falls; some advocate leasing interior elements, such as cellblocks and furnishings, to further decrease costs. The columns, beams, and joists of a new prison are rapidly installed at a site that was cleared and graded while prefabrication was underway, and prefabricated cells arrive ready to stack. Cell modules can be removed if the population decreases, or an addition to the facility can be quickly constructed by ordering a new shipment. The main advantage – time saved – can be beneficial to a construction company freed up to bid on other projects and to a customer who can occupy the facility as rapidly as possible and easily make any future adjustments.¹³⁹

The standardization and prefabrication of prison construction can be lucrative for private companies. For example, Porta-King Building Systems, based in Earth City, Missouri, has ten regional sales offices across the country and two manufacturing plants totaling 152,000 total square feet. Porta-King can deliver prefabricated, multi-story modular office buildings, shelters for bus passengers and smokers, and ticket booths. Porta-King also includes in their inventory prefabricated "overwatch booths" to be installed on guard towers at correctional facilities. Tindall Corporation in Atlanta specializes in precast concrete cell modules available in various sizes and with several options for architectural finishes, which were recently used for an expansion of the D. Ray James Prison (fig. 31). There, a two-phase expansion provided fifty-seven double-cell modules in phase one and sixty-seven double-cell modules in phase two, with each phase of the project constructed in under ten days once the modules arrived. Oldcastle

¹³⁹ Carlson and Garrett, *Prison and Jail Administration*, 131.

Precast in Telford, Pennsylvania offers a precast modular cell with an option to include a balcony, providing walkways when cell modules are stacked together (fig. 32).

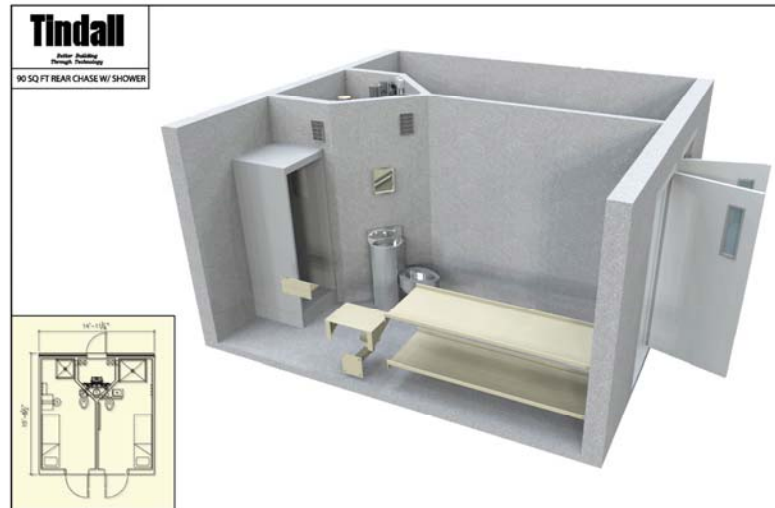


Figure 31: Precast concrete modular cell produced by Tindall Corporation [Tindall Corrections]¹⁴⁰



Figure 32: Precast concrete modular cells, with balconies, produced by Oldcastle Precast [Oldcastle Precast]¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Tindall Corrections, <http://www.tindallcorrections.com> (accessed December 18, 2009).

¹⁴¹ Oldcastle Precast, <http://www.oldcastleprecast.com> (accessed December 18, 2009).

Private Prisons

Private prisons, which are for-profit facilities contracted by the government for the private management, operation, and even ownership of an institution, presently house a relatively small segment of the total inmate population across all correctional systems (264 correctional facilities, housing about 100,000 adult offenders out of the over two million people currently incarcerated in America). However, this "trend" in contemporary correctional systems is important to include because the use of private prisons is on the rise.

The use of private prisons contributes significantly to the overall climate of corrections, which has refocused on straightforward incapacitation in recent decades. As prison overcrowding became a major social issue following sentencing changes during the 1980s and as prisoners responded with numerous lawsuits alleging inhumane conditions, many states were unable to afford the cost of constructing enough facilities to accommodate the rise in inmate population. They looked to private prisons to fill the void. In 1984, investors in Tennessee formed the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), which planned to construct new correctional institutions and lease beds to the state, ostensibly for less money than the cost of constructing a new state-owned facility. CCA's first design-build project was the Houston Processing Center, a contract from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. CCA is now the largest private corrections company in the country, and other chief private prison companies now include the GEO Group, Inc, (formerly Wackenhut Securities) and Cornell Companies.

As with the siting of new prisons in rural communities to stimulate economic development, there is much debate about whether private prisons can *save* taxpayer

money. Some sources contend that the private prison industry has promoted unproven cost savings, influenced politicians through campaign donations, and exploited the benefits of transitioning from public to private employment.¹⁴² Additionally, various players in the correctional system have alleged or inferred that private prisons threaten state jobs, weaken union strength and government power, and threaten prisoners' due process rights.¹⁴³ A number of organizations (including the National Sheriffs' Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the American Bar Association) have opposed the use of private prisons by states or the federal government, and several states have imposed moratoriums on the practice.

Important to an analysis of whether contemporary prisons will merit preservation is the private prison industry's practice of constructing speculative facilities to respond to public demands for time and cost savings. In a "spec" build, private prison companies construct new facilities without a contract or an appeal from a governmental entity. Once completed, the prison will ostensibly and conveniently be immediately available to overcrowded, government-run systems that are under political and perhaps legal pressure to alleviate poor prison conditions.¹⁴⁴ The haste with which prisoners can be transferred to a private prison is no doubt attractive to governments, though one can contend that the practice encourages mass incarceration by making the number of facilities that can be

¹⁴² Joel Dyer, *The Perpetual Prisoner Machine: How America Profits from Crime* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), 235.

¹⁴³ Charles H. Logan, *Private Prisons: Cons and Pros* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 10-12.

¹⁴⁴ Jacobson, *Downsizing Prisons*, 66.

constructed seemingly endless and thereby raises an important moral question about the purpose of the prison system.

Speculative private prison construction, which is a practice of national companies with little to no personal connection to the states in which they build, contrasts with the historic construction of correctional institutions that celebrated civic pride, expressed the regionalism of their environment, and involved substantial public input in their design and siting. As author Byron Eugene Price wrote, "Builders of speculative prisons would look at the state's fiscal problems, crime rate, the citizens' attitude toward raising taxes to build prisons, and the state's overcrowding problems. Once they compiled this information, they would determine if the state needed another prison. If the answer was yes, they built the prison without the state's involvement."¹⁴⁵ This practice is a stark comparison to the illustrious design competition for the Allegheny County Jail, the architecturally distinguished buildings of the Howard Reservation that expressed regional style and utilized local materials, and the involvement of President Theodore Roosevelt in construction of the Lorton Workhouse.

Predicting Preservation and Reuse

The "trends" in contemporary prison construction outlined above – management style, siting, design standardization and prefabrication, and the inclusion of private prisons in local, state, and federal systems – collectively do not bode well for the probability that future generations will preserve our modern-day prisons. Among the likely barriers will be a lack of structural integrity, architectural expression or creativity,

¹⁴⁵ Byron Eugene Price, *Merchandising Prisoners: Who Really Pays for Prison Privatization?* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2006), 92.

and siting in rural communities that may not experience economic development.

However, the podular layout, particularly as used in direct supervision facilities, may open the door to expanded uses that would find substantial interior demolition and fit-out necessary in a prison designed on the traditional linear plan.

The care and craftsmanship devoted to contemporary correctional institutions may preclude preservation of many of these structures both because they may have long since been demolished by entities that regard them as temporary in nature and because their structural qualities generally respond to time and money demands rather than planning for ongoing use. When Allegheny County celebrated its centennial celebration in September of 1888, the three-day celebration included the dedication of recently completed Richardson courthouse and jail. At the dedication ceremony, Judge J.F. White eloquently stated of the buildings' expected long life:

Substantial as the basis of our wealth, elegant and faultless in all its lines, its symmetry, its proportions, and its details; thus it stands the crowning glory of a century. Look at it! Look at it, ye people of Allegheny County, and rejoice! Plain, chaste, unique in architecture, with no vain or superfluous ornaments, the eye never wearies tracing its lines of beauty and harmony. Founded on the living rocks solid and massive in structure, fire-proof, as far as granite brick and iron can make a building fire-proof, it will stand for ages to come.¹⁴⁶

In contrast, when the High State Desert Prison was dedicated in Susanville, CA in 1996, Director of Corrections James Gomez remarked at the ceremony, "The citizens of Susanville are like other California communities who welcome a second prison as neighbors. The people of this city will share in increased economic prosperity and, at the

¹⁴⁶ Allegheny County Centennial Committee, *Allegheny County: Its Early History and Subsequent Development* (Pittsburgh: Snowden and Peterson, 1888), 147-48.

same time, help us improve public protection."¹⁴⁷ If financial gains and rapid construction continue to pervade the correctional system as key priorities, it is questionable if citizens will ever encourage improved aesthetics.

The Midland County Jail in Michigan, however, offers some hope that government entities will embrace their correctional institutions, anticipate their future, and find ways to incorporate regionalism. Five hundred citizens attended the dedication ceremony of the Midland County Jail, which included tours of the new facility, in October of 2009. Of the new jail, Facilities Manager Kevin Beeson stated, "The public said it wanted a jail for \$25 million, and not a penny more. We looked at many innovations and picked Michigan products and Great Lakes Bay contractors. This will serve us for generations to come." County Commissioner Rose Marie McQuaid agreed, adding, "My heart is full of hope that we can change the lives of those who come in here."¹⁴⁸ The jail's design, however, dampens dreams of higher architectural standards; the site is a low-slung, asymmetrical conglomeration of boxes punctuated by intermittent windows and surrounded by parking lots that is unlikely to attract preservation, much less reuse.

Whatever the time and money advantages to construction companies and local, state, and federal governments, the final product may be little more than a series of hastily stacked modules using substandard materials. If the message to prisoners and the public is that the ideal of rehabilitation is behind us, then the implication has been

¹⁴⁷ California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, "High Desert State Prison Dedication Ceremony," news release, June 20, 1996.

¹⁴⁸ "Midland County Unveils \$25 million Jail; 500 Turn Out for Self-guided Tours," *Saginaw News*, October 8, 2009.

received. Author K.C. Carceral, a pseudonym for a prisoner incarcerated since 1982, wrote *Prison, Inc.*, documenting his life behind bars at a private prison. In his book, Carceral provides a more intimate observation of prefabricated prisons and the mentality behind their construction:

The (Venture Correctional) corporation was determined to turn a profit on its new prison. Thus, it did only what it was required to do by its contract with Northern State (Department of Corrections). Everything that it was required to do – constructing the facility, hiring and paying staff, providing services to the inmates – was done as cheaply as possible...As I looked at my new home, I could see the place was built cheap. Very cheap! Everything was concrete or steel. Most of the concrete was prefabricated and trucked in. There were cracks everywhere – not hairline cracks but cracks so big you could put your finger in them. Later, when summer came, I learned this allowed the invasion of bugs, especially ants...There was concrete dust – it was everywhere. Many floors were poured and dried so they looked like oatmeal...And then there were the walls. Some cells had only primer on the walls and no paint. Other cells had one wall that was primed whereas the other three were painted.¹⁴⁹

The siting of large prisons in rural communities could potentially bolster their likelihood of reuse *if* economic development in the town responds to the construction. In addition to perhaps providing employment opportunities at the prison itself, secondary businesses geared towards staff and visitors generally open near the prison to provide healthcare and insurance, permanent housing and hotel rooms, food, and transportation. If successful, a small and struggling rural town could potentially develop around the prison into a larger city that is grateful for the arrival of the facility and wishes to retain and reuse it once decommissioned. There exists, however, the possibility that conditions could worsen. Author Tracy Huling described potential harm to rural towns, such as the closing of small shops as chain stores arrive, failed speculative housing ventures as prison

¹⁴⁹ K.C. Carceral, *Prison, Inc.: A Convict Exposes Life Inside a Private Prison*, ed. Thomas J. Bernard (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 9-10.

employees choose to live outside the county, and negative impacts on land value should a prison fail to boost development.¹⁵⁰ Thus, the effect of rural siting on future preservation and reuse seems to be dependent on the individual circumstances.

On a more positive note, podular prison design, specifically where direct supervision management is employed, offers an interesting reuse concept. The pod layout results in a decentralized style of management in which smaller housing units are monitored by dedicated staff members and in which residents of the pods receive meals and shower within their own unit and move throughout the complex as a contained group for exercise and worship. The visual result of cells (many of which have doors rather than bars) arranged around a dayroom, with devoted restroom areas, is somewhat akin to college dormitory rooms surrounding a central lounge. Likewise, because correctional officers are stationed directly inside the pod rather than having a secure office just outside, the atmosphere is somewhat akin to the role of college Resident Advisors living in the dormitory halls with their students for direct supervision of activities. It seems odd to imply, but perhaps the podular design could lend itself to the future reuse of these facilities by boarding schools, colleges, drug rehab facilities, care centers, or retreat centers, with exterior alterations to provide windows, of course. It is doubtful that any new user would retain the used carpeting or upgraded bathroom fixtures in direct supervision models, but more permanent, "softer" finishes might lend themselves to reuse.

¹⁵⁰ Tracy Huling, "Building a Prison Economy in Rural America," in *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Incarceration*, ed. Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind (New York: The New Press, 2002).

The sheer *quantity* of correctional institutions today, in addition to issues of *quality*, is foreboding to the preservation of most of these structures. The correctional system is flush with structures today. The budget of the Federal Bureau of Prisons today exceeds \$5 billion, up from \$330 million in 1980; the federal government operates 104 federal prisons, double the number in operation two decades ago. Likewise, federal, state, and local expenditures on the operation of correctional institutions amounts to approximately \$65 billion a year, up 400% since the 1980s.¹⁵¹ With so many facilities and preservation efforts often selecting the best examples to retain, there will undoubtedly be hundreds of sites that fade away. The prison system, along with other correctional facilities, is overbuilt and the market of potential preservation and reuse structures so saturated that it will be challenging for future generations to retain, maintain, and adapt a large proportion of the structures for a new life.

Conclusion

There is no way to quantify the diverse array of opinions on the quality of prison design and construction or to predict if or how these positions will influence the future perceived value of this building type. As mentioned, our ability to evaluate significance as preservation professionals is dependent upon the detachment and wider lens of understanding that come with the passage of time. Thus, what we embrace or reject today as successful or not may well have little impact on the ultimate appreciation for these contemporary buildings. Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky, having spent five years behind bars, wrote, "The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by

¹⁵¹ Larry K. Gaines and Roger LeRoy Miller, *Criminal Justice in Action*, (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2009), 418.

entering its prisons." If his prediction is right, then the array of correctional institutions that we leave behind will contribute greatly to our legacy.

Although Dostoevsky spoke of benevolent conditions rather than aesthetic beauty, there is a substantial divide between how we regard the design of contemporary correctional institutions and the comportment in which nineteenth and early twentieth century public officials and citizens remarked upon a new facility. For example, when Eastern State Penitentiary in Pennsylvania was completed in 1829, it was revered as the most state-of-the-art building in the country. Author Sasha Abramsky noted:

It was widely hailed as an architectural marvel...So confident of prison security were the wardens in those early years that they would lead visiting luminaries – from John Quincy Adams, whose presidency had ended the year the prison opened, to President Andrew Jackson to Charles Dickens – into the innermost core of the prison to observe how it functioned.¹⁵²

Similarly, an 1893 handbook on New York City described the Jefferson-Market Prison, then thirty years of age, as, "The Jefferson-Market Police-Court and prison, and the market from which they take their name, occupy different portions of a unique and handsome brick structure of irregular shape and considerable architectural beauty..."¹⁵³

Author Roger G. Reed wrote of the opening of the Charles Street Jail in Boston, the first constructed American design to appear in a foreign architectural magazine, that, "When it was completed in 1851, the city had a prison that reflected the most progressive thinking in penal reform, as well as a major architectural landmark that bolstered its popular self-

¹⁵² Sasha Abramsky, *American Furies: Crime, Punishment, and Vengeance in the Age of Mass Imprisonment* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007), 6.

¹⁵³ Moses King, *Kings Handbook of New York City* (Boston: Moses King, 1893), 494.

image as a modern city. By adopting a progressive architectural style, Boston made an unambiguous statement about its commitment to penal reform."¹⁵⁴

It is difficult to imagine that a future generation would embrace, retain, and reuse correctional institutions so ignored, criticized, or detested. Our hope might be that, like a number of urban renewal projects from the middle of the twentieth century, our contemporary prisons will accrue significance as "what not to do" projects that represent a moment in time. This is not to suggest that we should halfheartedly endorse present practices or celebrate substandard design. Instead, this is an opportunity for design professionals, government entities, and correctional systems to elaborate upon "good enough" existing standards for operation, staffing, and basic amenities by producing guidelines that better reflect the high standards of civic building design of which we are capable as cities, counties, states, and as a country.

Rather than assuming that time and money will preclude construction of a prison worth loving – and subsequently producing a building that meets this low expectation – this is an opportunity to imaginatively discuss what *could* be and to come together to find ways to realize these desires in part or in full. If we achieve and trumpet victory in this task, perhaps a graduate student in the next century will write a thesis about the adaptive use of "historic" correctional institutions built after the year 2010. Following Dostoevsky's lead, perhaps *our* "degree of civilization" can include the reemergence of great correctional institution design and the end of the self-fulfilling prophecy. This could be, if anyone cares to make it so, a new era of "Form follows reform."

¹⁵⁴ Roger G. Reed, *Building Victorian Boston: The Architecture of Gridley J.F. Bryant* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 65.

CONCLUSION

When measured against other building typology subsets under the overarching umbrella of functional architecture, the correctional institution is most certainly an underdog in attracting preservation, much less reuse. Adaptive reuse projects are now quite common at former schools, warehouses, libraries, and churches, but an audience intrigued by the air of mystery of imprisonment may not wish to sleep, shop, or work at a decommissioned facility. It is a big leap from appreciating the past to surrounding one's self with it, and neither the aura nor the truth of corrections history is welcoming.

If a champion for reuse of a historic correctional institution can be found, immediate challenges await. Based on the sheer size of many county, state, and federal correctional institutions, having been constructed to potentially hold thousands of inmates at once, the cost of merely rehabilitating a facility that could be over a century old can be insurmountable. Most historic correctional institutions were constructed when rates of jail and prison construction were much lower than they are today, and these facilities were therefore afforded gifts of good design, sturdy materials, and careful craftsmanship that could serve generations to come. However, delayed maintenance, years of vacancy, code violations, inaccessible spaces, and hazardous materials plague many of these projects. Costs to make these structures serviceable can be a substantial burden before any tenant fit-out and site beautification have been factored in.

If the early challenge of economic demands is met and overcome, planning for the new use can be equally as complicated. A correctional institution that was designed for occupancy only by inmates and staff will require a fair amount of work to ready it for the public. This can necessitate road construction, parking lots, sidewalks, food and restroom facilities, signage, lighting, and landscaping. The developer, whether public or private, will have requirements that enable the site to serve its intended user and also allow the project to be economically viable.

The project may attract, and even require, attention from numerous public officials, local planning and preservation offices and boards, and community members who wish to provide input on the proposal. Though two heads (or hundreds) are always better than one, there will inevitably be a diverse array of opinions to consider and revisions to make in an attempt to find common ground. Concessions and compromises will be made, at the request of the owner, the community, and even the site itself, which has limits on what it can tolerate structurally and environmentally. The end plan, which will be chewed up, swallowed, and regurgitated to be discussed again, will never satisfy everyone.

Basic Principles for Reuse Projects

There are many points along the road from inception to reality at which character-defining elements of architectural or historical significance can be unknowingly lost or voluntarily sacrificed in the pursuit of completing the project somewhere in the vicinity of the time and budget allowable. It is understandably difficult, amidst a flurry of opinions and with an extraordinary amount of money at stake, to stay focused on preservation priorities. This thesis has shown that there are five very basic principles,

briefly outlined below, that should guide more complicated planning for the reuse of historic correctional institutions.

Proceed Slowly

Time and budget pressure abound in any construction project, no matter how small, so the reuse of a large correctional facility will multiply these demands many times over. It is important, as shown in these case studies, that developers allow ample time to gather information, consult with interested parties, create and allow to marinate a thoughtful plan, and proceed through construction always expecting the inevitable surprise. The three projects examined in this thesis took several years to complete from the time that serious planning began to when construction got underway, but there were also more general, early discussions about what public entities hoped could be achieved there. These significant structures merit generous time for planning.

Proceed Jointly

Historic correctional institutions, like any buildings, are in the eye of the beholder. The old county jail may be beautiful to some, while others may have a tense, intimate relationship at a site where they or a loved one were once held. A state prison will have different meaning for the former prison guard and for the nearby neighbor who feared inmate escapes. Likewise, a reform school may have pleasant memories for a former teacher, while a city resident may remember threats from his parents to banish him there. There are many players and perceptions in the larger historic context of any correctional institution, and it is imperative that these views be considered. The solemn and sorrowful nature of correctional facilities will make this process much more complicated, as those memories may be very powerful for some members of the public.

It in addition to incorporating the comments of public officials and professional staff associated with review of site proposals, there are many seemingly inconsequential players whose voices should be heard at community meetings and in comment periods as planning is underway.

Proceed Knowledgeably

The history of correctional institutions is often long, complicated, and buried in dimly-lit and poorly-organized archives and libraries. There is a point with any research project at which the investigation period must end, but it is important to remember that these sites merit the guiding hand of individuals who are fully knowledgeable about the social context for the institution and about the minutiae of the site's history. This is not always readily available information and requires patience and creativity to follow resources to their natural conclusion and to dig deeply in the hope of being well-informed.

Proceed Carefully

Historic correctional institutions, no matter how humble or grand their size or design, always have a story to tell. There is historical significance in the original intent of the site, in the development of the site, in changes over time, and in the stories of the individuals who worked and were incarcerated there. Correctional institutions are a composition of parts, many of which may be removed during the reuse process. We understand the jail and prison by their cells, latrines and sinks, bunk beds, prison art scratched on the walls, dining halls and recreation rooms, and chain link fences. Once removed, these "used" parts, which are witnesses to history, cannot be replaced in spirit. Reconstructions may educate the visitor, but there is an intimate connection that the

public may make by walking around in a cell left onsite, by flipping through the daybooks of a jail, and by viewing artifacts that have been left behind. Any removal of these elements of history should proceed very carefully in order to ensure the authenticity of history.

Proceed Kindly

A reuse project that develops from a well-intentioned heart that wishes to honor an agonizing past starts out on the right track. These are complex structures in a number of ways, and reuse should be applauded and supported. Correctional institutions should rarely use pain as a marketing tool by capitalizing on the stories of individual inmates. Personal stories should remain educational tools, and the broader mystique of the site can draw in visitors. However, the tendency to detach from the past of these sites due to the passage of time can risk a breach of respect. When embarking on a reuse project, be mindful of the stewardship role assumed as the new guardian of the site's past. It is a privilege not to be taken lightly. An owner's love for a historic correctional institution and the pride they feel in a successfully completed reuse project can be intoxicating to the public.

Future Research Topics

There are two topics highlighted briefly in this thesis that merit additional research. The first, and most important, is financing. The three case studies collectively relied on a vast array of funding sources to achieve reuse. These included public dollars, personal investment, historic rehabilitation tax credits, bond financing, lease agreements, individual donations, and grants from corporations and organizations. Additionally, the site's operation will, of course, rely on income and outside financing to support

maintenance of the facility, future growth, and marketing. This is a complicated topic, one that combines business, economics, and preservation. There are many examples of successful and unsuccessful attempts to fund these projects, but the field would benefit from information distilled into layman's terms and presented in a comprehensive manner.

Second, as mentioned in the consideration of the potential preservation and reuse of contemporary prisons, there is a lack of wide-ranging, comprehensive guidance on thoughtful design for correctional institutions that also incorporates lessons learned from the history of correctional institutions. The Academy of Architecture for Justice within the American Institute of Architects highlights new projects that they feel merit recognition and provides design strategies, through their *Justice Facilities Review* publications and conferences. The American Correctional Association provides standards for administration and physical plant operation, and numerous documents address the basics of designing correctional institutions to address security needs. Separately, many books outline the history of jails, prisons, and other correctional facilities, and other publications discuss an array of broader institutional building types.

There is still room left in this field for a focused, niche document that summarizes all of these priorities, studies historical examples, looks at architectural failures for lessons learned, and examines this typology against the architectural evolution of other functional buildings. This guideline should strip out the rhetoric of money and concentrate on what makes for great, contemporary correctional institution design as a starting point. It would be a valuable resource for architects, public officials, communities, and preservation practitioners.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Correctional Institution: An umbrella term that describes any facility, within the local, state, or federal correctional systems, constructed for the purposes of incarcerating charged or sentenced offenders. Correctional facility subtypes respond to the age of the offender, the gender of the offender, and the severity of the offense.

Detention Center: An adult facility housing pre-trial suspects to ensure their appearance at judicial proceedings. Juvenile detention centers hold youth awaiting court hearings or placement in long-term care facilities, if other alternative locations are not available or advisable. The Federal Bureau of Prisons also operates Metropolitan Detention Centers, which are administrative facilities that detain all custody levels awaiting federal trials and transfer.

Jail: An adult facility detaining persons who are in the lawful custody of a city or county, including accused persons awaiting trial and those who have been convicted of a crime and are serving a sentence of less than one year.

Penitentiary: Term historically used in the nineteenth century to refer to prison facilities that demanded silence from prisoners. Penitentiaries generally employed solitary sleeping arrangements and either solitary (Pennsylvania plan) or congregate (Auburn plan) work arrangements. Silence was thought to afford an opportunity for reflection and repentance.

Prison: An adult facility within the state, federal, or military correctional systems constructed for the purpose of housing convicted offenders. Offenders are classified prior to incarceration in grading scales that vary by state. Security classes generally include: minimum-security, medium-security, and maximum-security. Prisons may also hold suspects who have been charged but not yet convicted, if these individuals are unable to post bail or to meet the conditions of bail (known as *remand*).

Reformatory: Generally refers to reformatory schools for youth, who receive correctional training and regular schooling; also known historically as training schools and reform schools. Adult reformatories provide academic and vocational training and typically hold women, young adult offenders, or first-time offenders.

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