

2017

Gender's Role in Abolitionist Pedagogy: A Fictionalized Autoethnography

Shelby A. Shaw
University of Rhode Island, shelby.ferreira@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/oa_diss

Terms of Use

All rights reserved under copyright.

Recommended Citation

Shaw, Shelby A., "Gender's Role in Abolitionist Pedagogy: A Fictionalized Autoethnography" (2017). *Open Access Dissertations*. Paper 540.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/oa_diss/540

This Dissertation is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Dissertations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.

GENDER'S ROLE IN ABOLITIONIST PEDAGOGY:
A FICTIONALIZED AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

BY
SHELBY A. SHAW

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
AND
RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

2017

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DISSERTATION

OF

SHELBY A. SHAW

APPROVED:

Dissertation Committee

Major Professor

C. David Brell

Jeremy Benson

Jill Doerner

Kathleen Peno

RIC:

Donald Halquist

Dean, Feinstein School of Education – RIC

URI:

Nasser H. Zawia

Dean, The Graduate School – URI

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
AND
RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE
2017

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation research was to explore the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. In order to achieve this objective, the following research questions framed this study:

- (1) How did institutional gatekeepers influence my experience with gender's role in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?
- (2) In my experiences within the cultures of different prison facilities and programs, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?
- (3) What role did gender play in my overall experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?

Using autoethnographic methods, my firsthand experience as a prison educator and researcher comprised the primary data for this study. The themes that emerged from data analysis included the following: (1) Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions, (2) Dualistic Paternalism, (3) Dualistic Sexualization, (4) Sexual Abuse of Power, (5) Necessity of *Doing Gender*, (6) Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime, (7) Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures, and (8) Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope.

The findings from this study appear to support the argument for a change in the gendered structures and cultures of the prison regime. Based on its findings, this study recommends that future research into prison-based abolitionist pedagogy focus on the role of race in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy, how the gender of the prisoner-student mediates the experience of abolitionist pedagogy, uncovering further first-person accounts of those involved in abolitionist pedagogy, and successful examples

of abolitionist pedagogy for the purposes of replication. This study also recommends that future practice focuses on drastically reducing the number of people in prison, altering the mission and culture of prisons, training of prison personnel, hiring of prison personnel, implementing outside bodies of accountability, and reshaping prison education to increase standards and become abolition-driven.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The journey of this dissertation writing has taught me the limits of my patience and flexibility: I am unwilling to compromise my values. Though my work at the prison meant the world to me, ultimately I valued more my humanity and the humanity of the people I worked with. Though this standard got me fired, I walked away with my dignity intact. This process has therefore solidified my values and increased my confidence in decision-making.

Over the course of this five-year journey, I have experienced great grief and loss, including the untimely death of my father; a tumultuous relationship and its subsequent culmination; not to mention the gamut of sad, dangerous, traumatic, and ugly events I witnessed while working in the prison system. On the other hand, this journey has brought me great triumph and joy: the conception of Stevie, my first child; marriage to Wega, the love of my life; and wisdom beyond my years. This dissertation marks the denouement of those same low and high points.

Dr. David Brell, my fearless leader and committee chair, deserves special thanks. You are forever family. Thank you for taking on this challenge with me; thank you for always encouraging me; thank you for going to bat for me; thank you for having my back. Also to Dr. Gerri August, Dr. Kathy Peno, Dr. Jill Doerner, and Dr. Jeremy Benson— my committee—and Dr. Elizabeth Holtzman, my outside examiner. You have all been so supportive and open-minded in your willingness to take on this project with me. You are all agents of social change and inspirations to me. Thank you. Finally, to my mom and dad: your belief in me has been unwavering. Thank you for teaching me confidence. This one's for you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	xi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Purpose	3
Significance	4
Research Questions	4
Theoretical Framework	5
Ecological Systems Theory	5
Social Reconstruction Theory	17
Prison Abolition Theory	18
Gender Theory	19
Definition of Terms	21
Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations	22
Dissertation Overview	24
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	26
The State of Mass Imprisonment Today	27
Boom in Imprisonment	28
The Disproportionate Imprisonment of Minority Populations	30

Theories about Mass Imprisonment	32
Effects of Imprisonment on Imprisoned People	37
Effects of Imprisonment on Families	39
Effects of Imprisonment on Communities and the Public	41
Prison Reform	42
Structural Reform	43
Transformative Reform	44
The Future of Prison Reform	50
Prison Education	55
Prison Education Today	59
Effects of Prison Education on Imprisoned People	61
Effects of Prison Education in Families, Communities, and the Public ...	63
Barriers to Prison Education	64
Abolitionist Pedagogy	70
Abolitionist Pedagogy Defined and Explored	71
Models of Abolitionist Pedagogy	73
Barriers to Prison-Based Abolitionist Pedagogy	74
Summary	75
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	78
The Naturalistic Paradigm	78
Feminist Standpoint Theory and Strong Objectivity	79
Autoethnography	81
Genres of Autoethnography	81

The Trajectory of Autoethnography	83
Situating My Study within the Paradigm	84
Research Design	85
Data Overview	85
Data Collection Procedure	86
Data Analysis Procedure	87
Data Transformation Procedure	89
Summary	94
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	96
Background	96
New England State Prison	97
Natalia Gomez	101
Fictionalized Narratives	101
Professor Anderson	102
Mindy	111
Rafael	125
Re-Entry	171
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS	199
Analysis of Findings	200
Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions	201
Dualistic Paternalism	203
Dualistic Sexualization	206
Sexual Abuse of Power	208

Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>	210
Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime	214
Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures	216
Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope	219
Summary of Findings	220
Relating to Theory and Literature	222
Consistencies with Previous Literature	223
Developments upon Previous Literature	224
Limitations	227
Trustworthiness	227
Implications	229
Recommendations	230
Recommendations Based on Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions	231
Recommendations Based on Dualistic Paternalism	231
Recommendations Based on Dualistic Sexualization	231
Recommendations Based on Sexual Abuse of Power	232
Recommendations Based on Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>	232
Recommendations Based on Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime	233
Recommendations Based on Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures	233
Recommendations Based on Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope	234
Contributions	235

Autobiographical Reflection	236
APPENDIX A: COMPILED EXTERNAL DATA TABLE	238
APPENDIX B: SELF-REFLECTIVE DATA TABLE AND CORRESPONDING EXTERNAL CONFIRMATORY DATA	241
APPENDIX C: GENDER THEORIES FOR ANALYSIS	244
APPENDIX D: DATA LOG SETUP	247
APPENDIX E: CODES AND THEMES	248
BIBLIOGRAPHY	253

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: Community-to-Prison Ecological Regime	7
FIGURE 2: Case of Rafael	12
FIGURE 3: Data Collection, Analysis, and Transformation Procedure	87
FIGURE 4: Race of Prisoners at New England State Prison	98
FIGURE 5: Age of Prisoners at New England State Prison	98
FIGURE 6: Characteristics of Males at New England State Prison	99
FIGURE 7: Characteristics of Females at New England State Prison	100
FIGURE 8: Salience of Themes in Overall Data Set	200

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Analysis of Rafael	13
TABLE 2: Rationale for Naturalistic Inquiry	78
TABLE 3: Definitions of Themes	89
TABLE 4: Summary of Themes and Their Respective Roles	221
TABLE 5: Trustworthiness	228
TABLE 6: Recommendations	234

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

At present, the rate of imprisonment in the United States is astronomical: 2.3 million, or 1 in 110 American adults, are behind bars (Roeder, Eisen, Bowling, Stiglitz, & Chettiar, 2015; Wagner & Sakala, 2014). This rate is inconsistent with both the rest of the world (Walmsley, 2013) and the declining rate of crime in the U.S. (Roeder, et al., 2015). Although a vast majority of Americans believe that imprisonment should serve to improve the lives of imprisoned people and prepare them for re-entry into democratic citizenship, prisons seem to be doing just the opposite (Williford, 1994). Imprisonment not only harms imprisoned people (Haney, 2003; Meiners, 2009; Warner, 2007) but also their families, communities (Cullen, Jonson, & Eck, 2013; Geller, Garfinkle, & Western, 2011; Hagan & Foster, 2012; Siennick, Steward, & Staff, 2014; Travis, McBride, & Solomon, 2005), and the general public (Hawkins, 2010; Lengyel, 2006; Schweinhart, et al., 2005).

Scholars, policymakers, and the public overwhelmingly agree that the US is facing an epidemic of mass imprisonment and that the need for reform is past due (Cullen, Jonson, & Stohr, 2013). However, no initiative comprehensive enough has addressed the problem in its totality. Small-scale prison reform initiatives have been attempted on two levels: (1) *structural* – changes to sentencing policies and structures of the criminal justice systems (ACLU, 2011; Bradshaw & Roseborough, 2005; FAMM, 2011; Federal crack cocaine sentencing, 2010), and (2) *transformative* – prevention and rehabilitation (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Behan, 2014; Council & Fabelo 2002; Ending mass incarceration, n.d.; Lochner, 2010; Lochner & Moretti,

2001; Martinson, 1978; 1978; Research Findings, 2015; Rotman, 1990; Schweinhart, et al., 2005). *Prison education*—including adult education, vocational education, college coursework, special education, and study release— is one model of transformative reform that boasts laudable outcomes (Behan, 2014; Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles, 2013; Fact sheet, 2011; Klein, Tolbert, Bugarin, Cataldi, & Tauschek, 2004; Nally, Lockwood, Knutson, & Ho, 2012; Steurer, Linton, Nally, & Lockwood, 2010; Ward, 2009; Wright, 2014). However, a number of barriers prevent harnessing the full potential of prison education. Some such barriers include funding (McCarty, 2006; Palmer, 2012), competing interests (Carey, 1994; Coffey, 1994; Jones & d’Errico, 1994; Licence, 1994; Lockard, & Rankins-Robertson, 2011; Torre & Fine, 2005; Warner, 2007; Williford, 1994; Wright, 2004), and the gendered structure of the prison (Britton, 2003; Case & Fasenfest, 2004; Lempert, Bergeron, & Linker, 2005; Richards-Allerton, 1994; Wilson, 1994; Wright, 2004). *Prison-based abolitionist pedagogy* is a form of education that seeks to abolish, through scholar-activism of imprisoned students, the systems fostering the epidemic of mass imprisonment (Critical Resistance, 2015; Davis, 2003; Harkins & Meiners, 2014; Larson, 2011; Rodriguez, 2010; Scott, 2014). Few successful models of prison-based abolitionist pedagogy are documented in the literature (Hartnett, 2011), and few scholars have explored the competing interests they have faced (Bordt & Carceral, 2012; Kilgore, 2011; Larson, 2011). To my knowledge, no scholarship surrounding the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy presently exists.

Purpose

At a prison in the northeastern U.S., I taught a variety of courses using abolitionist pedagogy. Subsequently, through the same prison, I researched a re-entry program with an abolitionist mission. Consistent with the findings of previous scholarship (Bordt & Carceral, 2012; Kilgore, 2011; Larson, 2011; Palmer, 2012; Scott, 2014), in both positions I encountered numerous barriers, some of which were related to gender, as illustrated by the following two examples. In the first case, and consistent with literature that shows “deviant men have been constructed as criminal while deviant women have been constructed as insane” (Davis, 2003, p. 66), many students in the women’s facility were so medicated with psychiatric drugs that they were unable to participate in classroom objectives. In the second case, my positive rapport with students in both the men’s facilities and the re-entry program was suspect and questioned on many occasions. This is consistent with literature that suggests many women working in men’s prisons feel trapped in a no-win situation: care is sexualized, and sternness is regarded as over-masculine (Britton, 2003; Rogers, 2008). In my own case, these barriers became exacerbated over time until, ultimately, I was terminated. Although some studies have explored gender in prison education (Case & Fasenfest, 2004; Lempert, Bergeron, & Linker, 2005; Richards-Allerton, 1994; Wilson, 1994; Wright, 2004) and others have explored abolitionist pedagogy (Bordt & Carceral, 2012; Critical Resistance, 2015; Harkins & Meiners, 2014; Hartnett, 2011; Kilgore, 2011; Larson, 2011; Palmer, 2012; Rodriguez, 2010; Scott, 2014), to my knowledge, as previously mentioned, no studies have explored the role of gender in

prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. Consequently, this study aims to investigate just that.

Significance

Institutional and cultural barriers and the stigma assigned to people with criminal records largely disqualify those same people from being viewed as capable of helping to solve the country's epidemic of mass imprisonment. As such, their voices have been excluded from academic and public discourses about prison reform. Discourses that influence scholarship and policy decisions affecting those most vulnerable to imprisonment predominantly comprise people with minimal contact with prisons. The people most affected by imprisonment, potentially significant contributors in their own right, go unheard.

Abolition-focused prison education might serve as an arena for crafting solutions to the epidemic of mass imprisonment. This study serves to explore the role of one significant and largely unexamined barrier— gender—in the hopes of eliminating one more obstacle to eradicating the country's epidemic of mass imprisonment.

Research Questions

Through an experience-based, narrative methodology this study explored the following research questions:

- (1) *How did institutional gatekeepers influence my experience with gender's role in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*
- (2) *In my experiences within the cultures of different prison facilities and programs, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*

(2a) In my experience within the culture of a women's medium-security prison, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?

(2b) In my experience within the culture of a men's maximum-security prison, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?

(2c) In my experience within the culture of a men's re-entry program, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?

(3) What role did gender play in my overall experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?

Theoretical Framework

This study operates from the convergence of four theories: (1) ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), (2) social reconstruction theory (Freire, 1993; Schiro, 2012), (3) prison abolition theory (Acker, 1992; Appel & Davis, 2011; Davis, 2003; Harris, 2011; Ritchie, 2005), and (4) gender theory (Acker, 1990; Britton, 2003; Britton & Logan, 2008; Butler, 1990; Connell, 1996;2006; Harris, 2011; Holsinger, 2005; hooks, 2000).

Ecological Systems Theory

The first theory according to which this study is framed is adapted from Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory of human development. Bronfenbrenner's theory begins from the idea that children develop according to their positioning within six ecological spheres of influence: individual, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (see Figure 1). My adaptation also borrows from Johnson's (2008) theory that members of privileged socioeconomic classes tend to follow the path of least resistance toward avaricious

behavior and Greenfield's (2009) theory that social change predicts changes in human development. In like manner, to my adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model I have added a predicted (Greenfield, 2009) path of least resistance (Johnson, 2008) that disproportionately leads some people toward prison and, more often than not, re-involvement in the criminal justice system. I have named my adapted model the *Community-to-Prison Ecological Regime* (CTPER). The choice to name this model a regime is inspired by Rodriguez's (2010) notion of the prison system as a structure of dominance, interconnected with all aspects of daily life.

The Community-to-Prison Ecological Regime. The stories of students and other study participants juxtaposed with a review of literature that highlighted the disproportionate impact of imprisonment on specific communities (Criminal Justice? n.d.; Gottschalk, 2006; Incarcerated Women, 2012; Racial Disparity, 2015; Western & Pettit, 2010) inspired me to theorize that the US has created a perfect storm of conditions to facilitate an epidemic of mass imprisonment. In order to condense all I have learned through students, study participants, and my own research, I developed the CTPER model (see Figure 1).

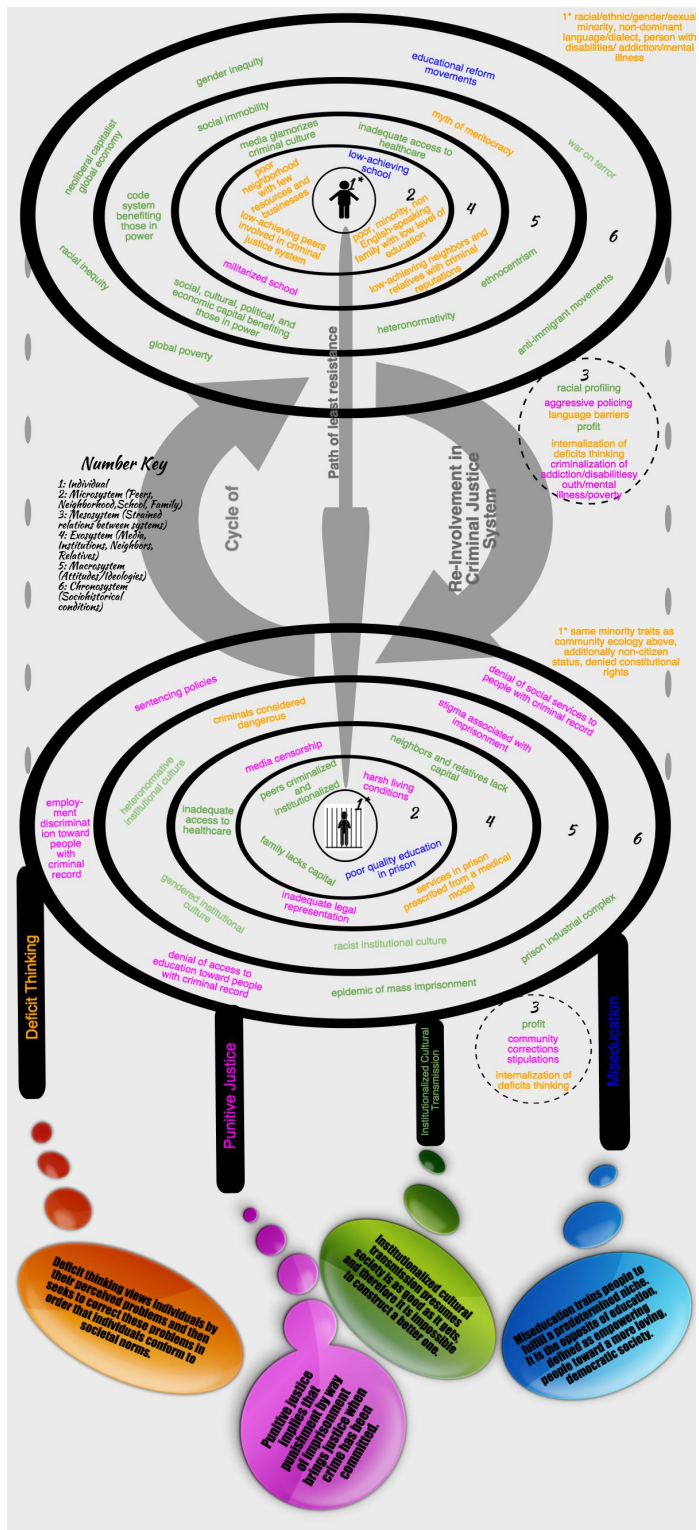


Figure 1. The Community-to-Prison Ecological Regime (CTPER). This figure illustrates that the CTPER is divided into two levels of ecological systems: the upper

system is the community level, and the lower system is the prison level. The levels are connected by a path of least resistance, connoting that individuals from particular communities will be extremely susceptible to experiencing imprisonment and similarly susceptible to returning to those same communities.

This model predicts that people who possess certain characteristics and people who are positioned within spheres of influence affected by certain characteristics will be extremely susceptible to imprisonment. I define the CTPER as an ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) of interlocking systems, spheres of influence, and characteristics that predicts (Greenfield, 2009) an individual person's path of least resistance (Johnson, 2008) from certain communities toward prison and, more often than not, re-involvement in the criminal justice system (Recidivism, 2014).

Such an ecological understanding of criminal behavior stands in stark contrast to "deficit thinking" (Martinson, 1974; Valencia, 1997) about crime, which ascribes pathological attributes to individuals involved in what is perceived as crime and prescribes behavior changes based on an inadequate understanding of the social contexts that foster it. The deficit model sees crime as a disease to be cured within the afflicted individual (Martinson, 1974). In contrast, the CTPER is a model based on the notion that crime is not merely an affliction of the individual, but also an affliction rooted in the multiple ecological spheres that surround and influence the person. These influences include each sphere of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model: *individual* (personal characteristics); *microsystem* (peers, neighborhood, school, and family); *mesosystem* (strained relations between systems); *exosystem* (media, institutions, neighbors, and relatives); *macrosystem* (attitudes and ideologies of the

culture within which the individual is situated); and *chronosystem* (sociohistorical conditions). Consequently, an ecological understanding of crime calls for coordinated transformation of all spheres simultaneously.

The upper system of the CTPER model symbolizes the community within which an individual perceived as a criminal is situated. This system is comprised of the six spheres of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (see Figure 1). Within each sphere exist characteristics that lubricate the individual's path of least resistance (Johnson, 2008) toward imprisonment. In Figure 1, the dotted vertical lines connecting the upper and lower systems represent the interconnection between the community and prison. Individuals who are impacted by a greater number of these characteristics have a greater likelihood of imprisonment.

Not only do the six spheres of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory surround and influence the individual person while situated within their community (as shown in the upper system of Figure 1) but also while situated within prison (as shown in the lower system of Figure 1). Characteristics within each sphere differ slightly depending on whether the individual is situated within the community or the prison.

Community (upper system). (1) On the *individual* level, these characteristics consist of the following: status as racial, ethnic, gender, and/or sexual minority status; non-dominant language or dialect; and disabilities, addiction, and/or mental illness. (2) On the *microsystem* level, these characteristics include low achieving schools; poor neighborhoods with few resources and businesses; low-achieving peers involved in the criminal justice system; and poor, minority, and non-English-speaking families with

low levels of education. (3) On the *mesosystem* level, these characteristics include racial profiling; aggressive policing; language barriers; profit; internalization of deficit thinking; and the criminalization of addiction, disabilities, mental illnesses, youth, and/or poverty. Note that, in Figure 1, dotted-outlined circles situated toward the right edges of both the upper and lower systems symbolize the mesosystem. These symbols signify that the mesosystem has the capacity to move between and overlap spheres, causing strain in their interplay. (4) On the *exosystem* level, these characteristics include media that glamorize criminal culture, inadequate access to healthcare, low-achieving neighbors and relatives with criminal reputations, and militarized schools. (5) On the *macrosystem* level, these characteristics include heteronormativity; ethnocentrism; the myth of meritocracy; social immobility; code systems benefitting those in power; and social, cultural, political, and economic capital benefitting those in power. (6) On the *chronosystem* level, these characteristics include educational reform movements, the war on terror, anti-immigrant movements, global poverty, racial inequity, the neoliberal capitalist global economy, and gender inequity.

Prison (lower system). (1) On the *individual* level, these characteristics consist of the following: status as a racial, ethnic, gender, and/or sexual minority; non-dominant language or dialect; disabilities, addiction, and/or mental illness; non-citizen status; and denial of constitutional rights. (2) On the *microsystem* level, characteristics include peers who are criminalized and institutionalized; harsh living conditions; the poor quality of prison education; and a family that lacks monetary, cultural, and social capital. (3) The *mesosystem* level characteristics include profit, community corrections stipulations, and the internalization of deficit thinking. (4) On the *exosystem* level, the

characteristics include inadequate access to healthcare and legal representation, services in prison that are narrowly and fallaciously prescribed from a deficit-only perspective, neighbors and relatives who lack capital, and media censorship. (5) On the *macrosystem* level, characteristics include the notion that criminals are considered dangerous; the stigma associated with imprisonment; and racist, gendered, and heteronormative institutional cultures. (6) On the *chronosystem* level, these characteristics include the prison-industrial complex: i.e., the interconnectedness of the prison and other economic and political institutions, denial of social services to people with criminal records, sentencing policies, employment discrimination toward people with criminal records, denial of access to education toward people with criminal records, and the epidemic of mass imprisonment.

Upon release from prison, characteristics within the prison system lubricate the individual's path of least resistance (Johnson, 2008) back toward their community. Then, characteristics within their community system are again activated, inciting a cycle of re-involvement in the criminal justice system (as exhibited by the cyclical arrows in the center of Figure 1).

The case of Rafael: An example of the CTPER. The following is the case of Rafael, a fictionalized character whose story is meant to illustrate the functioning of the CTPER (see Figure 2 and Table 1 for details). The characterization of Rafael emerged from common themes present in the stories of the students and research participants I worked with.

Rafael is an immigrant from the Dominican Republic. He and his mother fled the Dominican Republic because his mother feared for their safety at the hands of Rafael's abusive father. Rafael witnessed and experienced his father's abuse, and he overheard conversations that his father was involved in drug trafficking. Rafael remembers his father threatening his mother that, if she left, Rafael's father would find her and kill her. Rafael still has nightmares and flashbacks about this: signs that Rafael probably is experiencing undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder.

The community in which Rafael lived in is a poor, racially segregated ghetto in an urban community in the northeastern US that is renowned for high rates of teenage pregnancy, crime, and poverty. The community is also known for its failing school system and high levels of police surveillance. Rafael lived in a one-room apartment without electricity or furniture. He had not started school in the Dominican Republic, so he lacked the foundational academic skills many of his American peers already possessed. Moreover, Rafael did not speak English. He had already missed half the school year because he arrived in the winter. In addition, Rafael's mother did not speak English, had only achieved a sixth grade education in the Dominican Republic, and was unfamiliar with navigating the US educational system. Moreover, his mother worked long hours to make ends meet—to both provide for the household and pay legal bills for the family's immigration asylum case.

Rafael had been chronically absent at school because, with his mother working long hours for minimum wage, he was home alone, unmotivated to walk to school by himself. Rafael fell behind and repeated multiple grade levels. Bored, he frequently watched television or played video games where he saw images of people involved in criminal activities enjoying lavish lifestyles. Rafael decided to spend time in the streets where he met other young people in his same situation and learned from them how to make money by selling marijuana. Soon after, Rafael was caught by the School Resource Officer selling marijuana in school and sentenced to serve time at the juvenile detention center.

After release from the juvenile detention center, he was placed on probation. Rafael was not allowed back to his original school due to his drug affiliation. He was thus pushed from school to school, and, due to his criminal background, teachers had low expectations of Rafael. Once he turned eighteen, Rafael dropped altogether. His neighborhood lacks employment opportunities for kids with reputations like him, so he began selling crack cocaine in order to make money. He soon became a well-known drug dealer in his neighborhood. Inevitably, he was caught, tried as an adult, threatened with deportation, and, as a probation violator, sentenced to serve five years at an adult prison.

While in prison, Rafael felt pressured to maintain his safety through a hyper-masculine exterior and violent behavior. He had the option either to pursue education or to work. He chose to work because it was the only way he could earn money to purchase hygiene products and snacks from the prison commissary. He also chose work over school due to past experiences in school, which made him believe that he would be unable to succeed. The work he did paid less than a dollar per day but made significant profit for the prison.

Figure 2. The case of Rafael: An example of the CTPER.

Table 1

An Analysis of Rafael through the Lens of the Community-to-Prison Ecological

Regime

System	Sphere of influence	Traits that lubricate future path of least resistance toward prison	Examples from Rafael's story
Community	Individual	Status as racial, ethnic, gender, and/or sexual minority Speaking non-dominant language or dialect Person with disabilities, addiction, and/or mental illness	Immigrant from Dominican Republic Undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder Non-English speaking Lacks foundational academic skills
Community	Microsystem (peers, neighborhood, school, family)	Low achieving school Poor neighborhood with few resources and businesses Low-achieving peers involved in criminal justice system Poor, minority, and non-English-speaking family with low level of education	Father involved in drug trafficking Abusive father Single mother Poor, racially segregated ghetto of urban community Community with high rates of teenage pregnancy, crime, and poverty Failing school system Other young people in same situation One-bedroom apartment without electricity or furniture
Community	Mesosystem (strained relations between systems)	Racial profiling Aggressive policing Language barriers Profit Internalization of deficits thinking Criminalization of addiction, disabilities, mental illnesses, youth, and/or poverty	High levels of police surveillance Mother does not speak English Sentenced to serve time at the juvenile detention center Teachers have low expectations, self-fulfilling prophecy
Community	Exosystem (media,	Media glamorizes criminal culture	Television & video games with images of people

	institutions, neighbors, relatives)	Inadequate access to healthcare Low-achieving neighbors and relatives with criminal reputations Militarized school	involved in criminal activities enjoying lavish lifestyles Neighbors teach how to sell drugs School Resource Officer represents military presence in school
Community	Macrosystem (attitudes, ideologies)	Heteronormativity Ethnocentrism Myth of meritocracy Social immobility Code system benefitting those in power Social, cultural, political, and economic capital benefitting those in power	Mother works long hours, minimum wage, cannot get ahead Unable to communicate with those in power Immigrant status, viewed as less than citizen
Community	Chronosystem (sociohistorical conditions)	Educational reform movements War on Terror Anti-immigrant movements Global poverty Racial inequity Neoliberal capitalist global economy Gender inequity	Family's immigration case in the midst of anti-immigrant movement Fled Dominican Republic due to gender violence Pushed out of school because hindering the school's success in the midst of pressure on schools from educational reform movements
Prison	Microsystem (peers, neighborhood, school, family)	Peers criminalized and institutionalized Harsh living conditions Poor quality prison education Family lacks capital	Cannot go to school, must work Family cannot financially support while in prison
Prison	Mesosystem (strained relations between systems)	Profit Community corrections stipulations Internalization of deficits thinking	Work makes significant profit for prison Probation violation Because of past experiences in school, believes he is unable to succeed in school
Prison	Exosystem (media, institutions,	Inadequate access to healthcare Inadequate legal	Tried as an adult, threatened with deportation, sentenced to serve five years at an adult

	neighbors, relatives)	representation Services in prison from a deficits model Neighbors and relatives lack capital Media censorship	prison Family lacks capital for adequate representation Prescribed either to school or work
Prison	Macrosystem (attitudes, ideologies)	Criminals considered dangerous Stigma associated with imprisonment Racist institutional culture Gendered institutional culture Heteronormative institutional culture	Pressured to maintain hyper-masculine exterior Pressured to maintain reputation through violent behavior
Prison	Chronosystem (sociohistorical conditions)	Prison-industrial complex Denial of social services to people with criminal record Sentencing policies Employment discrimination toward people with a criminal record Employment discrimination toward youth Denial of access to education toward people with criminal record Epidemic of mass imprisonment	Unable to find a job that will accept felony record Churned through prison system Makes profit for prison

Rafael’s story represents the perfect storm of characteristics that inevitably lead to imprisonment. If Rafael had possessed characteristics of the majority or if he had grown up in a different community, it is likely that his trajectory would not have led him toward prison. Knowing that to be the case, I became perplexed at how this epidemic could continue even though, in my understanding, it was so evidently unjust.

For me, the answer to this question lays in four thought patterns, or ideologies, foundational to the CTPER (see Figure 1): (1) deficit thinking, (2) punitive justice, (3) institutionalized cultural transmission, and (4) miseducation. These four thought patterns manifest through characteristics present within the various spheres of the CTPER. In Figure 1, this is represented by the colors of the characteristics corresponding to the colors of the thought patterns from which the characteristics emerge.

Deficit thinking (Martinson, 1974; Valencia, 1997) views individuals by their perceived problems and seeks to correct these problems in order that individuals conform to societal norms. A key problem with that thinking is that it tends to blame individuals for collective societal problems while ignoring individual strengths. The societal problems that surrounded Rafael were never addressed; his individual strengths were never revealed. He was referred to as the sum of his deficits, which positioned him to be “corrected” punitively.

Punitive justice implies that punishment by way of imprisonment brings justice when a crime has been committed (Alexander, 2003; Meiners, 2011).

Borrowing from Kohlberg and Mayer’s (1972) theory that the goal of traditional education is to transmit cultural norms, perhaps the most serious drawback to *institutionalized cultural transmission* is that it presumes that society is fine the way it is, and therefore there is no impetus to construct a better one. Whether consciously or not, this conception conserves and replicates the status quo via *banking pedagogy* (Freire, 1993), which trains people by presuming they are empty vessels into which cultural knowledge can be deposited. This notion is institutionalized via the education

system, which, in many cases, ironically miseducates students (Illich, 1971). In the case of Rafael, the ultimate response to his failure in a cultural transmission style of schooling was prison, even though an alternative educational environment might have prevented his imprisonment.

Perhaps the most serious consequence of a cultural transmission or banking style of education is *miseducation* (Anyon, 1980; Dewey, 1916; Kozol, 2012), which trains people to fulfill a predetermined niche. Miseducation is the opposite of education, defined as empowering people toward a more loving, democratic society. Rafael seemed destined to follow a pipeline (Alexander, 2003; Meiners, 2011) from school toward prison, arguably fulfilling the only niche available to him.

Social Reconstruction Theory

The second theory through which this study is framed, and one that is already implicit in the foregoing discussion, is social reconstruction theory, which maintains that, at present, our society is unhealthy “because traditional mechanisms developed by society to contend with social problems are incapable of doing their job” (Schiro, 2012, p. 133). Through the lens of the CTPER, the mechanisms at play in the ecological model are failing to cultivate a just and fair society. One profound and obvious manifestation is the current epidemic of mass imprisonment. In response, social reconstruction theory posits that it is possible to reconstruct a better society than the existing one. This idea reframes one thought pattern that upholds the CTPER: *institutionalized cultural transmission*, which, as previously mentioned, upholds the notion that the society is acceptable the way it is.

In contrast, I believe that, through an empowering education, a society based

on equity and justice can be constructed and that schools can play a major role in that endeavor (Freire, 1993). Specifically in response to the epidemic of mass imprisonment, I believe that a socially reconstructionist education should take a prison abolitionist stance (Critical Resistance, 2015; Davis, 2003; Harkins & Meiners, 2014; Larson, 2011; Rodriguez, 2010; Scott, 2014). Therefore, the third theory within which I position my work is prison abolition theory.

Prison Abolition Theory

In the tradition of scholar-activist Angela Davis (2003), I self-identify as a prison abolitionist, which means I believe in the feasibility of a world without prisons. It is important to note that prison abolitionists do not envision the immediate closure of prisons. On the contrary, prison abolitionists view abolition as a prolonged and arduous process that would nurture a just and equitable society by transforming all aspects of the CTPER (see Figure 1). Addressing all aspects of the CTPER, would include, among other things, the decriminalization of many acts presently defined as criminal, an end to inequitable sentencing policies, a redistribution of wealth, the “demilitarization of schools, revitalization of education at all levels, [and] a health system that provides free physical and mental care to all” (Davis, 2003, p. 107).

Although it would be significantly curtailed in a society without prisons, harm committed between people and against society inevitably occurs even in a just and equitable society. Instead of responding punitively to harm, prison abolitionists believe in responding to harm through a “justice system based on reparation and reconciliation rather than retribution and vengeance” (Davis, 2003, p. 107). This idea

reframes the prevailing thought pattern of *punitive justice*, which assumes that punishment by way of imprisonment brings justice (see Figure 1).

Historically, the prison abolition movement has associated itself with movements surrounding gender and sexuality. One reason for this connection is the relatively recent disproportionate increase in rates of imprisonment for women and gender-nonconforming people (Criminal Justice? n.d.; Incarcerated Women, 2012). Additionally, the prison as an institution was founded on notions of heteropatriarchy (Harris, 2011) and hegemonic masculinity (Acker, 1992). Moreover, gender violence (Appel & Davis, 2011) is a collateral effect of the ecological systems that foster imprisonment. Though the prison abolition and gender justice movements associate with one another, they have not always collaborated to their fullest capacities. In response, Beth Richie (2005) argued for the “queering” of anti-prison work to include “an analysis of how the impact of the prison industrial complex is, for some, made more pernicious by gender violence and queer sexuality” (p. 73). As previously mentioned, when I implemented prison abolition theory into my work, I encountered barriers related to gender. Consequently, the final theory within which I will frame this study is gender theory.

Gender Theory

Gender theorists argue that society’s notion of gender is socially constructed; people perform gender roles according to socially acceptable norms (Butler, 1990). Gender norms are place-specific. Accordingly, there exist gender norms specific to prison (Acker, 1990; Britton, 2003). In fact, the gender norms specific to prison are so salient that theorists have named the prison and similar institutions of social control

(such as the military and schools) “gender regimes” (Connell, 1996; 2006), because they operate with gendered divisions of labor, relations of power, emotions, human relations, culture, and symbolism. The prison’s gender regime exacerbates and reproduces gender violence both within and outside its walls. This phenomenon is evidenced by the hyper-masculine, violent expectations of behavior for imprisoned men and the disproportionate victimization of women and gender-nonconforming people both in prisons and greater society (Harris, 2011).

Through a feminist lens, many gender theorists would argue for the transformation and subsequent reconstruction of a justice system offering fairness, healing, reconciliation, restoration of harm, and agency to victims (hooks, 2000; Harris, 2011; Holsinger, 2013). Additionally, standpoint theorists (Collins, 1999; Harding 1992; 1995; Kronsell, 2005) argue that researchers operating from the feminist standpoint are especially positioned to highlight gendered practices within gender regimes (Connell, 1996; 2006) and subsequently to inspire transformation.

In sum, my theoretical framework offers criticism of and alternatives to the thought patterns that maintain the present epidemic of mass imprisonment. Guided by an ecological understanding of crime, which stands in stark contrast to a notion of crime based in “deficit thinking,” my theoretical framework is informed by ecological systems theory, social reconstruction theory, prison abolition theory, and gender theory. These four theories reframe the prevailing thought patterns of “punitive justice,” “institutionalized cultural transmission,” and “miseducation,” which presently guide the way that prisons are conceived, managed, and perpetuated.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used during the course of this dissertation research study:

Abolitionist pedagogy: Inspired by prison abolitionism and critical, participatory pedagogy, education that explicitly intends, through content and instructional methods, to liberate both individuals and society from the devastation of mass imprisonment while reconstructing more just and equitable systems of justice.

Free world: The world outside of prison.

Iatrogenic: A term used by the medical community to refer to a disorder caused by the very treatment for that same disorder. Here, *iatrogenic* refers to the actions and behaviors associated with crime that are caused by the culture of prison—the same institution meant to protect from those same actions and behaviors associated with crime.

Imprisoned: Refers to the court-ordered confinement and denial of freedoms within any institution designed for such purposes, such as prisons, jails, correctional facilities, reformatories, penitentiaries, etc. This term is commonly referred to as *incarcerated*. I choose not to use the word *incarcerated* because I believe the term *imprisonment* to be more honest, as the word *prison* serves as its root word.

Pedagogy: Instructional content and methods guided by a philosophy.

Prison: Places of court-ordered confinement. Dishonest language calls them correctional facilities, reformatories, penitentiaries, etc. *Prisons* and *jails* are not differentiated within this dissertation.

Prison education: Refers to any education happening inside prisons, commonly referred to as *correctional education*. I prefer to use the term *prison education* in order to align with my understanding of honest language.

Prison officials: People who work in support of the custody and control function of prisons, commonly referred to as *correctional personnel*. Some prison educators may be considered prison officials when their work functions to uphold the CTPER.

Re-involvement in the criminal justice system: Refers to any re-arrest, re-conviction, or re-imprisonment of someone who was previously arrested, convicted, or imprisoned. This phrase is commonly referred to as *recidivism*, which points to a relapse in the criminal behavior of the individual as the result of re-arrest, re-conviction, or re-imprisonment. The notion that individual people relapse into criminal behavior is misaligned with my ecological understanding of crime. As such, I prefer the term *re-involvement in the criminal justice system* for the purposes of this study.

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

In this study, I use autoethnographic methods to explore the role that gender plays in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. Autoethnography refers to an approach to qualitative research that systematically blends the researcher's personal experience

with cultural analysis (Chang, 2008; Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). The use of autoethnographic methods is explained in greater detail in Chapter 3.

This study's research methodology is guided by Sandra Harding's (1992; 1995) theory of *strong objectivity*. This theory repudiates the value of the traditional standard of objectivity set by the empirical research community. Instead, strong objectivity values research that embraces the researcher's identity and interpretations as intimately intertwined with research findings. Some identities and interpretations are more meaningful in some research contexts, however.

Feminist standpoint theory (Collins, 1999; Kronsell, 2005) argues that research based in a feminist standpoint can shed light on gendered practices often considered the norm. Therefore, women researchers have a unique perspective to offer in certain contexts. As a feminist woman working within an institution of hegemonic masculinity, I assert that my unique standpoint about the role of gender in abolitionist pedagogy offers value in its alignment with the notion of strong objectivity. Therefore, I affirm that this study is limited in its scope to the viewpoints related to my interpretation of my experience as a prison educator and researcher. However, I simultaneously argue that this limitation also constitutes this study's strength.

I have chosen to transform the findings of my autoethnographic analysis into fictionalized narratives and weave throughout those same narratives *letters from prison*—a counternarrative indigenous to the setting and population. This choice is based in a commitment to deepening meaning while maintaining confidentiality. Skeptics may wonder how fictionalizing data already colored by the researcher's interpretations can yield valuable findings. To this apprehension, I would respond that

this study's findings bear consistencies with existing literature in the areas of gender and prisons (Acker, 1990; Britton, 2003; Connell, 1996; 2006; Harris, 2011), gender and prison education (Britton, 2003; Case & Fasenfest, 2004; Lempert, Bergeron, & Linker, 2005; Richards-Allerton, 1994; Wilson, 1994; Wright, 2004), and abolitionist pedagogy (Harkins & Meiners, 2014; Larson, 2011). Consistencies with previous literature are further explored in Chapter 5.

The findings that follow are based on data I collected during my work at one prison and related re-entry program in a state in the northeastern U.S. The prison institution consists of seven facilities classified by sex and security risk. Of those seven facilities, data analyzed for this study include four facilities: men's minimum-security, men's medium-security, men's maximum-security, and women's medium-security. However, I will explore, through fictionalized narratives, the cultures of the facilities at which I spent most time: men's maximum-security, women's medium-security, and a re-entry program.

My hope is that this study provides future leaders of prison transformation with an authentic account of the complex role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy.

Dissertation Overview

This chapter introduced the study for the dissertation as a whole, presented the problem statement, outlined the purpose of the study, stated the significance of the study and research questions, explored the theoretical framework, defined conceptual terms used during the course of this dissertation research, and stated the study's assumptions, limitations, scope, and delimitations. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on

the state of mass imprisonment today, prison reform, prison education, and abolitionist pedagogy, honing in specifically on barriers to the successful implementation of prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical grounding for this study's methodology and discusses the study's autoethnographic research design. Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study by way of fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison. Chapter 5 provides implications of this study's findings and recommends directions for future research and practice.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars, policymakers, and the public agree that the United States is facing an epidemic of mass imprisonment. However, disagreement surrounds how to respond. The purpose of this literature review is to situate the role that gender plays in abolitionist pedagogy—the focus of this study—within the wider context of mass imprisonment and prison reform. In doing so, this literature review focuses on four main areas surrounding mass imprisonment and the country’s response to it: (1) the state of mass imprisonment today, (2) prison reform, (3) prison education, and (4) abolitionist pedagogy.

First, I will explore literature surrounding the state of mass imprisonment today. In doing so, I will examine present rates of imprisonment; the contemporary boom in imprisonment; the disproportionate imprisonment of people from minority communities; theories about mass imprisonment; and the effect of imprisonment on imprisoned people, their families, communities, and the public.

Second, I will examine a range of reform efforts. These include structural reforms, transformative reforms, and the future of reform. In examining the future of reform, I will inspect closely some prison models and prison programs that offer promising outcomes.

Third, I will explore prison education. In doing so, I will examine the history of prison education; prison education today; principles of adult education foundational to prison education programs; the effects of prison education on imprisoned people, their families, communities, and the public; and barriers to prison education, which include funding, competing interests, and the gendered structure of the prison.

Finally, I will examine abolitionist pedagogy. After defining and exploring this domain, I will investigate models and barriers to its successful implementation.

The State of Mass Imprisonment Today

Approximately 7 million people were under the supervision of adult prison systems in the United States at yearend 2013 (Glaze & Kaebel, 2014). One in 51 American adults were on probation or parole, and 1 in 110 American adults were imprisoned (Glaze & Kaebel, 2014). Today, approximately 2.3 million people (Roeder, Eisen, Bowling, Stiglitz, & Chettiar, 2015) are imprisoned in 1,719 state prisons, 102 federal prisons, 2,258 juvenile prison facilities, 3,283 local jails, 79 Indian country jails, military prisons, immigration detention facilities, civil commitment centers, and prisons in US territories (Wagner & Sakala, 2014).

These rates are highly dissimilar to the rates of imprisonment of other countries. The US presently imprisons a greater proportion of its population than any country in the world: 25% of the world's imprisoned people with only 5% of the world's population (Collier, 2014). In comparison to similar industrialized countries, the US imprisons a significantly greater portion of its population. For example, per 100,000 people, France imprisons 98; Germany imprisons 79; Italy imprisons 106; Japan imprisons 52; and the United Kingdom 148, while the US imprisons 716 people per 100,000 (Walmsley, 2013).

According to the most up-to-date statistics regarding the re-involvement in the criminal justice system (Recidivism, 2014) of previously imprisoned people in the US, within three years of release, about two-thirds (67.8%) of released prisoners were rearrested. Within five years of release, about three-quarters (76.6%) of released

prisoners were rearrested. Of those who were rearrested, more than half (56.7%) were arrested by the end of the first year after release.

Boom in Imprisonment

The rates of imprisonment in the US have not always been this astronomical, however. Prior to 1980, the US imprisoned about 500,000 people (The Sentencing Project, n.d.). The boom in imprisonment experienced by the US was unique. According to Alexander (2010), between 1960 and 1990, the rates of crime in the US matched those in Finland and Germany. The rate of imprisonment in Germany stayed the same, while Finland's decreased by 60%. During this same thirty-year period, the rate of imprisonment in the US quadrupled. Today, the rate has increased nearly fivefold since 1980.

Some believe the steep increase in the rate of imprisonment in the US resulted from *tough on crime* legislation (Meiners, 2009), which included such policies as the war on drugs, mandatory minimum sentences, and three strikes laws. In the first case, in response to the influx of drugs to the US during the 1960s, President Nixon declared a war on drugs (A Brief History of the Drug War, 2015) in June 1971. But it was not until Reagan's presidency that the war on drugs was expanded so as to spark the movement toward mass imprisonment that we see today. The war on drugs criminalized drug possessions not previously criminalized, increased police surveillance in urban neighborhoods, and enforced tougher drug sentences. Second, mandatory minimum sentences (What Are Mandatory Minimums? 2014) automatically prescribed sentences of a particular length for people convicted of certain crimes. This removed autonomy and leniency from judges' sentencing

decisions. This policy also imprisoned greater numbers of people and lengthened their sentences. Finally, no matter the charge, three-strikes-and-you-are-out laws (Three Strikes Basics, 2015) automatically imprisoned three-time convicted people for significant amounts of time (in California, for life), sometimes for offenses that otherwise would result in much lesser consequences. An example is the case of Gary Ewing, who received a 25 years-to-life sentence for stealing golf clubs. In sum, many social scientists believe the boom in imprisonment that began in the 1980s resulted from policies that led to more arrests, more convictions, and longer sentences.

Another theory holds that prosecutors are to blame for the boom in imprisonment (Pfaff, 2012). Data on prosecutorial felony filings from thirty-four states show a steady increase each year since 1994 (the date at which such data became available). This micro level data is substantiated by macro level data showing that this greater number of felony filings were supported by an increase in fiscal capacity to support prison growth. Spelman (2009) found that resource availability accounted for 30 percent of the variation in prison population, meaning that prison populations grew with the rising flow of cash pumped into them.

Ironically, the aforementioned factors, believed to have set the stage for the boom in imprisonment, came at a time in history marked by a decline in crime (Roeder, et al., 2015). A report by the Brennan Center for Justice (Roeder, et al., 2015), which analyzed over thirty years of criminal justice data from all fifty states and the fifty largest cities in the country, found that the movement toward mass imprisonment was not the cause of this decline in crime. Rather, the report found that a targeted policing approach called CompStat accounted for a five to fifteen percent

decrease in crime in the cities that introduced the technique. Additionally, certain social, economic, and environmental factors played a role in the decline in crime. These factors included the aging population, changes in income, decreased alcohol consumption, increased consumer confidence, and a decrease in inflation. The paradox of increased imprisonment at a time when crime was decreasing has inspired scholars to theorize about the roots causes of the movement toward mass imprisonment. Many of these theories are based on statistics that show that minority populations are vastly overrepresented in and disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system (Alexander, 2010; Davis, 2003; Fowler, 2011; Meiners, 2009; 2011).

The Disproportionate Imprisonment of Minority Populations

No other country in the world imprisons ethnic minorities as disproportionately as the US (Gottschalk, 2006). Western (2007) contended that the experience of imprisonment is so pervasive among some social groups that it is a defining feature of their collective life experience, meaning that imprisonment characterizes the groups and influences their life chances. For black men, imprisonment has become a common life event that now rivals or overshadows their frequency of military service or college graduation (Pettit & Western, 2004). Forty percent of imprisoned people self-identify as black (Roeder, et al., 2015), while black people account for only thirteen percent of the US population (USA QuickFacts, 2015). According to Petit and Western (2004), black people, on average, are about eight times more likely than whites to be in state or federal prison.

Young black men are especially vulnerable to imprisonment. According to Meiners (2009), from 2002-2004, blacks accounted for 16% of youth in the US but

28% of juvenile arrests, 30% of referrals to juvenile court, 37% of the detained population, 34% of youth formally processed by the juvenile court, 30% of adjudicated youth, 35% of youth judicially waived to criminal court, 38% of youth in residential placement, and 58% of youth admitted to state adult prison. Overall, youth of color are significantly more likely than white youth to be removed from their homes, tried as adults in court, and sent to adult prison (Meiners, 2009).

It is no surprise then that the lifetime likelihood of imprisonment for people of color is significantly greater than that of white people (Racial Disparity, 2015). For men, 1 in 17 white men will go to prison at some point in their lives while 1 in 3 black men and 1 in 6 Latino men will spend time in prison. For women, 1 in 111 white women will go to prison at some point in their lives while 1 in 18 black women and 1 in 45 Latina women will spend time in prison.

Though men comprise the majority of imprisoned people, rates of imprisonment for women and gender non-conforming people have grown disproportionately in recent decades when compared to rates for men (Criminal Justice? n.d.; Incarcerated Women, 2012). Since the boom in imprisonment that began in the 1980s, the number of imprisoned women has increased by nearly 650%, as compared to a 419% increase for men. Furthermore, 54% of a national sample of transgender and gender non-conforming people reported having had contact with police, with 16% of all transgender and gender non-conforming people having been imprisoned. Forty-seven percent of those same people identified as African American, and thirty percent identified as American Indian. Also notable are the disparities between gender identity and contact with prison. Twenty-one percent of imprisoned

transgender people identify as male-to-female (MTF) whereas ten percent identify as female-to-male (FTM) (Criminal Justice? n.d.).

Poverty is yet another characteristic shared among the majority of imprisoned people (Western & Pettit, 2010). “Class inequalities in [imprisonment] are reflected in the very low educational level of those in prison and jail” (Western & Pettit, 2010, p. 1). About 70% of state prisoners lack a high school diploma, and this comes at a time when employment opportunities for people with a high school diploma or less have deteriorated. Unsurprisingly, many people are unemployed or underemployed prior to becoming imprisoned. This disparity compounds at the intersection of race and class. Thirty-seven percent of black men who lack a high school diploma are imprisoned, whereas approximately 10% of white men who lack a high school diploma are imprisoned. Incidentally, 68% of black men born since the mid-1970s who lack a high school diploma have a prison record.

To make matters worse, the consequences of imprisonment follow people upon their release from prison, further disadvantaging them as they emerge with a criminal record and lack employable skills (Lyons & Pettit, 2011). Wages grow at a 21% slower rate for black compared to white ex-imprisoned people. Previously-imprisoned blacks also enjoy fewer wage returns compared to their work history as compared to their white counterparts.

Theories about Mass Imprisonment

At a time when crime was declining, why did imprisonment increase? And why have people from minority populations been so starkly impacted? Furthermore, why would the imprisonment rate for women increase disproportionately to that of

men? Many scholars have theorized that political interests and structural inequities underlie these trends in the movement toward mass imprisonment.

New Jim Crow theory. One such theory is the idea that mass imprisonment functions as America's "New Jim Crow Laws" (Alexander, 2010). After the abolition of slavery, Jim Crow segregation laws kept black people socially excluded and subordinate in status, unable to achieve social mobility or civil participation. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (following the Supreme Court's Brown decision of 1954) officially outlawed Jim Crow segregation laws, a new rhetoric of law and order soon arose thereafter. In response to the social movements and influx of drugs during the 1960s, a conservative revolution was sparked during the Nixon presidency. These effects carried over through Reagan's presidency with the declaration of the war on drugs, which, as previously mentioned, marked a turning point toward the boom in imprisonment. Although people of color and white people use and sell drugs at similar rates, people of color have been and continue to be convicted of drug offenses at rates out of proportion to their white counterparts.

In response to mass imprisonment's disproportionate impact on poor people of color, Alexander (2010) argues,

Mass [imprisonment] in the United States ha[s], in fact, emerged as a stunningly comprehensive and well-disguised system of racialized social control that functions in a manner strikingly similar to Jim Crow... Although this new system of racialized social control purports to be colorblind, it creates and maintains racial hierarchy much as earlier systems of control did. Like Jim Crow (and slavery), mass [imprisonment] operates as a tightly networked

system of laws, policies, customs, and institutions that operate collectively to ensure the subordinate status of a group defined largely by race. (p.13)

Alexander (2010) argues that the war on drugs is the vehicle by which extraordinary numbers of black men are rounded up and imprisoned. Then they are denied adequate representation, pressured to plead guilty, incur fines, are convicted, spend time in prison during which their lives are regulated and monitored, and finally released. Once released, they endure invisible punishment— sanctions imposed after their release, including homelessness due to denial of public housing after drug convictions; unemployment due to criminal records and a lack of employable skills; debt from court fines that they are unable to pay; inability to vote or serve on juries; and, many times, an internalization of the negative image according to which they have been portrayed, resulting in psychological harm that manifests in a variety of damaging ways.

Prison-Industrial Complex theory. Whereas Alexander (2010) contributes an argument based largely on race, scholars of Prison-Industrial Complex theory base their theory of mass imprisonment largely on economics and politics, with a racial component. Meiners (2009) called the Prison-Industrial Complex a

Multifaceted structure in the United States that encompasses the expanding economic and political contexts of the corrections industry: the increasing privatization of prisons and the contracting out of prison labor; the political and lobbying power of the corrections officers union; the framing of prisons and jails as a growth industry in the context of deindustrialization; the production, marketing, and sales of technology and security required to

maintain and expand the state of [imprisonment]; the racialized and hyperbolic *war on drugs*; the legacy of white supremacy in the United States; and more.

(p. 80-81)

This theory argues that the US is economically and politically driven to maintain a flow of human bodies into prisons because the government, business communities, and media profit from the growth of the prison industry (Davis, 2003). The bodies most vulnerable to this system are those from minority populations.

School-to-Prison Pipeline theory. “While the term [Prison-Industrial Complex] typically refers to connections between [prisons], the economy, and the political sphere, research demonstrates that education must be included in this definition” (Meiners, 2011, p. 549). School-to-prison pipeline theory specifically examines the school’s role in cultivating mass imprisonment.

Fears of youth violence in schools (particularly in urban schools with high concentrations of poor students and students of color) have led to an expansion of school-based policing and zero tolerance discipline (Fowler, 2011). Many urban schools even look and feel quite similar to prisons, as evidenced by the use of metal detectors, cameras, uniforms, prescribed patterns of movement, security guards, and police officers. The historical reality is that America's public schools are very safe, even when located in high crime neighborhoods. Yet school discipline is becoming increasingly punitive, moving from the schoolhouse to the courthouse. This is apparent in Texas, where a multiyear study determined that schools' discretionary decisions to suspend, expel, and/or criminalize student misbehavior contributed to student push-out, dropout, and imprisonment. Unsurprisingly, poor students and

students of color are overrepresented in school discipline, resulting in their overrepresentation in the school-to-prison pipeline. Incidentally, students with disabilities are overrepresented as well (Tulman & Weck, 2009).

Gender theory. Scholars who view the impact of imprisonment through a gendered lens see an economic system that forces men (very often poor men, men of color, and men without formal education) to provide for their families via black market economies (Alexander, 2010). They then become imprisoned and have to adapt to being dependent on others while locked within an institution founded on notions of hegemonic masculinity (Acker, 1992) and heteropatriarchy (Harris, 2011), which often manifest as gender violence. Not only does this paradox—dependency on others paired with the power associated with hegemonic masculinity—negatively affect imprisoned people, but this paradox also spills over outside of prison, negatively affecting non-imprisoned families and communities as well (Appel & Davis, 2011).

This spillover effect (Hagan & Foster, 2012; Weiner & Lutz, 2009) has contributed to increasing numbers of women becoming involved—both directly and indirectly—in the criminal justice system. These women are impacted economically when loved ones become imprisoned. Thus, a feminization of poverty (Sudbury, 2002) occurs as poor, black women become overrepresented in the social welfare system and sensationalized by media representations of them as “welfare queens” (Sudbury, 2002). Women are also impacted emotionally by the collateral damage of gender violence that spills over when a loved one endures institutionalization based in hegemonic masculinity (Acker, 1992) and heteropatriarchy (Harris, 2011). This manifests in a higher incidence of domestic altercations and crimes of passion, often

dramatized by the media (Sudbury, 2002). Though black women do not use or sell drugs at rates higher than their counterparts of other races, black women have also been targeted in the war on drugs and crack epidemic (Sudbury, 2002). The media have played a role in further sensationalizing the image of black women in portraying them as “crack whores” (Sudbury, 2002).

Effects of Imprisonment on Imprisoned People

Denying freedom to great numbers of people—disproportionately people from minority communities— is only one of the many negative effects of mass imprisonment. Imprisonment also creates a number of long-term negative consequences on human wellbeing. Haney (2003) argues that, caused by overcrowding, poor living conditions, poor management, and little access to programming, the stress, trauma, and idleness posed on imprisoned people negates the rehabilitative goals of imprisonment. Therefore, once released, there is little hope for imprisoned people once they transition back into the free world (Sadeh & McNiel, 2015; Warner, 2007).

What is more, when they are imprisoned for significant amounts of time, people become institutionalized to the norms of prison culture (Haney, 2003). Upon their release, previously-imprisoned people face significant challenges in adapting to a society absent of the rigid structure of prison. Institutionalization can damage interpersonal relationships, as antisocial behaviors that are normative in prison—hyper vigilance, interpersonal distrust, suspicion, emotional over-control, alienation, psychological distancing, social withdrawal, isolation, and exploitation—challenge relationships in the free world where such behaviors are non-normative.

Institutionalization may also facilitate a diminished sense of self-worth and personal value and, many times, lead to post-traumatic stress disorder, further challenging re-entry into society. Carrying this further, many previously imprisoned people emerge from prison with an array of physical and mental health problems due to the substandard conditions of prisons and jails.

The denial of civil liberties upon transitioning back into the free world is another barrier faced by previously imprisoned people. Meiners (2009) used the term “civil death” to refer to the civil consequences beyond imprisonment. These include restrictions on voting, employment, and social services. According to a 2007 report from the Sentencing Project, 5.7 million Americans, or one in 41 adults, have currently or permanently lost their right to vote as a result of a felony conviction (Meiners, 2009).

Beyond civic consequences, imprisonment imposes severe social and economic consequences as well. First, securing a living wage becomes increasingly difficult. Many employers deny employment to people with criminal records. Upon release, many people who are placed on community correction supervision are unable to work due to electronic monitoring. Second, securing housing is a challenge. Many people experience homelessness as a result of denial of public housing access due to their convictions. Finally, previously imprisoned people sometimes endure the removal of their children by court decisions that they are unfit parents as a consequence of imprisonment (Meiners, 2009). Indeed, this extreme decision not only affects the imprisoned parent(s) but also the children and other family members involved.

Effects of Imprisonment on Families

Family structure, financial relationships, income levels, emotional support systems, and living arrangements may be adversely affected by imprisonment (Lengyel, 2006; Meiners, 2009; Travis, McBride, & Solomon 2005). These effects most severely impact those closest to imprisoned persons—namely, their children (Geller, Garfinkle, & Western, 2011; Hagan & Foster, 2012; Schenwar, 2014) and closest loved ones (Bandelet, 1999; Friedman, 2012; Schenwar, 2014; Siennick, et al., 2014; Travis, et al., 2005). According to Lengyel (2006), imprisoning particular types of people has a higher social cost than other types of people. There is no “average” prisoner. In particular, imprisoning parents has a very high social cost due to the collateral damage it causes to their families. This collateral damage costs the public, which provides social services to their families and children once a parent is imprisoned. Moreover, once a parent is imprisoned, their children are more likely to become imprisoned in the future, resulting in exponential social costs.

Children. Children of imprisoned people experience extreme adversity. In situations where their parents are deemed unfit by court decision, children of imprisoned parents must be uprooted from their home either to live with a willing relative or to be placed in the custody of the state (Meiners, 2009; Schenwar, 2014). Many babies born to imprisoned mothers are immediately shipped off to foster care; more than half of mothers in prison never see their children while imprisoned. The infant mortality rate for babies born to imprisoned mothers is nearly 30% higher than the infant mortality rate of the general population (Schenwar, 2014). In some American schools, those situated in “high imprisonment neighborhoods” (Hawkins,

2010), as many as one fifth of fathers have spent time in prison during their child's primary education. This contributes to a "spillover" (Hagan & Foster, 2012; Weiner & Lutz, 2009) effect: these children experience challenges in school connected to poor attendance, lack of resources, stigma that teachers have regarding their educational prospects and that being a self-fulfilling prophecy, and negative association with college completion (Hagan & Foster, 2012). These adversities follow children of imprisoned parents upon their parents' release from prison, as parents are at a diminished capacity to financially support their children upon release (Geller, Garfinkle, & Western, 2011; Lyons & Pettit, 2011). The adversity that children of imprisoned parents face manifests in a variety of ways: they are more likely than children of non-imprisoned parents to be involved in addiction (American Council for Drug Education, 1999), to lag educationally (Hagan & Foster, 2012), to have psychological and emotional issues (Geller, et al., 2011), and to later become imprisoned themselves (Schenwar, 2014).

Loved ones. Relationships between prisoners and non-prisoners are extraordinarily burdensome. Most marriages between prisoners and non-prisoners end in divorce (Siennick, Steward, & Staff, 2014). The challenges of maintaining a relationship through imprisonment are largely due to the financial and physical strains caused by having an imprisoned partner (Bandelet, 1999; Friedman, 2012; Schenwar, 2014; Siennick, et al., 2014; Travis, et al., 2005). Once a partner becomes imprisoned, their financial obligations either are put on hold or are assumed by their loved ones. For people who were once financial providers, becoming imprisoned necessitates that the non-imprisoned partner rearrange their life in order to provide financially.

Furthermore, the emotional support typically provided by loved ones becomes strained with the imprisonment of a partner (Bandelet, 1999; Friedman, 2012; Schenwar, 2014; Siennick, et al., 2014; Travis, et al., 2005). First, the non-imprisoned partner may endure stigma, judgment, or scrutiny surrounding their relationship with an imprisoned person. Second, imprisonment causes barriers to communication (Bandelet, 1999; Friedman, 2012; Schenwar, 2014; Siennick, et al., 2014; Travis, et al., 2005). For example, phone calls are expensive, limited, and monitored; many institutions bar contact visits; and, in the event of a long-distance imprisonment, visitation is either burdensome or impossible. Intimacy (Bandelet, 1999; Friedman, 2012; Travis, et al., 2005)—both physical and emotional—is also challenged. Conjugal visits are rare in the US, and when they are available, they are subject to invasive searches, strict rules, and constant surveillance.

Effects of Imprisonment on Communities and the Public

Mass imprisonment involves immense expenses paid for by taxpayers; yet public spending on imprisonment has a negative return on investment (Scheweinhart, et al., 2005). Additionally, spending on imprisonment detracts from spending on education. In many high-crime cities, such as Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and Houston, more money is spent on imprisonment than education (Hawkins, 2010). What is more, families dealing with the imprisonment of a loved one suffer psychological and economic trauma, costing the public more in social services (Hawkins, 2010; Lengyel, 2006). Despite evidence that spending on imprisonment is by far one of the worst public investments, the epidemic of mass imprisonment presently costs taxpayers approximately \$260 billion annually (Roeder, et al., 2015).

Aside from the economic costs associated with mass imprisonment, the epidemic has immense social costs (Hawkins, 2010; Lengyel, 2006). Imprisoned people largely hail from poor and racially segregated communities. As such, the imprisonment of loved ones in already disadvantaged communities further disadvantages those same communities by the social, emotional, and financial spillover effect of imprisonment. To further compound this exponential disadvantage, oftentimes imprisoned people are released back to the same poor and racially segregated communities, which further entrenches the social, emotional, and financial burden through the challenges of re-entry.

Furthermore, poverty and racial segregation are said to contribute to criminal behavior (Rothstein, 2013; Weiner, Lutz, & Ludwig, 2009). Therefore, imprisoned people who return to poor and segregated communities upon release have greater chances of re-engaging in criminal behavior, diminishing the chances of social mobility for them, their families, and their communities. In sum, poverty and racial segregation lead to a cycle of re-involvement in the criminal justice system for all those involved.

Prison Reform

Most scholars agree that the US is experiencing an epidemic of mass imprisonment and that reform is imminent. There have been, however, several tensions regarding what reform agenda to pursue. The country has yet to experience a large-scale, cohesive reform movement. Instead, we are in the midst of some disconnected structural and transformative reforms. Though many initiatives show

promise, the country has yet to truly invest in what it would take to address the problem of mass imprisonment on a large scale.

Structural Reform

Structural reform involves changes to sentencing policies and changes to the structures of criminal justice systems. Most recently, by passing the Fair Sentencing Act, the Obama administration attempted a federal policy change to halt the boom in imprisonment (Federal crack cocaine sentencing, 2010). This act, through limitations on mandatory minimum sentences on crack cocaine arrests (which disproportionately affect poor communities of color), attempts to undo some injustices and ineffectiveness of tough on crime legislation of the 1980s. This act projects a decrease in the federal prison population by about 4,000 people in ten years.

Several states have implemented reforms in three areas: (1) altering their entire criminal justice system, (2) “front-end” reforms that reduce the number of people entering their state’s criminal justice system, and (3) “back-end” reforms that increase the number of people exiting and staying out of prison in their state (ACLU, 2011). First, systemic reforms include implementing evidence-based practices and risk-assessment instruments based on criminology or social science rather than fear or emotion, committees that oversee the reforms, and accurate fiscal impact statements. Second, front-end reforms include reducing pre-trial detention for people involved in low-risk crimes, reducing penalties for drug offenses, eliminating mandatory minimum sentences, eliminating three strikes laws and reclassifying low-level felonies as misdemeanors. Third, back-end reforms include eliminating “truth-in-sentencing” laws, which require people to serve 85% of their sentence before becoming eligible for

parole; expanding earned credits for prison, parole, and probation; using non-prison alternatives for technical and parole violations; increasing the transparency, oversight, and training of parole boards; creating parole eligibility for the elderly; and reinvesting savings in programs that reduce crime.

Moreover, some states have made strides in the way they respond to crime through the development of alternative courts (FAMM, 2011; Mitchell, Wilson, Eggers, & MacKenzie, 2012) and restorative justice practices (Bradshaw & Roseborough, 2005). These practices bypass the punitive justice model by responding to some issues typically defined as crime by using alternative means. For example, drug courts mandate people involved in drug crimes to attend drug treatment programs. These programs typically remove the involved criminal record upon completion of the program. In addition, restorative justice practices attempt to solve issues typically assigned to the criminal justice system by way of mediation between involved parties, reparation of harm, and reconciliation.

Transformative Reform

Transformative reform views crime as a social problem and attempts, through prevention and rehabilitation, to change the social ills that cause crime both before it starts and while people are involved in the criminal justice system.

Preventative reform. Preventative reform attempts to halt imprisonment before it starts. Schooling that is high quality, inclusive, and extends from early childhood through adulthood paints an overall portrait of what it takes to educate someone to prevent future imprisonment. The Perry/High Scope study examined the lives of 123 children born into poverty and who were considered high risks of failing

in school. The children were randomly divided into two groups—one group received a high-quality preschool program, and the other received no preschool. Schweinhart, et al. (2005) conducted the study's most recent phase by interviewing participants still living at age forty and found that the participants who received preschool were less likely to have been imprisoned and more likely to be employed and have higher academic achievements.

Schweinhart, et al. (2005) found that high-quality early childhood education significantly reduces likelihood of imprisonment later in life. These findings are consistent with those of Lochner and Moretti (2001), who found that with more years spent in school the probability of imprisonment decreases. These findings are also consistent with those of Lochner (2010), who found that increased school quality and educational attainment (especially high school completion) reduces rates of violent and property crime. In sum, more years spent in school, better quality of schooling, and higher achievement in school predict decreased risk of imprisonment later in life. Moreover, educational interventions for juveniles involved in delinquencies as well as community investment in programming for juveniles significantly decrease their likelihoods of future imprisonment as adults (Ending mass incarceration, n.d.).

Historically, however, early childhood education and juvenile programs have been underfunded and ill-conceived (A Call for Excellence in Early Childhood Education, n.d.). Moreover, as a result of unequal funding allocations, spending on education in poor communities of color (the residents of which are the most vulnerable to future imprisonment) is lower than spending on education in wealthier communities (Biddle & Berliner, 2002). Unfortunately, children who need the most educational

resources are those who receive the least. Unequal school funding schemes paired with runoff from the legalized racial segregation of yesteryear have perpetuated racial segregation in neighborhoods, contributing to the present racial segregation of schools (Rothstein, 2013). Racial segregation in the poorest schools depresses their economic disadvantage even further (Rothstein, 2013). Incidentally, court-ordered desegregation of schools dramatically decreased the incidence of crime but was never implemented to scale before its decline (Weiner, et al., 2009).

Rehabilitative reform. Rehabilitative reform uses the criminal justice system as a mechanism to facilitate transformation. Before prisons existed, convicted people were executed or tortured in order to punish them for their crimes (Foucault, 1995). Over time, this brand of punishment went out of style, and people envisioned criminal justice systems that were more humane. Prisons emerged as part of a humanistic dream meant to evade execution and torture and instead to rehabilitate convicted people of their perceived deficits, then release those same people back into society deficit-free (Gehring & Eggleston, 2007). Unfortunately, in some ways, torture has continued inside US prisons. From once-good intentions arose unintended consequences; dreams of rehabilitation inside prisons have not yet come true.

Much of the attempted rehabilitative reforms inside prisons have been based on the medical model: the belief that crime is a disease that presumably can be cured (Barnes, Beaver, & Boutwell, 2011; Martinson, 1974; Rhodes, 2000). From their inception in the US, prisons were created for the purpose of rehabilitating convicted people under this belief. The first prisons in the US were designed in the form of penitentiaries, which saw prisoners as wayward people situated in a spiritually corrupt

world, offering them an opportunity to achieve penance for their crimes through solitude, work, and worship (Gehring & Eggleston, 2007). These prisons failed at supporting convicted people to achieve penance because they were designed in the style of solitary confinement, which proved oppressive and destructive. However, early penitentiaries were successful at one goal: confining and restraining convicted people. Later institutions were designed in the form of reformatories. These institutions also saw convicted people as wayward but in need of training to become Christian gentlemen and gentlewomen. These prisons failed because they were based in sexist and ethnocentric values, which proved problematic for people who would not or could not ascribe to those values. Similarly, early reformatories, like early penitentiaries, were successful at confining and restraining convicted people, but not much else (Johnson, Dobrzanska, & Palla, 2005).

With the increases in imprisoned populations over time, prisons began to expand. With the expansion of prisons came the expansion of the range of rehabilitative programming offered. In 1974, Martinson reviewed all available literature about rehabilitative programming in prison (231 studies). He analyzed the efficacy of the programs by way of participants' rates of recidivism. According to the National Institute of Justice, recidivism "refers to a person's relapse into criminal behavior" and "is measured by criminal acts that resulted in rearrests, reconviction or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a [specified] period following the prisoner's release" (Recidivism, 2014). The types of programming studies that Martinson reviewed surrounded the following areas of rehabilitation: education and vocational training, therapy (individual and group counseling), transforming the

institutional environment, medical treatment (drugs and surgeries for behavior change), sentencing alterations, and decarceration. Martinson (1974) concluded that, “With few and isolated exceptions, the rehabilitative efforts that have been reported so far have had no appreciable effect on recidivism” (p. 25) and suggested that these findings meant one of two things: either (1) that the programming was not administered skillfully enough or (2) that programming alone could not overcome other factors contributing to criminal behavior. Martinson (1974) later admitted that the treatment programs he reviewed were based on a medical model of crime that overlooked the social factors related to crime.

When Martinson’s (1974) study emerged, the US was struggling with issues of social justice in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and Civil Rights Movement. Prior to the study, liberals began speaking out about the disproportionate numbers of poor and minority people in prisons and sought equality in treatment of convicted people. Conservatives, on the other hand, sought to reel in social unrest. Martinson’s (1974) study came at just the right time for the country to listen. What the country heard, however, was that it was impossible to rehabilitate convicted people, so it was necessary to imprison them in order to enhance public safety. This sparked a movement toward penal harm and set the stage for the movement toward mass imprisonment that began in the 1980s (Cullen, Jonson, & Stohr, 2013; Pratt, Gau, & Franklin, 2010). Apparently, the US was not ready to hear Martinson’s (1974) other suggestion: *that the country needed to examine the social issues that caused crime in the first place*. Though Martinson (1978) later admitted that his study had methodological flaws and that many prison rehabilitative programs *did* in fact

demonstrate efficacy in their ability to reduce recidivism, he upheld his previous recommendation that the US look toward society and beyond the convicted individuals themselves for solutions to reforming the criminal justice system. Unfortunately, however, Martinson's (1974) study encouraged prisons to become little more than human warehouses (Johnson, et al., 2005).

Today, overall, rehabilitative programming is sparse, limited, inconsistently implemented, lacking in resources, and highly subject to institutional volatility (Andrews, et al., 1990; Coffey, 1994; Kilgore, 2011; McKinney & Cotroneo, 2011; Palmer, 2012; Williford, 1994; Wilson, 1994). These shortcomings are compounded when it comes to rehabilitative programming for imprisoned women (Wilson, 1994). Although some rehabilitative programs today, on a small scale, demonstrate success in their ability to decrease rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Nally, Lockwood, Knutson, & Ho, 2012; Steurer, Linton, Nally, & Lockwood, 2010), increase rates of post-release employment (Davis, Bozick, Steele, Saunders, & Miles, 2013; Nally, Lockwood, Knutson, & Ho, 2012; Steurer, Linton, Nally, & Lockwood, 2010), contribute to personal transformation (Behan, 2014; Steurer, Linton, Nally, & Lockwood, 2010), and support re-entry into society (Steurer, Linton, Nally, & Lockwood, 2010), with such an astronomical population of imprisoned people, the purpose of most prisons is little more than custodial (Johnson, et al., 2005). Moreover, in light of the collateral damage caused by imprisonment to individual people, families, and communities, in-prison reform is failing on a macro level (Johnson, et al., 2005; Warner, 2007). The positive impact of rehabilitative programming is hidden from public view because the negative effects of imprisonment

are so overpowering. In fact, imprisonment alone is shown to increase the likelihood of one's re-involvement in the criminal justice system by five to fourteen percent as compared to doing nothing at all (Cullen, Jonson, & Eck, 2013). Considering this, according to Cullen, Jonson, and Stohr (2013), we have reached the tipping point of the penal harm movement that was spawned by the tough on crime policies and the misinterpretation of the Martinson (1974) study. Bipartisanly, we now agree that the penal harm movement costs too much and fails to keep the public safe, and that something must be done.

The Future of Prison Reform

Regarding what must be done, scholars are presently focused on two main areas of reform: (1) reducing the number of people in prison and (2) increasing the quality of corrections (Cullen, Jonson, & Eck, 2013; Williford, 1994). Reducing the number of people in prison would involve much bolder structural reforms than have been attempted to date (Spelman, 2009). (This might include decriminalizing much of what is now considered crime or offering alternatives to prison.) For the scope and purpose of this literature review, I will focus specifically on enhancing the quality of corrections.

In order to enhance the quality of corrections, scholars contend that it is necessary to set goals for what imprisoned people will achieve from corrections (Cullen, Jonson, & Eck, 2013). In the 1970s, Martinson (1974; 1978) suggested that, in the past, the goal of rehabilitative programs was to cure convicted people of perceived disease but implored us to think beyond the crime-as-disease paradigm.

Rotman's (1990) theory of the rehabilitation of criminal offenders built upon Martinson's (1974; 1978) groundwork study, arguing that there are two opposing concepts of rehabilitation: (1) *an authoritarian model* that bolsters oppressive, brainwashing interventions in alignment with the crime-as-disease paradigm and (2) *an anthropocentric model* that enhances human dignity and restoration to freedom. Indeed, the American public, at least in terms of the overall goal of personal transformation in prison, seems to agree with Rotman: Williford (1994) contended that the vast majority of Americans believe that imprisonment should serve to improve the lives of imprisoned people and prepare them for re-entry into democratic citizenship.

Prison models with promising outcomes in personal transformation. Some prison systems offer a modicum of Rotman's (1990) theory in practice, at minimum in their ability to support the personal transformation of imprisoned people. The Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) is one such example (Research Findings, 2015). The explicit mission of the Minnesota DOC is to reduce rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system and promote transformation in the people that are imprisoned in their custody. The Minnesota DOC has been quite successful in comparison to other states in which the average percentage of people who will remain free from custody within three years of release is about 34%. In contrast, 74% of convicted people in the custody of the Minnesota DOC will not become re-imprisoned within three years of release. This explicit focus on decreasing rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system corresponds with Rotman's (1990) belief that rehabilitation should restore freedom, not diminish the capacity for it as imprisonment has been shown to do. The Minnesota DOC only imprisons those who pose a threat to

community safety. Others are sentenced to community-based programs, restitution/fines, or probation/parole. Those people who *are* imprisoned engage in a variety of evidence-based programs based on their unique needs, including chemical dependency treatment, education, vocational training, cognitive behavior therapy, and intensive sex offender treatment. Additionally, since prison visits reduce reoffending, the Minnesota DOC purports to support family visitation. The Minnesota DOC also boasts a comprehensive reentry plan. Though the Minnesota model offers promise in decreasing rates of re-involvement with the criminal justice system through personal transformation, the model falls short in transforming the ecological systems surrounding imprisoned individuals.

Another program that supports Rotman's (1990) anthropocentric model in personal transformation is the InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI), a small-scale prison- within-a-prison model in collaboration with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (Council & Fabelo, 2002). The mission of this program is to "create and maintain a prison environment that fosters respect for God's law and rights of others, and to encourage the spiritual and moral regeneration of prisoners" (Council & Fabelo 2002, p. 1). Its goal is to "facilitate the life transformation of the member eliminating the thinking process which resulted in his [imprisonment] and to rebuild the member's value system, establishing a solid foundation for productive growth" (Council & Fabelo 2002, p. 1). Members of this program are voluntary, imprisoned within minimum-security custody levels 18-30 months from release, male, English-speaking, without significant medical problems, and without a history of sex offense. The program consists of three phases. The first phase consists of in-prison work, education,

support groups, mentoring, and Bible study with peer groups. The second phase is the same as the first phase with the addition of off-site community service. The third phase consists of six to twelve months of post-release aftercare. Two years after graduation, IFI graduates have significantly lower rates of re-arrest than a comparison group (17.3% vs. 35%) and significantly lower rates of re-imprisonment (8% vs. 20.3%) (Jonson, Eck, & Cullen, 2013). This program was also replicated in Minnesota and achieved similar results (Jonson, Eck, & Cullen, 2013). Similar to the Minnesota model mentioned above, the IFI model offers promise in decreasing rates of re-involvement with the criminal justice system through personal transformation, but the IFI model falls short in addressing the ecological systems surrounding imprisoned individuals.

Prison programs with promising outcomes. Within other prisons exist supplementary programs that offer rehabilitation in alignment with Rotman's (1990) anthropocentric model of personal transformation. In order to truly transform people, Andrews, et.al (1990), Martinson (1978), and Ward (2009) argued rehabilitation for imprisoned people must correspond to their individual needs and goals. Rehabilitation, when it is institutionalized, typically reaps diminishing returns. But rehabilitation under Rotman's (1990) anthropocentric model is not one-size-fits-all. Accordingly, rehabilitative programs with the best records of success cater specifically to subsets of the imprisoned population. For the scope and goal of this literature review, I will focus only on rehabilitative programs for adults. The juvenile population has a unique set of needs and goals, and it is outside the scope of this work (see Aos, et al., 2006).

Rehabilitative programming in Washington State boasts promising outcomes for specific subsets of the imprisoned population (Aos, et al., 2006). For those people who fit their respective profiles of eligibility, intensive drug treatment-oriented programs have decreased re-involvement in the criminal justice system by 17.9%; Washington's Dangerously Mentally Ill offender program has decreased re-involvement in the criminal justice system by 20.7%; and sex offender treatment in prison with aftercare has reduced re-involvement in the criminal justice system by 9.6%.

Other programs demonstrate efficacy through prison education programs. Steurer, et al. (2010) argued that there are nine benefits to prison education: (1) Education is an excellent reentry tool; (2) Imprisoned people understand the importance of education for their own success in life; (3) Education has deep roots in America prison history; (4) Academic education and vocational education reduce re-involvement in the criminal justice system and support employability after release; (5) Education is much more effective in reducing future crime than building prisons; (6) From a humanistic viewpoint, education is the right thing to do; (7) Education is the foundation for the success in other important program areas; (8) The true effect on re-involvement in the criminal justice system may be seriously underestimated; and (9) Education is effective as a prison population control tool. The next section will explore prison education in more detail, but first it is worth noting that motivation in the context of prison education is an important area of scholarship.

Motivation. For the scope and purpose of this literature review, I will not explore this area deeply. We might assume that a person's motivation for participating

in prison education certainly influences the outcome of the educational program. Provided that, an alignment with Rotman's (1990) anthropocentric model would provide for educational programming that is voluntarily selected by the participant and in alignment with their unique needs and goals. Mandating people to participate in a program against their will is certainly not in the interest of protecting human dignity and restoring freedom but rather in alignment with an authoritarian model of rehabilitation. Incidentally, mandated and prescribed educational programming does not boast as much success (Aos, et al., 2006).

Even in situations where imprisoned people are *not* mandated or prescribed educational programming, motivation in prison is ambiguous. An imprisoned person may be motivated to pursue prison education for a variety of reasons, some of which are non-educational—a reduced sentence, pay, access to better living conditions, access to other people in the class, etc. Nevertheless, the next portion of the literature review that explores prison education bears in mind that, although participation in the prison education programming explored here seems to be voluntary, what is considered voluntary in prison may not in fact be considered voluntary in the free world (Behan, 2014; Manger, Eikeland, Diseth, Hetland, & Asbjørnsen, 2010).

Prison Education

Prison education boasts a rich history over several distinct periods (Gehring & Eggleston, 2007; Johnson, Dobrzanska, & Palla, 2005; Silva, 1994). Its history began during the period from 1773 to 1875 after the US opened its first jail: the Walnut Street jail in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1773. Here, chaplains educated imprisoned people in Christianity. Soon thereafter, the Pennsylvania prison system emerged. This

system allowed imprisoned people, along with a chaplain educator in their solitary cells, to study the Bible. Next, resulting from the negative psychological effects of solitary confinement, the Auburn system—a group confinement model—emerged and allowed group Bible study. It was in an early Auburn-style prison in New York that the first needs assessment of imprisoned students was administered.

The aforementioned educational advancements happened only in men's prisons. During this period, a man committing a crime was not considered a significant occurrence, as criminal men were considered only one step above barbarians but still human. By contrast, a woman who committed a crime had fallen "so far from her natural state, and off the pedestal established by the culture, that she was, literally a fallen angel" (Gehring & Eggleston, 2007, p. 16). Though very few women prisoners existed during this period, those who did were confined to attics or isolated wings of men's prisons, responsible for the domestic chores of the prison, and excluded from educational programming. Imprisoned black women were treated even worse than imprisoned white women. When black women became imprisoned, they were sent to plantation prisons and enslaved along with imprisoned black men. There was no discernment between the treatments of black women versus black men prisoners.

The period from 1876 to 1900 marked a high point in prison education, attributed to the advancements of Zebulon Brockway, the superintendent of Elmira prison in New York. For his innovations in prison education, Brockway is regarded as the father of prison reform. At Elmira, Brockway built several school buildings, developed forty-two vocational trades, and established an array of academic courses and other related educational programs. Brockway's was the most serious experiment

in American prison programming to date, and education was at the heart of its design. Brockway hired college professors, school principals, and attorneys as civilian teachers. He also taught imprisoned people to be teachers. These peer educators attended training courses and served under civilian education faculty. Additionally, prison officers were encouraged to act more like teachers. The system supported academic freedom for both faculty and students; controversial topics were selected on purpose and discussed openly without constraints. Guest speakers, artists, performers, etc., brought the free world inside the prison. Other achievements of Brockway's model included the first imprisoned person-published newspaper, the creation of a special education department, and a civics and citizenship curriculum aimed at the large population of immigrants at Elmira.

The period from 1901 to 1929 boasted progressive reforms that carried the 1876 to 1900 period further. Miriam E. Carey began the first prison library service. In addition, after a juvenile facility demonstrated success in running a reform school governed like a republic, the same was attempted in an Auburn style prison. This experiment, "The Mutual Welfare League," proved very successful. During this same period, Brockway opened the first prison annex for women. Similar to the period before, however, women remained responsible for domestic chores, and male officers who sexually abused the imprisoned women often managed annexes. During this period, blacks, for the first time, had access to prison education. Even still, they were considered "defective delinquents" and subordinate to white prisoners. Prison education maintained Jim Crow segregation as did the free world: education units were separated by race and gender.

The period from the 1930s to 1941 saw the first systematic review of prison education programs by Austin MacCormick. He visited 110 of the 114 prisons in the US, reported on their educational programming, and recommended that the field of prison education professionalize. MacCormick then began implementing the then newly emerging principles of adult education into the field of prison education.

Attention was diverted from prison education because of World War II during the period from 1941 to 1945. Prisons were converted to factories to supply goods for the war. Many people who would have become imprisoned were instead sent to the front lines, and many prison educators went to war as well. In the post-World War II period, prison education struggled to regain the momentum lost due to the war.

From 1946 to 1963, prison education struggled to regain balance after the war. The industrial prison model continued. The period from 1964 to 1980 marked a transitional period during which no prison education leaders emerged, and prisons experienced challenges funding educational initiatives because federal education funds were invested mainly in public schools.

The 1980s marked the era of mass imprisonment, and with it came tough on crime rhetoric, which sparked public fear that imprisoned people would “learn their way out of prison” if educated, i.e., that prison education would create more savvy criminals. Public support and funding for prison education experienced great decline during this era; the zeal experienced in the field before World War II was gone.

(Gehring & Eggleston, 2007).

Prison Education Today

Today, prison education programs offer a range of models that differ by facility and by state. These programs range from adult basic education (ABE); adult secondary education (ASE), including preparation for the GED test or an equivalent alternative high school completion credential; vocational education; college coursework; special education; study release (Klein, Tolbert, Bugarin, Cataldi, & Tauschek, 2004); and other miscellaneous programs, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) (Olinger, et al., 2012) and creative arts programs (Hartnett, 2011).

Adult education in prison. Many prison education programs are guided by principles of adult education. I will now briefly explore three principles of adult education—*andragogy*, *self-directed learning*, and *transformative learning*. Then I will connect these principles to two examples of previously imprisoned adult education students: Malcolm X and Carl Upchurch.

First, *andragogy* (Knowles, 1980; Knowles & Associates, 1984) refers to the art and science of helping adults learn, which is distinct from teaching children. According to the literature on adult education, adult learners, as opposed to children, possess a wealth of life experiences from which their education might draw inspiration. Additionally, adult learners have a desire to immediately apply their learning to their goals. In the spirit of *andragogy*, adult educators work collaboratively with learners to develop objectives and methods that speak to the goals and life experiences of the learners. Second, *self-directed learning* (Brookfield, 1985) refers to the informal processes outside the classroom where adult learners engage in learning activities of a more complex and practical nature than is typically the case with

children and youth. Approximately 70 percent of adult learning is self-directed (Staff, 2011). With that being said, adult educators can support the self-directed learning of adult students through guidance and resources. Finally, transformative learning (Freire, 1993; Mezirow, 1997; 2000) refers to learning that changes the way adult learners think about themselves and their worlds. This type of learning involves a shift in consciousness. One example of this shift in consciousness is the confidence and opportunities an English language learner might experience upon achieving command of the English language. Adult educators can foster transformative learning within their classrooms by creating a culture of trust, empathy, care, and integrity; knowing the interests of their students; and developing learning activities that explore different points of view and critical thinking.

Two examples of adult students in prison whose learning followed the aforementioned three principles of adult education are Malcolm X (Haley & Malcolm X, 1964) and Carl Upchurch (Upchurch, 1996). Both of these adult learners drew upon their respective wealth of lived experiences, directed their own learning with guidance from formal and informal adult educators, and experienced transformation that ultimately led them away from lives of involvement in crime and toward a life characterized by leadership within activist communities.

Unfortunately, adult education in prisons across the country lacks consistent methodologies, missions, and assessment practices. Additionally, the data on educational provisions are deceptive, as the data are incomparable from state to state; educational offerings could comprise lectures over loudspeakers at some facilities and

highly rigorous and engaging programming at others (Lockard & Rankins-Robertson, 2011).

According to a report by the US Department of Education, about half the imprisoned population of the US participates in prison education, and approximately 90% of prisons offer educational programs to people imprisoned at their facilities (Klein, et al., 2004). However, the following details are missing: scope of prison offerings, size of course enrollments, intensity of educational coursework, course curriculum, standards, assessment, demand for educational services versus supply, intensity of participation, and program retention (Klein, et al., 2004).

Effects of Prison Education on Imprisoned People

Despite their lack of cohesion, prison education programs boast promising outcomes, provided they are well implemented. After controlling for selection bias, whereby people who elect to participate significantly differ from those who must participate mandatorily, a meta-analysis of fifty-eight academic and vocational prison education programs revealed that adults who participated had a 43% lower chance of becoming re-involved with the criminal justice system than those who did not participate (Davis, et al., 2013). Another study of prison education programs in Indiana found the rate of re-involvement in the criminal justice system was 29.7% among convicted people in the group who participated in a variety of prison education programs (Nally, et al., 2012). By comparison, the rate of re-involvement in the criminal justice system was 67.8% among convicted people, in comparison to the group who did not participate in prison education programs during imprisonment.

Additionally, research shows that people who participate in prison education are more likely to obtain post-release employment than people who do not participate. A report by the US Department of Education (Klein, et al., 2004) found that people involved in prison education programs were 13% more likely to obtain post-release employment than peers who were not involved. The same report also found that people involved in prison education earned higher wages post-release than those who were not involved (Klein, et al., 2004). In addition, a study that boasted a sample of over 14,000 imprisoned people revealed that career and technical education in prison is also associated with lower rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system, lower parole revocation rates, better post-release employment patterns, and better disciplinary records for participants than non-participants (Ward, 2009).

College education in prison is perhaps the best educational tool for decreasing the likelihood of re-involvement in the criminal justice system. According to the Wesleyan Center for Prison Education (Fact sheet, 2011), people who earn a degree while in prison are four times less likely to become re-imprisoned than the general prison population. Moreover, there is an inverse relationship between the type of degree earned and the likelihood of becoming re-imprisoned: Associate's (13.7%); Baccalaureate (5.6%); Master's (0%).

Reductions in rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system are not the only effect of prison education, however. According to Behan (2014), imprisoned people reported other positive, qualitative effects of prison education, including preparing for release, escaping the harsh environment of the prison, and personal transformation. Wright (2014) added that prison education fosters spaces that allow

people to construct and perform different identities, making participation in prison education an important, and perhaps crucial element for re-entry into society.

Effects of Prison Education on Families, Communities, and the Public

The results of studies by Davis, et al. (2013) and Nally, et al. (2012) suggest that prison education programs may serve as an important mechanism for reducing re-involvement in the criminal justice system among released convicted people. These results in turn suggest that prison education can reduce the collateral damage of imprisonment on families, communities, and the public. “It has been found that the best predictor of a child's educational success is the educational attainment of his or her mother across social classes, races, and ethnicities. This relationship has not, however, been tested across the telephone lines and geography separating children from mothers in prison” (Torre & Fine, 2005). Literature suggests that increases in parental educational levels relate to a variety of positive outcomes for their children, including educational success, occupational success, and health (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann, 2009; Flores, Bauchner, Feinstein, & Nguyen, 1999). Increased levels of parental education are also associated with increases in family income (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005), suggesting that parents who while in prison achieve increased educational levels are more likely to provide economically for their families upon release.

Prison education boasts at least three benefits to the general public. First, prison education dramatically reduces likelihood of re-involvement in the criminal justice system (Davis, et al., 2013; Nally, et al., 2012). Second, prison education reduces the collateral costs associated with the long-term warehousing of people,

including the psychological, social, and economic damage on imprisoned people, their families, and the community (Esperian, 2010). Third, public investment in prison education and vocational training programs result in powerful returns on public investment (Fowles, 2012; Moore, 1990). One study in Florida found a return of \$3.52 for every dollar of public investment (Moore, 1990). In Utah, \$6.03 was returned for every dollar of public investment in prison education (Fowles, 2012). What is more, when prison education was paired with post-release employment programs, \$13.66 was returned for every dollar of public investment (Fowles, 2012).

Barriers to Prison Education

Notwithstanding the promising impacts of prison education for imprisoned people, their families, communities, and the public, there are great barriers to reaping the full benefits. These barriers include funding, competing interests, and the gendered structure of prisons.

Funding. Not only did the tough on crime movement of the 1980s contribute significantly to a boom in imprisonment, but this movement also decreased funding for prison education programs (Palmer, 2012). Consequently, imprisonment became largely punitive and less rehabilitative. This punitive orientation contributed to increases in rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system, as people were released from prison in worse positions than when they entered.

Another significant decline in prison funding came with the abolition of Pell Grants for imprisoned students (Karpowitz, Kenner, & Initiative, 1995; Ubah, 2004). In 1965, Pell Grants were established to support the pursuit of college education for economically disadvantaged students. Until 1994, imprisoned students were able to

take advantage of this opportunity (Gehring & Eggleston, 2007; Silva, 1994). Even though college programs in prison are one of the best tools to decrease rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system (Fact Sheet, 2011), the Clinton administration abolished Pell Grants for prisoners. Thereafter, the percentage of prisons offering higher education programs decreased from 82.6 to 54.9, and the percentage of participants in prison-based higher education programs decreased from 7.3 to 3.8 (McCarty, 2006). Today, funding for college programs in prison is extremely low (Karpowitz, Kenner, & Initiative, 1995). Incidentally, the US Department of Education recently unveiled a plan to offer a limited exemption on the federal ban on prisoners receiving Pell Grants. However, no outcome data exists at this time.

Competing interests. Prison officials and prison educators tend to work with competing interests. Prisons overwhelmingly operate under the assumption that imprisoned people are dangerous to society; therefore, the prison is a closed institution that controls and confines imprisoned people in order to keep the public safe. Most prisons structure custody and control through hierarchical organization and rigid, authoritarian rules. By contrast, as previously explored, adult education principles support democratic classroom environments, open discussion, critical thinking, and self-direction. As such, core assumptions, organizational structures, and values clash, as prison education represents the intersection of two opposing paradigms. Consequently, conflicts often arise between prison officials and prison educators (Coffey, 1994; Carey, 1994; Jones & d'Errico, 1994; Licence, 1994; Warner, 2007; Williford, 1994; Wright, 2004).

Kilgore (2011) described several factors surrounding prison officials' concerns for security that inhibited his instruction as a GED tutor at a prison in California. Those factors included the institution's rigid approach to educational management and the institution's regulation of resources. It was common for classes to be cancelled due to concerns for security; students were not allowed the resources they needed (Internet, rulers, scissors, tape, etc.) to complete projects; books and calculators were in short supply and only allowed for the duration of class.

Lockard, and Rankins-Robertson (2011) and McCarty (2006) document the precedence that matters of prison administration take over education. Classes are often cancelled for lockdowns and other administrative matters. Students are regularly transferred in and out of classes due to work assignment changes and transfers between facilities. In addition, other appointments that students must attend are often scheduled at the same time as classes.

Competing interests often manifest in relations between prison educators and prison officials. On this point, Carey (1994)—a prison educator—argued that the treatment of educators by prison staff was problematic. Carey (1994) experienced discomfort around prison officials, who gave him the impression that his presence was an intrusion. Prison officials often mentioned that “good” prisoners were the ones who stayed uneducated, did menial tasks around the prison, and did not try to better themselves. Many prison officials also expressed anger that prisoners received a free education while officials had to pay for their children's education. Incidentally, 93% of prison wardens strongly support educational and vocational programming for adult

prisoners, but prison officers are less likely to support prison education (Torre & Fine, 2005).

Another way competing interests manifest is through opposing ideas of who constitutes a prison professional (Coffey, 1994). At many facilities, prison officials are treated as professionals, earning fair wages with benefits and ample opportunities for professional development. By contrast, prison educators rarely experience the same professional treatment. Prisons rarely employ full-time educational staff members; instead, prisons often sub-contract educators through outside community partnerships. When prisons partner with educational organizations in the community, oftentimes the most inexperienced educators are recruited to fulfill prison duties (Coffey, 1994). Continuing this further, prison educators often lack backgrounds specific to prison education. They enter prison without “a basic understanding of how the institution is run, how [imprisoned people] move within it, how the [prison] clock of shifts, counts, distribution of medications, and meals ticks” (Coffey, 1994, p. 77).

In a prison-university partnership between Wende Correctional Institution and SUNY Buffalo, competing interests manifested by the eventual shutdown of a highly successful prison education program (Licence, 1994). Through this program, imprisoned students undertook leadership and teaching roles; others pursued terminal degrees. The program was discontinued because prison staff felt it gave imprisoned students too much power and feared prisoner takeover of the facility. Licence (1994) urged that, in order for prison-university partnerships to function, it is necessary to address the lack of legislative and executive recognition that the goal of prisons is to

empower people and to provide resources to help imprisoned people to re-enter society in non-criminal ways.

Gendered structure of prison. The gendered structure of the institution constitutes another barrier to prison education. According to Britton (2003), “the ways that we think about prison are deeply gendered and reflect an exaggerated version of life in men’s institutions, one in which ‘real men’ contend for the prize of masculine physical dominance” (p. 2). The way we imagine that a “real prison” should function is evident in the way we have dealt with imprisoned women over the years. Women have not “belonged” in prisons, as evidenced by their design along a hegemonic, masculine stereotype. As mentioned earlier, in the early history of prisons, women were remanded to an attics or hidden places (Gehring & Eggleston, 2007). The thinking was that if women became imprisoned, it meant they had completely fallen from their graces and needed to be trained in domesticity in order to redeem their womanhood. Even when separate women’s prison facilities were first opened, rehabilitative programming for women was dominated by domestic training.

According to Wilson (1994), prisons have held long-standing histories of rehabilitating women through gendered rehabilitation programs, mostly involving domestic tasks. In addition, men’s prisons boast more educational programs than women’s prisons. Still today, imprisoned women have less access to rehabilitative and educational programming than imprisoned men (Wilson, 1994). Of course, gender inequities exist in many institutions, not only prison. One such institution is higher education. Gender inequities in higher education compounded by gender inequities in prison have fostered prison based higher education programs as ripe environments for

magnetizing the gendered barriers to prison education. Continuing this further, Case and Fassenfest (2004) found that prison vocational education for women pales in comparison to prison vocational education for men. Vocational educational opportunities for women, unsurprisingly, surround female-dominated and low-paying industries, such as clerical work and cosmetology.

Another gendered barrier involves female prison educators. Though women dominate the teaching profession, many female teachers entering the male hegemony of prison experience condemnation. One way this condemnation manifests is when female teachers demonstrate care (Noddings, 1992) inside men's prisons. Within prisons, care is easily misconstrued as romance (Wright, 2004). For example, while working at a men's prison and demonstrating care, Richards-Allerton (1994) experienced inappropriate sexual comments by a student. Prison officials disciplined the student harshly. Thereafter, however, prison staff became hyper-vigilant of the behavior of *both* the teacher and students. This hyper vigilance caused a breakdown of the trusting relationship between teacher and students, which diminished the educational focus of the class.

Similarly, conflicts arise when female teachers teach female students. According to Lempert, Bergeron, and Linker (2005), prison officials regularly questioned the expertise of female teachers. Officials never regarded female teachers as professionals but rather as "nice ladies" coming to teach "the ladies." Oftentimes prison officials considered teachers "visitors" and subjected them to the same search procedures as family and friends visiting imprisoned loved ones (Lempert, Bergeron, & Linker, 2005).

Many female prison educators feel trapped in a no-win situation (Britton, 2003; Richards-Allerton, 1994). If they care too much about students, they are suspect by prison officials. If they care too little about students, they are unable to establish the rapport necessary to facilitate transformative educational experiences for students. Many female prison officials also experience the same no-win orientation (Britton, 2003). As such, a relational midpoint constitutes a nearly impossible feat for women working in prisons (Wright, 2004).

It is important to note that the literature surrounding gender and prison education orients around a gender binary (Butler, 1990). Little, if any, literature surrounding prison education and transgender students and teachers exists.

Abolitionist Pedagogy

As previously explored, prison education has enormous potential to promote the personal transformation of imprisoned people, leading to decreased rates of re-involvement in the criminal justice system, increased rates of post-release employment, positive impacts on families and communities, and returns on public investment. However, personal transformation, though laudable, represents only half of the prison reform equation (Martinson, 1978; 1978; Rotman, 1990). Social transformation is needed to balance the rest. Prison abolitionists (Davis, 2003; Prison Research Education Action Project, 2005) contend that the boom in imprisonment cannot be attributed to a boom in individual criminal behavior alone. Rather, society shares responsibility for the boom in imprisonment and must therefore respond by transforming the ecological systems that lead people toward imprisonment (as

explored in the Theoretical Framework section). Abolitionist pedagogy comprises one avenue toward such transformations.

Abolitionist Pedagogy Defined and Explored

Though the prison abolition community has yet to establish an agreed upon definition, pedagogical method, or path for abolitionist pedagogy, the following definition captures the spirit of literature surrounding abolitionist pedagogy: *inspired by prison abolition theory and critical, democratic, participatory pedagogy, education that intends, through corresponding content and instructional methods, to liberate society from the devastation of imprisonment while reconstructing more just and equitable systems of justice.* In a like manner, the following captures the spirit of pedagogical methods utilized within the community: (1) problematization and naming of the issue of mass imprisonment; (2) criticism of accepted knowledge and power structures surrounding the prison and interconnected systems; (3) consideration of alternatives to imprisonment and different courses of action; (4) acting along these lines to transform individual selves and society (Barraclough, 2010; Bordt & Carceral, 2012; Corr, Kraemer, Lankford, Robert, & Lai, 2010; Critical Resistance, 2015; Davis, 2003; Harkins & Meiners, 2014; Hartnett, 2011; Hill, 2013; Jackson & Meiners, 2010; Kilgore, 2011; Larson, 2011; Lawston & Meiners, 2014; Meiners, 2009; 2011; Palmer, 2012; Rodriguez, 2010; Scott, 2014).

An additional note of importance is that the prison abolition community has not agreed upon a path toward abolition. Although the ultimate objective of abolitionist pedagogy is liberation from imprisonment and interconnected systems of oppression, steps to get there are inexplicit. One reason for this may be that a variety

of prison reform efforts have been implemented unsuccessfully from the top down (Rodriguez, 2010; Scott, 2014). Instead of continuing on that same unsuccessful path, abolitionist pedagogy seeks instead to rely on the expertise of people who have firsthand experience with the prison system, reasonably trusting that a path toward abolition can emerge through the work of students involved in abolitionist pedagogy.

Literature surrounding abolitionist pedagogy is sparse. From the literature that exists, two distinct themes emerge: (1) resisting banking pedagogy and (2) collaborating with interconnected systems (not just the prison) in the work of abolition.

Resisting banking pedagogy. As explored in the Theoretical Framework, banking pedagogy is defined as education for cultural transmission, which trains people by presuming they are empty vessels into which cultural knowledge can be deposited (Freire, 1993; Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972). One way abolitionist educators resist banking pedagogy is by asserting a deliberate stance as abolitionists (Larson, 2011). Larson (2011) suggests that abolitionist educators encourage their students to “peacefully transform/abolish the prison” by democratically working alongside prison personnel “to raise local and national solidarity” (p. 11). Similarly, Harkins and Meiners (2014) express the importance of resisting banking pedagogy within college programs in prison, asserting that, although some college programs in prison might achieve abolitionist outcomes, not all college programs in prison claim abolitionist stances. Harkins and Meiners (2014) asserted that abolitionist educators be wary that college prison programs tend to support university and prison agendas, many of which align with banking pedagogy values.

Collaborating with interconnected systems. One interconnected system involves education outside of prison. A substantial body of literature explores abolitionist pedagogy happening in classrooms outside of prison (Barraclough, 2010; Bordt & Carceral, 2012; Corr, et al., 2010; Hill, 2013; Jackson & Meiners, 2010). Meiners (2009) proposes four ways that educational systems outside of prison can ally with the abolitionist agenda: (1) by dismantling educational policies that disenfranchise vulnerable communities; (2) by auditing post-secondary institutions for the points of access for those formerly imprisoned; (3) by supporting programs that provide educational access to imprisoned people; and (4) by advocating for free post-secondary education.

The literature surrounding abolitionist pedagogy outside of prison suggests that students are inspired toward imagining the possibility of an abolitionist future (Barraclough, 2010; Corr, et al., 2010; Hill, 2013; Jackson & Meiners, 2010). In one study, Bordt & Carceral (2012) explored a traditional university course co-taught by the professor of record and an imprisoned scholar. This project inspired students to imagine abolitionist futures. The professor of record praised the effort, claiming that it was a “subversive project useful to the prison abolition movement” (Bordt & Carceral, 2012, p. 25).

Models of Abolitionist Pedagogy

Literature on prison-based abolitionist pedagogy is largely theoretical (Rodriguez, 2010; Scott, 2014). Few models of successful prison projects in abolitionist pedagogy exist in the literature (Hartnett, 2011). Looking inside U.S. prisons, communications expert Stephen John Hartnett (2011) detailed a myriad of

prison educational projects that are abolitionist in nature. One of these projects—Prison Creative Arts Project—whose participants are comprised of high school youth, imprisoned youth, and imprisoned adults—have created 463 original plays, have given 154 readings of their creative writing, and have participated in more than 80 art workshops “dedicated to practicing resistance to the prison-industrial complex” (p. 151). The Theater of Empowerment offered at Racine Correctional Institution offers imprisoned people an opportunity to “challenge dehumanizing stereotypes and daily humiliations of the prison-industrial complex” by way of an “ensemble of theater games and exercises” (p. 251). Finally, by way of the creation of a learning community of imprisoned and non-imprisoned people, the Inside-Out Prison Exchange program “is dedicated to stopping the cycle [of dehumanization that occurs in prison] and is based on the belief that by engaging in dialogue, people on both sides of prison walls can discover new ways of thinking about themselves...society, and the systems that keep us all imprisoned” (p. 253). Aside from Hartnett (2011), however, few successful models of prison-based abolitionist pedagogy are explored in the present body of literature.

Barriers to Prison-Based Abolitionist Pedagogy

Scott (2014) explored one reason there are so few successful models of prison-based abolitionist pedagogy: abolitionist pedagogy’s aim of ending mass imprisonment competes with the prison’s interest in maintaining its survival. Competing interests manifest either when abolitionist prison educators choose to work subversively (Bordt & Carceral, 2012; Kilgore, 2011; Larson, 2011) or when they are forced to end their work entirely (Kilgore, 2011). Aside from competing interests, to

my knowledge no other barriers to prison-based abolitionist pedagogy are explored in the literature. As I will explore further in much of what follows, among these unexplored barriers is the gendered nature of prisons.

The action research of prison educator James Kilgore (2011) explores competing interests that challenge prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. In his study, Kilgore attempted to incorporate components of abolitionist pedagogy into his instruction. Kilgore admitted, however, that his pedagogy was not radical enough to have significantly transformed his students. He feared, “With such an approach I would not have survived for long...[The prison system] had long since figured out how to handle such subversion and make sure it does not spread among the population” (Kilgore, 2011, p. 63). The “subversion” to which Kilgore referred is what prison education expert Shelby Palmer (2012) refers to as “[t]he philosophical divide between the language of liberation [synonymous with abolitionist pedagogy] and the practice of control expressed in the authoritarian environment of [prisons]” (p. 163).

Summary

At present, the rate of imprisonment in the US is astronomical. This rate is inconsistent with both the rest of the world and the declining rate of crime. Beginning in the 1980s, the US experienced a major boom in imprisonment that has disproportionately impacted people from minority populations, and many scholars have theorized that the impact on minority communities is largely rooted in the inequities of institutions such as the government, educational system, economic system, and gender. Imprisonment not only harms imprisoned people but also their

families and communities. In fact, all taxpayers are affected by imprisonment, whether they are personally connected to someone who is imprisoned or not.

There has been no reform initiative large enough in scale or scope to address the epidemic of mass imprisonment presently facing the US. However, small-scale successful prison reform initiatives have been attempted on the structural and transformative levels. Structural initiatives include changes to federal and state criminal justice policies. Transformative initiatives include prevention and rehabilitation. In-prison rehabilitative programs that boast significant outcomes align with an anthropocentric model of rehabilitation. Provided its alignment with the anthropocentric model, prison education is an especially effective rehabilitative reform initiative.

Prison education boasts a rich history but also a history marked by struggle to keep it alive. Though the positive outcomes of prison education are myriad, barriers to successful implementation have hindered reaping the full benefits of robust prison education programs. Three of the most salient barriers to prison education include funding, competing interests, and the gendered structure of the prison itself.

The purpose of abolitionist pedagogy is to use education as a mechanism to abolish the systems that foster the epidemic of mass imprisonment. Upon review, two themes emerge from the literature surrounding abolitionist pedagogy: (1) resisting banking pedagogy and (2) collaborating with interconnected systems. Largely due to the barriers that exist, few successful models of prison-based abolitionist pedagogy have been documented in the literature. At present, competing interests are the only documented barriers to prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. A motivating factor for

this study is that no literature surrounding the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy presently exists.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will first provide an overview of the methodological paradigm within which this study is situated. Next, I will outline the procedures used to collect and analyze data. Finally, I will provide a rationale for my choice to transform the findings from this study into fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison.

The Naturalistic Paradigm

According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), naturalistic inquiry refers to the collection of data without manipulation of the environment. This method of inquiry honors five axioms: (1) multiple, constructed notions of reality; (2) interaction between knower and known; (3) time- and context-bound working hypotheses; (4) synonymy of cause and effect; and (5) value-bound inquiry. Provided the alignment of these axioms with the contextual and theoretical frameworks within which this study operated, naturalistic inquiry was appropriate for this study (see Table 2 for more detail). Social reconstruction theory, which assumes the possibility of a different,

Table 2

Rationale for Naturalistic Inquiry

Axiom of naturalistic inquiry	Alignment to study
(1) Multiple, constructed notions of reality	Social reconstruction theory maintains that it is possible to reconstruct a better society (see Theoretical Framework in Chapter 1)
(2) Interaction between knower and known	My feminist standpoint within an institution of hegemonic masculinity offers valuable insight (see Feminist Standpoint Theory and Strong Objectivity section below)
(3) Time- and context-bound working hypotheses	Ecological context surrounding the epidemic of mass imprisonment facilitates the necessity of abolitionist pedagogy at this historical moment (see Statement of the Problem and Theoretical Framework in Chapter 1; see also Chapter 2)
(4) Synonymy of cause and effect	Ecological theory facilitates an understanding of the epidemic of mass imprisonment as holistic and cyclical, not causal (see

	Theoretical Framework in Chapter 1)
(5) Value-bound inquiry	I believe that mass imprisonment is wrong, and I hope this study will facilitate its abolition (see Significance of the Study in Chapter 1)

fairer society, supports the notion of a constructed reality, *axiom one*. The insight my feminist standpoint brings to the study supports the notion of *axiom two*, the interaction between the researcher and study. The historical moment of mass imprisonment supports *axiom three*, the time- and context-boundedness of the study. Ecological systems theory sees mass imprisonment as holistic and cyclical, not causal, supporting *axiom four*. Finally, this study is value bound (*axiom five*), in its presumption of abolition as a solution to mass imprisonment.

The researcher is a key instrument of naturalistic inquiry, meaning that the researcher collects and analyzes data through her own standpoint (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Kronsell (2005) argues the importance of the feminist standpoint of women within institutions of hegemonic masculinity (such as prisons). Since women own the feminist standpoint and can highlight certain practices of masculinity that are considered the norm, women have a unique and important perspective to offer. As such, feminist standpoint theory (Collins, 1999; Kronsell, 2005) supports the notion that, as a female researcher and educator within the prison, my position offers valuable insight.

Feminist Standpoint Theory and Strong Objectivity

Sandra Harding (1992; 1995) argues that research based in feminist standpoint theory carries a standard of *strong objectivity*. This notion denies the worth of the value-neutral objectivity standard of traditional empirical research. According to

Harding (1992), “It is a delusion—and a historically identifiable one—to think that human thought could completely erase the fingerprints that reveal its production process” (p. 57). In order to counter this delusion, Harding (1992) argues that research should strive toward *strong objectivity*: “acknowledge[ing] the social situatedness that is the inescapable lot of all knowledge-seeking projects but also, more importantly, transform[ing] it into a systematically available scientific resource” (p. 58). According to Harding (1992; 1995), research based in feminist standpoint theory does just that in its ability to “[enable] us to understand women’s lives, men’s lives, and the relations between the two through concepts and hypotheses arising from women’s lives rather than only ones arising from the lives of those assigned administrative/managerial work” (Harding, 1995, p. 342).

With that being said, in this study I strived toward a standard of strong objectivity by using my feminist standpoint as a starting point from which to explore the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. This study constitutes my first-person perspective surrounding the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. Through the lens of strong objectivity (Harding 1992; 1995), my first-person perspective serves as a strength of this study. I hope that, through my perspective, this study illuminates the gendered practices that were barriers to my work. Moreover, I hope this study illuminates the role of gender in the other peoples’ experiences that I was privileged to observe. In doing so, my goal is that this study serves as a starting point toward transforming gendered barriers to prison abolition.

Autoethnography

Continuing this further, the depth of my firsthand experience enabled autoethnographic methods. According to Ellis, Adams, & Bochner (2011),

Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience. This approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others and treats research as a political, socially-just, and socially-conscious act. (p. 273)

The autoethnographic process compels the researcher to use tools of social science to collect and analyze data. The product of autoethnography combines elements of autobiography and ethnography—making “personal experience meaningful and cultural experience engaging, but also...producing accessible texts...[that] reach wider and more diverse mass audiences [than] traditional research” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 277). The autoethnographic product may take on a variety of forms—descriptive, confessional, analytic, or imaginative—as no singular prescribed format to produce an autoethnographic product exists (Chang, 2008; Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011).

Genres of Autoethnography

Numerous genres of autoethnography exist, and, according to Bochner (2000), more continue to develop. Autoethnographic research differs in its *purpose*, *point of view*, and *style*. Chang (2008) identifies four *purposes* of autoethnographic research: (1) description—realistic, accurate storytelling; (2) confession—emotive, vulnerable exposure of problems; (3) analysis—interpretive, contextual analysis; and (4)

imagination—creative, entertaining writing that might involve fiction, poetry, drama, or similar. Many autoethnographies combine two or more of these styles.

Autoethnographers utilize *point of view* as a mechanism to strengthen their purpose. Hodges (2015b) uses the second-person point of view in a narrative about the chemicals consumed and utilized daily by society in order to connect with the reader. Hodges' (2015b) use of the second-person point of view intimated that the reader was a character within the narrative, consuming the chemicals referred to in the narrative. The same author uses the first-person point of view in another piece about the American aspiration for straight, white teeth (Hodges, 2015a). This point of view bolsters the study's trustworthiness, as Hodges' first-person perspective includes his experience as a young man from a poor, working-class family. Hodges (2015a) writes into the narrative his experience of being unable to afford straight, white teeth.

Style is also used by autotethnographers to strengthen the purpose of their study. Some autoethnographers choose to explore their relationship with participants through *relational autoethnography*, in which a researcher and storytelling participant compose a narrative together. The researcher is thus positioned to bear witness to the experience of the storyteller as well as the experience of the researcher him/herself encountering the storyteller's experience (Ellis & Rawicki, 2013). Ellis (2001) exemplifies the relational style in her autoethnography that explores both her mother's experience and her experience with coping with her mother's terminal illness. When attempting to explore the relationship between multiple experiences, autoethnographers might use layered accounts or vignettes—narratives involving

multiple characters and their experiences, usually related by way of common themes (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Humphreys, 2005; Lapadat, 2009).

Another stylistic choice made by autoethnographers is the choice of revealing personal information and the ethics associated with that same revealing. In some cases, participants may ask the autoethnographer to keep private pieces of information. Ellis (2001), in a relational autoethnography about the author's and her mother's experiences with her mother's terminal illness, explores the struggle to keep private information her mother considered embarrassing, such as information about bodily functions. One way some autoethnographers cope with the ethicality of revealing vulnerable information is through fictionalization. One example includes Doloriert & Sambrook (2009), who chose to fictionalize an autoethnographic dissertation out of the dissertation committee's concern for revealing vulnerable information.

The Trajectory of Autoethnography

Some autoethnographers adhere to traditional qualitative norms while others creatively push the boundaries of social science research. Critics of autoethnography claim autoethnographic research is self-indulgent and narcissistic (Coffey, 1999). Atkinson (1997) criticizes the methodology for being a "romantic construction of the self, a vulgar realism, hyperauthentic" (p. 28). These criticisms compel many autoethnographers to maintain traditional qualitative norms. Proponents of the methodology's development, however, criticize this purism for being "too scientific and not sufficiently artful" (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 283). The beauty of autoethnography, they argue, is its wide reach. Autoethnography is both researcher-friendly and reader-friendly in that the methodology frees the researcher from

traditional conventions while expanding readership beyond an academic audience (Chang, 2008). Proponents also argue that autoethnographic purism advocates a “white, heterosexual, middle/upper classed, Christian, able-bodied perspective” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 275)—an injustice to a methodology that has such a wide reach and utility in a variety of fields (Doloriert & Sambrook, 2009).

Although there exist critics and autoethnographic purists, by and large the current discourse on autoethnography involves evocative genres and styles (Anderson, 2006). Proponents call for autoethnographers to continue to push the boundaries of qualitative research while ensuring the implications of their work are pragmatic (Herrmann, 2012) and in support of positive transformation (Chang, 2008; Glowacki-Dudka, Treff, & Usman, 2005).

Situating My Study Within the Paradigm

My study borrows from a variety of the aforementioned autoethnographic conventions and moves in the direction of current autoethnographic discourse. I combine all four of Chang’s (2008) purposes for autoethnographic research. This study is *descriptive* in its use of narrative storytelling to display findings. This study is *confessional* in its exposure of deeply troubling practices present within many prisons. The study is *analytic*, as I engaged in a highly rigorous analytic process in order to arrive at findings. Finally, the study is *imaginative* in its style of fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison. I use the first person point of view to strengthen these purposes, as framing this study within my feminist standpoint constitutes an opportunity to bolster this study’s trustworthiness. My choice to transform findings into fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison

constitutes the movement of the autoethnographic discourse toward alternative, evocative methods. My hope is that the findings of this study lead toward positive transformation of the present state of mass imprisonment.

Research Design

Having provided an overview of the autoethnographic paradigm, I will now outline the procedures used to collect, analyze, and transform data.

Data Overview

According to Chang (2008), autoethnography uses traditional qualitative social science data collection techniques to combine cultural analysis and interpretation with the narrative of the author. Consequently, this study involved two layers of data: (1) external and (2) self-reflective (Chang, 2008). Self-reflective data constituted the primary source of data for the fictionalized narratives that follow in Chapter 4, while external data served to confirm the self-reflective data (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011).

External data. External data is defined here as the sum of texts I collected over the span of my work as a prison educator and researcher. These data sources – which include such items as transcribed interviews, field observation notes, and other documents generated from a post-prison re-entry program study (the purpose of which was to serve as a phenomenological evaluation, previously approved by the Institutional Review Board); policy, training, and administrative documents collected during my work with the prison (publicly available); documents collected for in-class purposes, such as classroom assignments and communication with students and prison officials; and my teaching journal – are cataloged in detail in Appendix A. I must note

that, in order to protect the confidentiality of participants, information has been redacted from the catalog of external data sources in Appendix A. Ninety-nine pieces of external data were compiled in total.

Although the data I collected in my work with the post-prison re-entry program had IRB approval, for purposes of confidentiality and ethicality, no direct quotations, names, or exact scenarios from external data were revealed. In fact, findings were transformed into fictionalized narratives, further protecting the confidentiality of external data sources.

Self-reflective data. Autoethnographic researchers use external data to confirm self-reflective data (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). Self-reflective data is defined as retroactive first-person written accounts about past experiences, in this case my experiences as a prison educator and researcher. I assembled these accounts after compiling the full range of external data. I then holistically reviewed the external data while using gender theory as a guide. The topics of these self-reflective accounts, which include *Observing Prison Educator's Class*, *Student at Men's Maximum-Security*, and *Re-entry Program BBQ*, to name a few, are cataloged in detail in Appendix B. Please note that, similar to the catalog of external data sources in Appendix A, information also has been redacted in Appendix B in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants. In total, I assembled seventy-six self-reflective accounts.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection comprised a three-step procedure (see Figure 3). First, I compiled the range of collected external data (ninety-nine items) and inventoried each

item in a compiled external data table document (see Appendix A). Second, I holistically reviewed this data using gender theory as a guide (please see Appendix C for a list of gender theories used for analysis). Third, using my hindsight with the help of external data, I wrote seventy-six self-reflective accounts while confirming my recollection of these accounts through external data sources. I inventoried each self-reflective account in a self-reflective data table document (see Appendix B).

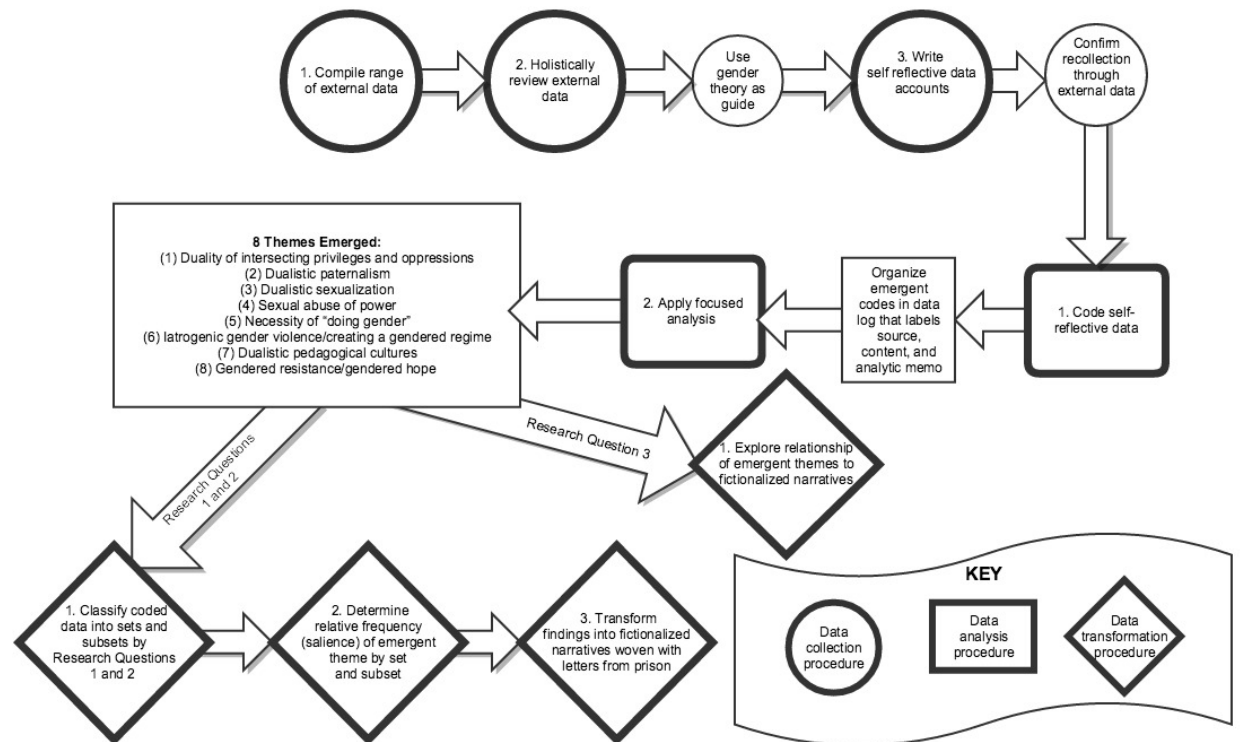


Figure 3. Data collection, analysis, and transformation procedure.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis comprised a two-step procedure (see Figure 3). First, I coded the self-reflective data while writing memos on my impressions as to “repeated topics, emerging themes, salient patterns, and mini and grand categories” (Chang, 2008, p. 131). I kept these analytic memos and respective data sources organized by way of an

analytic data log that labeled the data source, content, and analytic memos (Chang, 2008) (see Appendix D for an example of that data log). By way of this review, two-hundred eighty-nine chunks of data were coded with eighty-nine codes (see Appendix E for detail about those codes). Second, I applied a focused analysis using the ten strategies for autoethnographic analysis suggested by Chang (2008):

- (1) search for recurring topics, themes, and patterns;
- (2) look for cultural themes;
- (3) identify exceptional occurrences;
- (4) analyze inclusion and omission;
- (5) connect the present with the past;
- (6) analyze relationships between self and others;
- (7) compare yourself with other people's cases;
- (8) contextualize broadly
- (9) compare with social science constructs and ideas;
- and (10) frame with theories. (p. 131)

Through this focused analysis, I categorized the aforementioned eighty-nine codes into eight themes: (1) *Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions*, (2) *Dualistic Paternalism*, (3) *Dualistic Sexualization*, (4) *Sexual Abuse of Power*, (5) *Necessity of Doing Gender*, (6) *Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime*, (7) *Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures*, and (8) *Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope*. Appendix E explores to which of the eight themes each code was categorized. The aforementioned themes are defined below in Table 3. These themes will be explored in detail in Chapter 4 and 5.

Table 3

Definitions of Themes

Theme	Definition
Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions	On the one hand possessing intersecting characteristics of privilege increased power and potential to abuse power without consequence. On the other hand, possessing intersecting characteristics of oppression decreased power and increased potential to be considered suspect and endure consequence
Dualistic Paternalism	On one hand, serving as well-intentioned guardian of the public. On the other hand, serving as tool of oppression
Dualistic Sexualization	On one hand, prisoners and women working in the prison were considered hypersexual. On the other hand, they were regarded as asexual
Sexual Abuse of Power	Prison officials holding positions of power over prisoners and women working in the prison maintained an environment ripe for sexual abuse
Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>	Performing stereotypical gender roles as means of survival
Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime	The prison's oppressively gendered culture exacerbated the same gender violence it is meant to prevent. This violence spilled over into the community and brought people back to prison, creating a gender regime of imprisonment
Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures	On one hand, prison officials maintained low pedagogical expectations for imprisoned students. On the other hand, many students engaged in abolitionist pedagogy exceeded those low expectations
Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope	Students and educators of abolitionist pedagogy resisted the institutional culture of stereotypical gender performance

Data Transformation Procedure

For Research Questions One and Two, data transformation comprised a three-step procedure (see Figure 3). First, I classified into sets each of the 289 chunks of themed data by relevance to Research Question One (*How did institutional gatekeepers influence my experience with gender's role in prison-based abolitionist*

pedagogy?) and Research Question Two (*In my experiences within the cultures of different prison facilities and programs, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*). In the case of data that fell into the realm of Research Question Two, I categorized that same data into three subsets according to the facility from which the data was collected: the women's medium-security prison, the men's maximum-security prison, and the men's re-entry program.

Second, I determined the salience of each theme by calculating each theme's respective relative frequency by set and subset. Third, I transformed each set and subset of data into fictionalized accounts, woven with letters from prison where appropriate, that were reflective of each theme the salience of which I had calculated.

For Research Question Three (*What role did gender play in my overall experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*), I investigated the implications of the relationships of the emergent themes to the fictionalized narratives.

Research Question One. In response to Research Question One, I wrote one fictionalized narrative, entitled *Professor Anderson*, which is presented in Chapter 4.

Research Question Two. For Research Question Two, I wrote three fictionalized narratives related to my analysis and wove through each narrative letters from prison. The narrative and respective letters from prison connected to the women's medium-security prison subset is entitled *Mindy*. The narrative and respective letters from prison connected to the men's maximum-security prison subset is entitled *Rafael*, and the narrative and respective letters from prison connected to the men's re-entry program is entitled *Re-entry*. *Mindy*, *Rafael*, and *Re-entry* are available in Chapter 4.

Research Question Three. Research Question Three (*What role did gender play in my overall experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*) will be explored, through expository text, in Chapter 5.

Fictionalized Narratives. The purpose of transforming findings into fictionalized narratives was twofold. First, educational researcher Maxine Greene (1988) implores us to use imaginative literature and art in the context of educational research. “Fiction,” she suggests, “can serve us well in the quest for meaning in our lives, ‘in our longing for something better than unacceptable present conditions.’ Good literature causes us to question our values, prompts new imaginings of the ideal and the possible. It can even stir action against the conventional, the seemingly unquestionable, and the tried and true” (Barone, 2001, p. 736, as cited in Greene). This socially reconstructive use of fiction is especially salient in light of educational research in prison. Since, from my ecological understanding, the epidemic of mass imprisonment is entrenched in our way of life, seeing beyond it can be challenging. However, through fiction, we might imagine a world that overcomes the unacceptable present state of mass imprisonment.

Second, in addition to widening the boundaries of educational research, presenting findings as fictionalized narratives ensured confidentiality of external data sources. Other studies have similarly chosen to fictionalize findings. For example, Smith-Bowen’s (1964) *Return to Laughter* constitutes a fictionalized version of fieldwork in Africa that draws upon the real work and experiences of the author (Coffey, 1999). Thematically and realistically, what the author wrote fictionally could have been true, but findings were purposely fictionalized in order to protect the

confidentiality of the participants and to add emphasis (see also Barone, 2001; Sconiers & Rosiek, 2000).

Fiction process. I adapted novelist Elizabeth George's (2004) approach to fiction writing in order to fictionalize findings. George (2004) suggests a process to writing fictional novels that begins with detailing an idea that includes a primary event, then moves to creating characters that exist within the world of the idea and primary event, next researching the world of the characters, creating settings, outlining the plot, and finally drafting. My adaptation of George's (2004) process excludes researching the world of the characters, as my data collection process already accounted for this research while I was working in the prison and re-entry program. The fictionalized ideas, primary events, characters, settings, and plots explored in this study were informed by data analysis.

Letters from prison. While transforming findings into fictionalized narratives, I wove *letters from prison* throughout a number of these fictionalized narratives. I decided to include letters from prison in these fictionalized narratives for two reasons. First, letters from prison are a counternarrative— a genre of discourse that carries the voices of imprisoned people but has been historically devalued (Bamburg & Andrews, 2004; Baszile, 2005). By presenting findings through a genre of discourse unique to imprisoned people, I hope to have amplified the largely disqualified experiences of imprisoned people while elevating to the academic level a style of discourse traditionally considered non-academic.

Historically, the letters from prison of mostly white male authors and political figures of high social rankings achieved literary status through publication: for

example, nineteenth century Irish author Oscar Wilde (2000), German anti-Nazi pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1971), and Italian Marxist theoretician and politician Antonio Gramsci (Lawner, 1973). These letters were not prized for their academic contributions until after the deaths of their authors, at which time the letters emerged as commentary about the conditions of confinement, the political milieu during which their writers lived, and the psychological impact of imprisonment. Additionally, Bonhoeffer's (1971) letters offer commentary on the impact of imprisonment on family and loved ones, as his published works exhibit a call and response framework including letters written to and from Bonhoeffer and his family members. We might wonder what academic contributions were lost as a result of the devaluing of these letters from prison of individuals whose race, gender, and social class did not match those of such figures as Wilde, Bonhoeffer, and Gramsci.

Second, "Postmodern theory accords literary content a status equal to that of form" (Barone, 2001, p. 737). The climate of danger, mistrust, and paranoia associated with prison often prevents imprisoned people from authentic expression. Because it is rarely censored, the letter is a genre of discourse through which imprisoned people often express themselves more authentically, in a manner that is less influenced by the gender norms specific to the prison. According to Chang (2008), "[W]hat makes autoethnography ethnographic is its intent of gaining a cultural understanding" (p. 125). As such, I hope this study's form, just as its content, offers readers an authentic, cultural understanding of the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy.

More contemporarily, actor and author Hill Harper (2013) used a call and response framework similar to Bonhoeffer (1971) in *Letters to an Incarcerated*

Brother: Encouragement, Hope, and Healing for Inmates and Their Loved Ones.

Though Harper (2013) fictionalized letters from prison to illuminate authentic political issues surrounding the present state of mass imprisonment and to serve as a prison survival guidebook for imprisoned people and their families, the piece is not grounded in empirical research. To my knowledge, no other researchers have used fictionalized letters from prison as a mode of exhibiting the findings of empirical research on the role of gender and abolitionist pedagogy.

Portraiture. Portraiture—a genre of inquiry that seeks to join science and art—constitutes another lens through which to understand my choice to present findings as fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison. Social scientist and artist Sarah Lawrence-Lightfoot invented portraiture in order to “develop a document, a text that came as close as possible to painting with words” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 4). In order to form an aesthetic whole, paintings consist of form (color, tone, line, shape, space, and texture) and content (the subject of the painting) woven together through the unique perspective of the artist. Fundamentally, this study is an exercise in portraiture. By presenting, in the form of *fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison* and through the lens of my feminist standpoint and the empirical findings guided by this study’s research questions, I hope to have woven together an aesthetic whole that speaks to the role of gender in abolitionist pedagogy.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the philosophical grounding for this study’s methods, the study’s methodological procedures, and the ways in which these decisions reflected the research design. The naturalistic paradigm and feminist standpoint theory were

described along with the rationale for the autoethnographic research methodology. This chapter also provided the rationale and process of this study's research design, including the collection of external and self-reflective data, analysis of that data in light of gender theory, and subsequent transformation of that analyzed data into fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study by way of fictionalized narratives woven with letters from prison. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of this study's findings and makes recommendations for future research and practice.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. The findings of this study are organized into fictionalized narratives as they relate to two of the study's three guiding research questions: (1) *How did institutional gatekeepers influence my experience with gender's role in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?* and (2) *In my experiences within the contexts of different prison facilities and programs, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?* Research Question Three (*What role did gender play in my overall experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*) will be explored in Chapter 5.

Background

Before exploring the findings of research questions one and two, it is important to reveal a bit of background information regarding the two main characters in the fictionalized narratives that follow. The New England State Prison—the community-to-prison ecological regime (CTPER) that serves as the setting of the narratives that follow—serves as our antagonist. Though a setting, I characterized the CTPER because the regime took on the role of villain, becoming personified through those people charged with upholding it—prison administrators, educators, correctional officers, re-entry program workers, and others. The reader will encounter many supporting characters whose actions will likely seem villainous, but it is important to mention that my intention here was not to vilify those individuals working for the CTPER, but rather to point out that anyone working for this system is likely to become

so entrenched in its functioning that their role effortlessly transforms into that of villain, even when intentions are otherwise.

Natalia Gomez is our protagonist. She continually attempted to resist the drive of the CTPER to transform her into a villain. This resistance ultimately led to her expulsion from the CTPER. Sadly, this expulsion also meant that she was no longer able to work with the students about whom she cared deeply.

New England State Prison

New England State Prison is a fictionalized entity based on my scholarly research, my participation in international conferences devoted to prison abolition, my communications with other prison abolitionists, and my direct experience working in a state prison in New England from 2012 to 2014.

Over the course of the narratives that follow, the New England State Prison imprisoned on average about 3100 people—3000 of those people were imprisoned within male facilities of 5 different security levels, and 100 of those people were imprisoned within female facilities of 2 different security levels. Though the prison experienced some highs and lows in population, its population has remained between 3000 and 4000 imprisoned people for the past 15 years. About 25,000 people are either under the custody of New England State prison, on probation, or on parole. The prison's rates of probation and parole are some of the highest in the United States.

Most of the people imprisoned at New England State Prison identified as white. The racial background of imprisoned people is about 52% white, 20% Hispanic, and 25% Black. The remaining 3% identified as Asian, Native American, or other. Figure 4 below details the race of prisoners at New England State Prison.

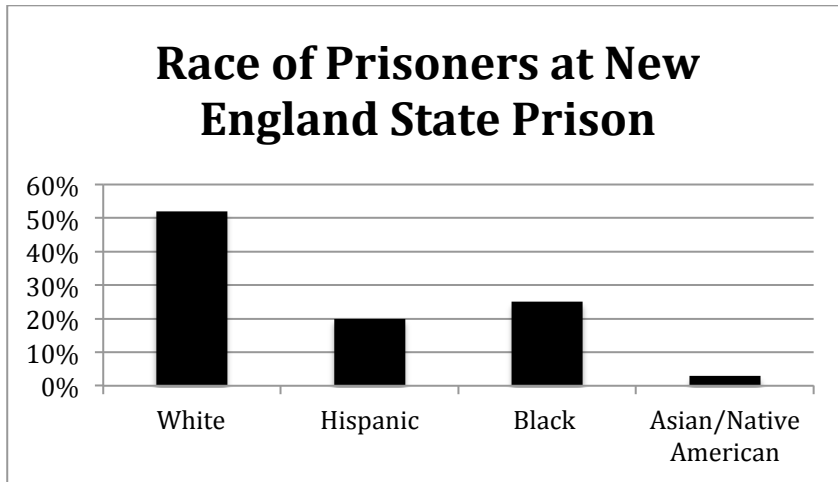


Figure 4. Race of Prisoners at New England State Prison.

The population at New England State Prison was quite young, with most imprisoned people under the age of forty. Four percent was under the age of twenty; forty-three percent was between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine; twenty-seven percent was between the ages of thirty and thirty-nine; seventeen percent are between the ages of forty and forty-nine; and nine percent was between the ages of fifty and fifty-nine. The remaining four percent was aged sixty or over. Figure 5 below details the age of prisoners at New England State Prison.

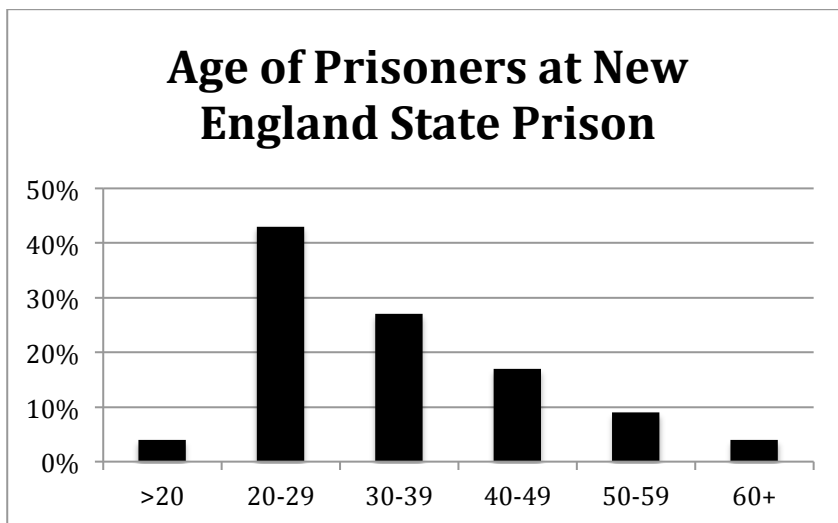


Figure 5. Age of prisoners at New England State Prison.

Males imprisoned at the New England State Prison had committed a variety of offenses. They were likely to have low levels of education, have children, be unemployed at the time of their imprisonment, and to return to prison after their release. About 44% of males imprisoned in New England State Prison were imprisoned for nonviolent offenses. Thirty-two percent of the males were imprisoned for violent offenses. Twenty-nine percent of males imprisoned entered as probation or parole violators. Fifty-one percent completed their high school diploma or GED (most of whom completed the latter while in prison). Thirty-eight percent earned less than a twelfth grade education, and eight percent completed some college. Fifty-four percent of males were fathers. Fifty-one percent were unemployed at the time of imprisonment, and fifty percent were re-sentenced within three years of their release.

Figure 6 below details the characteristics of males at New England State Prison.

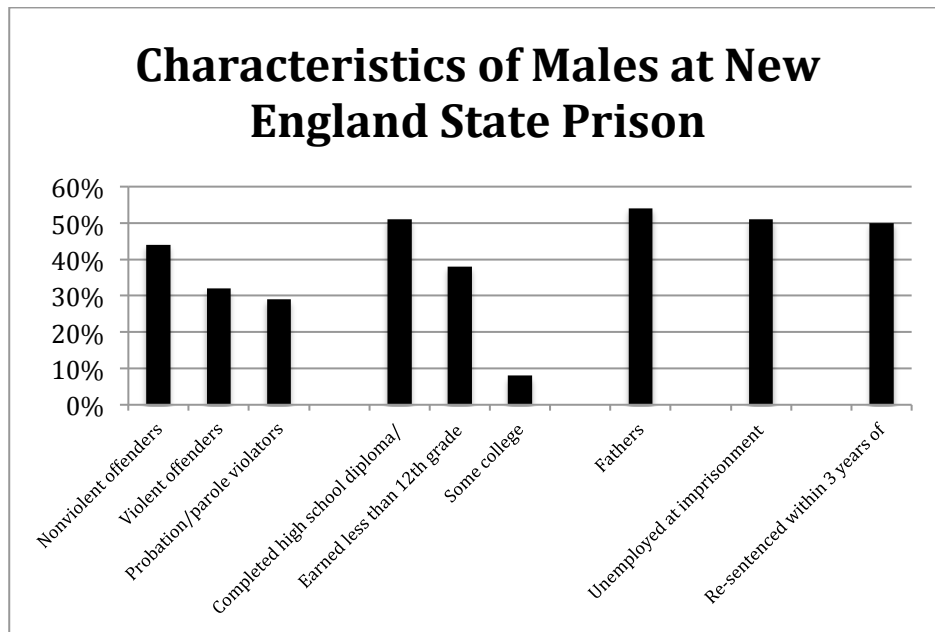


Figure 6. Characteristics of Males at New England State Prison.

Many of the female prisoners had committed drug offenses. Their educational levels were on average higher than those of the males; they were likely to have children and have been unemployed at the time of their imprisonment. Fewer females were imprisoned in New England State Prison for violent offenses. Fifty-nine percent of females were imprisoned for nonviolent crimes and 23% for violent crimes. Twenty-one percent of females entered prison as probation or parole violators. Forty-four percent had completed their high school diploma or GED (most of whom completed the latter while in prison). Nineteen percent earned less than a twelfth grade education, and twenty-seven percent completed some college. Sixty-six percent of the women prisoners were mothers. Sixty-three percent were unemployed at the time of imprisonment, and forty-one percent were re-sentenced within three years of their release. Figure 7 below details the characteristics of females at New England State Prison.

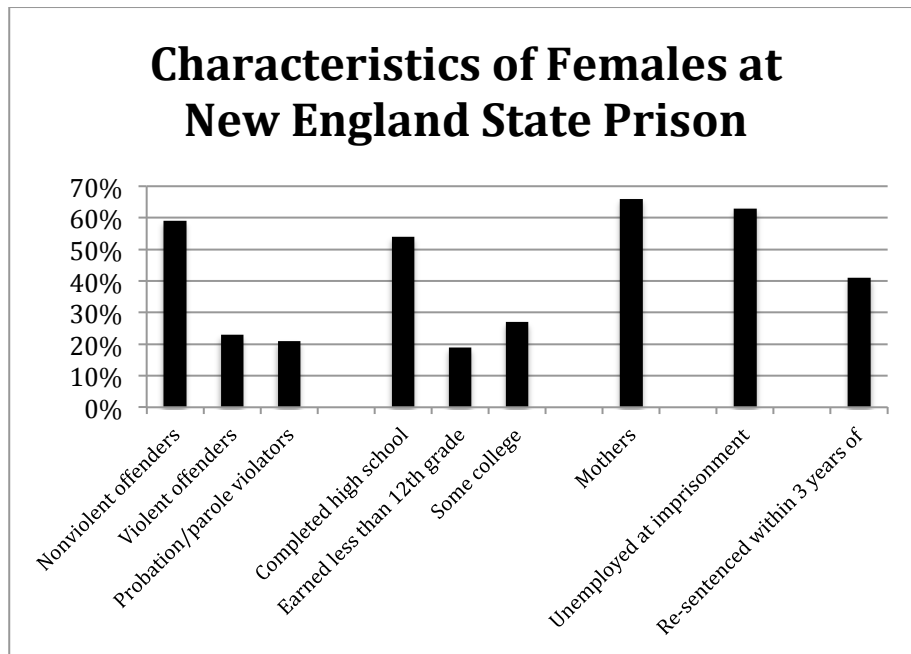


Figure 7. Characteristics of Females at New England State Prison.

Natalia Gomez

Natalia was a graduate student who happened upon a job teaching at the New England State Prison when her professor, Anderson, invited her to teach a course there. Natalia also volunteered with a local re-entry program that seemed to ascribe to an abolitionist mission.

Natalia had an affinity for working with vulnerable and disadvantaged populations that stemmed from a desire to give back to her community. She grew up about forty miles from the prison in a working class household to immigrant parents without college educations. She was no stranger to legal issues, as her family endured many throughout her childhood. Many of Natalia's family members were often in and out prison, and through her education she was able to learn about the social structures that promoted the imprisonment and legal issues of her family members. She was the first in her family to receive a college education, and she knew that her education is what allowed her to pursue a life different from that of her family.

Over the course of the narratives, Natalia was twenty-seven years old, single, had dark hair and eyes, was Latina, attractive, energetic, and politically progressive. She stood 5 feet and 4 inches tall and weighed around 160 pounds with a curvy frame.

Fictionalized Narratives

The following fictionalized narratives comprise the findings of research questions one and two. *Professor Anderson*, the first fictionalized narrative below, responds to Research Question One: *How did institutional gatekeepers influence my experience with gender's role in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?* *Mindy, Rafael,* and *Re-Entry*, the second, third, and fourth narratives respectively, respond to

Research Question Two: *In my experiences within the contexts of different prison facilities and programs, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*

Before beginning, I must remind the reader that the narratives that follow are completely fictionalized. The characters and situations that follow are not real; rather, they are fictional creations resulting from the amalgamation of the people and situations I have seen, met, or heard about during the process of data collection.

Professor Anderson (as narrated by Natalia)

After class, all the students filed out of the maroon upholstered stadium seats of the lecture hall. I lingered until they had all left. I needed to talk to Professor Anderson, my 46-year old white male graduate professor of criminal justice at New England University.

“Hey, Professor Anderson, I’m really interested in this whole idea of prison abolition, but I don’t really understand how it works. Could you recommend any literature for me to learn more?”

He groaned, “It’s an idealistic pipedream really—the idea that if we had a differently structured society then there would be no need for prisons. Me, I think we will always have a criminal element regardless of how equitably we’ve structured society. So we certainly could reform prisons by making them more rehabilitative and decrease the number of people we imprison, but I believe we will always need a mechanism like prison for dealing with crime so the public feels safe. Have you ever been to a prison, Ms. Gomez?”

“No.”

“Well, I’ve noticed you in class, Ms. Gomez,” his eyes pierced me, “and you’re doing really well. I can tell how interested you are in issues of criminal justice. I would love to give you a hands-on experience,” his remarks oozed with sexual undertones that I chose to brush off, giving him the benefit of the doubt.

“What do you mean?”

“Well, you know, I teach classes at the local prison and I’ve love for you to teach there sometime.”

“Oh, wow, that would be amazing. Thank you.”

“Repay me later, Ms. Gomez,” he laughed off this again sexually ambiguous comment as if it were a joke, turned, and walked out of the lecture hall.

* * *

Email September 28, 2012

Professor Anderson,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me after class today. I am quite enthusiastic about your proposition to become involved in teaching classes at New England State Prison. I have a background in education and I have worked with a variety of vulnerable student populations. I believe my skill set would transfer over to teaching in prison. Would it be possible to first observe your class at the prison to get a feel for things? Please advise me as to what next steps I should take.

Thanks again,

Natalia Gomez

Email September 28, 2012

Ms. Gomez,

You are certainly welcome to observe my class. I teach in the evenings Monday through Thursday. Please let me know which day would be best for you.

Looking forward to working with you,

Professor Anderson

Email September 29, 2012

Professor Anderson,

Monday would be great. Is there anything I need to do beforehand?

Natalia

Email September 29, 2012

Ms. Gomez,

Meet me outside of the minimum-security facility on Monday at 5:00pm.

Professor Anderson

I was surprised at how easy it seemed to observe Professor Anderson's prison class, as I expected I would need to engage in a rigorous background check in order to gain entry.

* * *

I waited in my car in the parking lot of minimum-security, observing uniformed, male, mostly white correctional officers toting lunchboxes, exiting the facility, and entering their cars in the same parking lot. I also noticed plain-clothed civilians entering the facility. I assumed they were visitors.

Suddenly, I heard a knock on my driver's side window and jumped, startled.

Professor Anderson waved, smiling.

I exited my car, and, walking ahead of me swiftly, Anderson announced, "Follow me." We entered through the minimum-security entrance door. Anderson instructed me to sign my name on a visitor's sign-in sheet under his name. Though plenty of prison officials stood around the sign-in sheet, none of them questioned my entry. Anderson continued swiftly, stepping through a metal detector, which beeped sharply. He motioned for me, and I followed. No questions.

We continued down a corridor, waiting for only one door to be unlocked. This door headed upstairs to the facility's classrooms.

I took a seat in the back of the class, in the corner furthest from the door so that I was situated in a location in which I could easily observe everything that was happening in the class. With me I carried a pink, lined legal pad and a pen. I noticed

Professor Anderson's desk was stationed in the front of the class. In rows, the student desks and chairs faced toward his desk. The room was absent of any technology. Books piled upon ancient maple bookshelves. A few antiquated posters with slogans like "Dream big" and "Reach your goals" surrounded the room. Students began entering the classroom, their visages indicating their noticeable shock at the site of a woman they hadn't seen before. I smiled gently at everyone that entered.

"Good evening, gentlemen. Please welcome Ms. Gomez to class today. She is observing because soon she will be teaching here." Anderson continued, "Would you like to say anything, Ms. Gomez?"

Surprised by how forthcoming he was with the students about me teaching at the facility, I stumbled on my words before replying, "Um, well, thank you Professor Anderson for inviting me here, and I look forward to learning more about the work you are all doing. If there is anything I can do to help today, please let me know."

"Okay gentlemen, what are we working on today?"

"Professor Anderson, I think we should continue on that algebra stuff we started yesterday."

"Very well, Mr. Fitzgerald, please pass out the mathematics books. Where did we end off yesterday?" I was surprised that Anderson seemed unprepared. I assumed that, while working with prisoners—the very population about which I assumed he had expertise, such a well-respected professor of criminal justice would have an intensive lesson planned. I decided to mark this in my observation notes under the heading *What I Would Do Differently*.

Another student reminded Anderson of the page they had ended on the day before. The students turned to that page, and Anderson began completing the problems from that page on the blackboard. I thought it was unusual that he did not ask for student input. Some of the students watched in silence as Anderson completed the problems on the blackboard. Others took down notes. Another observation I marked *What I Would Do Differently*.

The class went on like this for about an hour, with a few sidebar discussions during which Anderson shared stories about his life or that he had read in a newspaper, “You know what the real killer is in our midst, gentlemen? Diet soda,” he continued on to explain a research study he had read about the dangers of overindulging in diet soda. Again, I marked this *What I Would Do Differently*. Diet soda seemed a strange subject amidst an audience of individuals who presumably had acquired lifetimes of rich experiences. I wondered why Professor Anderson didn’t use these students’ personal experiences as content for the lessons he was instructing.

When the G-sharp movement bell rang, the students filed out of class; I smiled at them as they left, silently considering all the things I would do differently as a prison educator. I also thought about what I had learned about prison abolition. I wondered how I might be able to plan a class that supported prison abolition theory while using pedagogical strategies more attuned to the experience of the population. I followed Anderson out of the facility while thinking.

“So, Ms. Gomez, what did you think?”

He still wielded power over my grade in criminal justice class, so I lied, “It was great!”

“Why don’t we schedule lunch tomorrow to debrief and plan for the class you’ll be teaching? Meet me here at noon tomorrow.”

He didn’t leave room for negotiation. And since he still held the power of my grade, I begrudgingly affirmed, “Okay,” remembering some of the questionably sexual comments he had made previously. But maybe it was all in my mind.

* * *

The next day I arrived at noon at the minimum-security parking lot. Anderson was already waiting. When he saw me arrive, he stepped out of his car, wearing a three-piece suit. I felt overdressed in my blue jeans and button-down shirt. As I walked over to him, I smelled his potently-doused cologne. “Ms. Gomez,” he walked to the passenger side of his car to open the door for me, “leave your car here. I’ll drive.”

Again, no room for negotiation. Though I felt compelled to drive in the event that I wanted to leave early, I ignored my better judgment and sat in Anderson’s passenger’s seat. Anderson closed the door for me.

“I took the liberty of making reservations,” it was obvious that Anderson had recently cleaned and detailed his car. I wondered if this was just for today’s occasion.

“Reservations for lunch?”

“Yes of course, only the best for the best,” he laughed and tapped my knee. I shuddered nauseously.

From the discomfort of realizing Anderson was using this situation as more than an opportunity to debrief and plan for this class he wanted me to teach, I tried to change the subject, “So, what was the nature of the class I observed yesterday?”

“Oh, all of those students have not yet achieved their high school credential. And they’re all at really low levels. There’s not much you can do with them, but I like to give them the power of deciding what we work on in class.”

“Is the class like this everyday?”

“Oh, yes, for the most part. Sometimes the students prefer to work on reading, writing, social studies, or science. And in those cases we’ll just use the books for those subjects.”

“So you rotate the books depending on what the students want to work on that day?”

“That’s right. I find they appreciate me giving them that power of deciding what we’re doing in class. This is a group of people who have by and large never had to make their own decisions. So I really feel like giving them the power to decide what they’d like to study that day is teaching them decision making skills, in addition to content.”

This all seemed like an excuse not to plan. It also seemed like Anderson didn’t believe in the abilities of these students, as if he believed they were incapable of engaging in material that was deeper than their textbooks.

Instead of questioning his pedagogy, I replied, “Interesting.”

“Ah, here we are, Ms. Gomez. Please stay seated; you must always open the door for a lady,” he shuffled around the front of the car and opened my door. When I emerged from the car, I noticed he had driven to Napolitano’s, a restaurant renowned for being the most expensive in the city, “Only the best,” he commented again. He handed his keys to the valet attendant and opened the door to the restaurant for me.

“Two for Anderson,” he told the hostess.

“Right this way, Mr. Anderson.” She sat us in a romantic corner table, handed us our menus, and said, “Enjoy.” I found the menu a helpful distractor for a little while until Anderson started asking me questions.

“So, Ms. Gomez,” he leaned in so close I could smell notes of coffee and tooth decay emanating from his mouth, “has your boyfriend ever brought you to a restaurant like this?” Even though I didn’t have a boyfriend, it was obvious that his comments were becoming less ambiguous and I needed to do what I could to make them stop.

“Sure,” was the only answer I could think of at that moment, “So what days do you think I will be teaching?”

“We can talk more about the specifics later. Tell me more about you.”

“Uh, well, I’m really into my studies and work.” I thought that would give him the hint, but it only fueled him to brag about himself.

“You know when I was your age I used to be the same. Once I earned my doctorate, I began to care more about the good life—travel, fine dining, wine. Are those things that interest you, Ms. Gomez?”

That was enough. I stood up, “I’m going to use the ladies room.”

“Of course.”

I escaped the table and hid in the bathroom stall for as long as I could, pondering an escape plan. I figured that if I stayed there long enough he would think I was sick and we’d be able to leave quickly. I went with that plan.

As I walked back over to the table, I noticed he had ordered and was already eating. I approached, and he boasted, “I took the liberty of ordering based on what delicacies I thought you might not have tried before. Oysters?”

“Uh no. I’m not feeling well and I’d like to go.”

Anderson paused, visibly disappointed, “Oh, well alright. I suppose we can do this some another time then.”

“In fact, I’m going to head outside to get some air.”

“I will join you as soon as I pay,” he said as I was already walking toward the exit. I heard him mentioning to the waitress loudly enough for me to hear that he didn’t care what the price was, and that the waitress could just put it all on his credit card. But I didn’t care. I wanted to get out of there. And fast.

During the car ride, Anderson asked me, “If you are feeling better, would you like to come by my house? We can talk more about abolition theory if you like.”

“No, I’m not feeling well,” I scolded, visibly annoyed.

We approached the minimum-security parking lot; I didn’t allow him to open my door, and I rushed back to my car. All the while, I heard Anderson shouting, “Would you like to take some of this food with you?”

I ignored him and sped away.

When I arrived back home, I checked my email and saw one from Anderson:

October 2, 2012

Ms. Gomez,

*I hope you are feeling better. I am writing to thank you for a lovely lunch today. I really enjoyed spending time with you. I have spoken with my colleague Mr. Johnson, and he has agreed to work with you on teaching an upcoming class at the women’s facility. I look forward to hearing back from you and continuing the conversations we started. Once I hear from you, I will connect you with Mr. Johnson.
Professor Anderson*

I didn't respond. I decided that I would reach out directly to Mr. Johnson to cut out Anderson as the middleman.

October 2, 2012

Mr. Johnson,

My name is Natalia Gomez, and Professor Anderson, who said you might have an opening to teach a class at the women's facility, referred me to you. I was wondering if I might be able to meet with you soon in order to discuss this?

Thank you so much,

Natalia

October 3, 2012

Natalia,

Thanks for reaching out. I actually have an opening for a class that starts next week. Would you be able to put something together in such a short turnaround? This is a beginning level writing class. I don't have a budget for any textbooks, so you would basically have to provide everything you need for the class. But you could also make it your own and choose whatever activities you'd like to do with the students.

Thanks,

W. Johnson

I started the next week without any idea of what to expect, without any training or advice. All I knew about what was to come was what I had observed during the one time I observed Anderson's class.

I also had to face Anderson in my university class for the remaining weeks of the semester. I kept my head down and tried to leave class as early as possible every day. Anderson seemed to notice.

Mindy

October 15, 2012

Pablo,

How are you? How's the baby? I hope you are doing good. I know you probably hate me, and you probably fuckin' with someone else by now, but I want you to know that I still love you, and I will never do you wrong the way you did me. My mom hates me, and she won't write back to me, so I ain't got nobody else to write to. And I can't trust none of these bitches in the joint. You're all I got.

So I got placed in this writing class here. We had one class so far, and it seems pretty fly, but they got me on these meds to calm me down, and I can't focus on what

we be doing in class when I take my meds. And if I don't take my meds, they will throw me in seg 'cuz they're scared I'm gonna kill myself or something. But I never took them shits on the outside, so I don't know what the fuck they talking about anyway.

*Your wife,
Mindy*

October 18, 2012

Mindy,

Yeah, you're right. You can't trust any of them bitches. All you can do is trust me. What the fuck you taking classes for? You in jail, not in school.

Pablo

* * *

“Good morning everyone!” I announced as the women, dressed in blue khaki button-less, canvas short-sleeve shirts and pocket-less, elastic waist-banded pants, filed into the classroom. One student, Crystal—a thin, twenty-something white woman with her thin, strawberry-blond hair tightly bound in a bun atop her head, had arrived a little early to help me set up the room in my usual roundtable fashion.

“Hey, Natalia,” one student smiled. I smiled back.

When everyone had chosen a seat, I began, “So, how’s everyone doing? What’s new?”

Mindy raised her hand. This was only our second class, but I got to know Mindy fairly quickly because she was quite outspoken. After our first day, Mindy stayed after class to tell me a little about her story. Mindy was a twenty-one-year-old Puerto Rican woman who was living in a poor, urban community in the Northeast of the US at the time of her imprisonment. Prior to moving to the United States, Mindy, her mother, and her mother’s boyfriend lived together in a violent *caserio* (public housing project) in Puerto Rico.

From an early age, Mindy witnessed domestic violence against her mother by her mother's boyfriend, from whom Mindy herself also endured sexual abuse. At age sixteen, she met her husband Pablo, who was twenty-five at the time. He forced her to drop out of high school and move with him to the United States, where she had no family or support system. He constantly cheated on her, and he made her believe that his cheating was her fault, that she needed to fight for his love and do as he told her.

Mindy soon found herself pregnant, and immediately Pablo forced her to enroll in government assistance, living in the projects and receiving welfare aid. He lived in the house, earning money by selling drugs.

Mindy lived alone in the house while Pablo was in and out of prison. Once, while Pablo was in prison, Mindy learned that he was in a relationship with another woman from the same housing project. Mindy learned about the affair when the woman came over to the house and spitefully told Mindy about their relationship. The woman also said that when Pablo got out of prison he was going to live with her, not Mindy, and Mindy would just need to get over it. The two women began fighting in Mindy's house, which ultimately resulted in Mindy's imprisonment after being charged with assault with a deadly weapon for stabbing the other woman with a kitchen knife.

* * *

"I wanna say that these meds they got me on got me trippin'. It's like hard to focus and stuff while we in class."

Another student, LaDonna—a middle aged black woman—responded, "Girl, they give you those meds to make their job easier, keeping you sedated so you don't

deal with your emotions. If you keep on taking those things, you're never going to be able to heal your wounds and move on with your life."

The class erupted, "Yeah, they tried to start me on that shit, I won't take them."

"I take them because they threaten me that I'll get in trouble if I don't."

"That's not true! They can't force you to take drugs!"

"Don't believe everything you hear."

"It doesn't say anything like that in the handbook. You have the right to choose what you ingest."

The students continued on for about five minutes. I let them pursue this conversation without attempting to change the subject, as I didn't have an answer, and felt this was an impactful topic that needed to be pursued. And I was glad the students felt our classroom was a safe arena for pursuing it.

When I looked around the room, I noticed a few students who seemed out of character, not participating in the conversation and presenting flat affects. It occurred to me that those students might be highly medicated on the same type of drugs to which Mindy referred.

"Wow, this is a really heavy topic. I think it would be a robust topic for you to consider writing about. Thank you all for sharing." I paused and shifted the conversation as everyone grew quiet, "So we've been working on perfecting the paragraph and looking at literature related to gender. Today we're going to weave those themes together in our first formal assignment." I circulated around the class, passing out a copy of the first assignment instructions to all the students. "Using ideas from at least one of the three texts we've studied thus far, write a paragraph about a

function of gender, either on the societal level or on the individual level. Any questions?”

“When is this due?”

“I’d like a rough draft tomorrow in class. Then we’ll work on some peer review. You’ll have the opportunity to complete a couple of more drafts before turning in a final copy.”

“Anything else?”

At the sound of the G-sharp movement bell, the students stood up and thanked me as they marched out the door. Crystal, the same student that helped me set up the classroom in the morning, helped me put the classroom back to its traditional state: rows of student desks facing the blackboard and the teacher’s desk at the front of the room. She began to tell me, “You know, Natalia, everything that they were saying today about the pills is true. They try to get everyone to take those pills. It doesn’t matter if you’ve never even taken meds on the outside. They tried it with me, and I don’t have any kind of medical issues or psych issues. And when you try to question it, they bully you into taking them, like Mindy was saying. They make you think that you can get in trouble for not taking them. They say things like, ‘If you don’t take them you might end up losing your mind and hurting yourself or hurting other people, so it’s mandatory for you to take them.’ Some people believe them and end up taking the pills. They just become like zombies in here. And I’ve heard that they totally kill your sex drive.”

“That’s horrifying. Thanks for sharing, Crystal,” I said with a frown.

“Yeah, no problem. I’ll see you later.”

On my way out that day, I ran into the Deputy Warden of the women's facility. She was a slightly overweight, middle-aged white woman who wore glasses and pantsuits.

"Excuse me, Deputy Warden?"

"Yes?"

"Hi, my name is Natalia, and I teach a writing class with a group of women here."

"Pleasure to meet you," she firmly shook my hand. Her gaze did not waver from my eyes.

"I wanted to let you know about an issue that arose today that I'm concerned about."

"Please, would you like to come into my office?"

"Sure, thanks." Her office was close, only about twenty feet away from where we had encountered each other. She closed the door, "Please, have a seat."

"Today I noticed many students in class who presented flat affects. They seemed like they were in another world, totally incapable of participating in what we were doing in class. Now I'm not saying this because I think they should be pulled from the class or get in trouble or anything like that. I know they are good students and want to participate. At the same time, I overheard that it was possible that these students were medicated. If this is the case, I'm just wondering whether their medication dosage levels could be checked. I'd really like them to be able to participate in class, and, in their present state, they're not able to." I was careful not to mention that during class, the students engaged in a deep discussion about the prison's

practices of medicating female prisoners. I wanted to keep the narrative one of concern for those students who could not participate in my class.

“Well, thank you so much for bringing this to my attention, Ms. Gomez.” I wondered how she knew my last name. I had introduced myself with my first name only, “I will certainly look into this. We appreciate our teachers and support staff cooperating with us surrounding inmate concerns. And here is my card. Please feel free to call or email me in the event that anything else comes up,” she handed me her business card with the New England State Prison logo.

“Thank you,” I reached out my hand; we shook hands, and I went home.

On my ride home, it occurred to me that I should write an email to follow up on this event, in order to have something in writing that a conversation actually occurred.

* * *

October 19, 2012

Dear Deputy Warden,

Thank you for meeting informally with me today. I am writing to follow up on our conversation. Just to reiterate, many of my students seemed highly medicated and unable to participate in class today. Would you please let me know if there is anything I can do to support their ability to participate in class?

Thank you so much,

Natalia Gomez

She never wrote back.

* * *

The next day in my criminal justice class, I felt Professor Anderson’s eyes on me more aggressively than usual. In my typical fashion, I escaped from class as quickly as possible in order to attempt to not have any contact with him, but he caught

me. “Ms. Gomez,” this time his eyes pierced me in an angry way, not the usual sexual way that I had experienced before. “How is your class?”

“It’s good.”

“That’s not what I hear.”

I couldn’t move. I wanted to ask him what he meant by that, but I already knew. He had heard about my conversation with the Deputy Warden. He had eyes everywhere. And he was not happy that I was avoiding him.

He packed up his leather briefcase and walked out of class. This time, before me, as I was still stuck in my tracks. He did not make eye contact as he walked out.

* * *

October 22, 2012

Pablo,

I’m so tired of taking these fuckin meds. They got me fucked up, like all I wanna do is sleep. I’m numb to everything. And I wanna participate in class, but I feel so out of it when I’m in class that I can barely keep my eyes open.

How’s the baby?

Your wife,

Mindy

* * *

The next morning, I arrived at the prison a bit early in my usual fashion, leaving enough time to pass through the inspection of my property, metal detectors, and to set up my classroom in roundtable form, as I preferred. Unusually, there weren’t any correctional officers at the front desk. I was accustomed to someone being there so that I could begin the inspection process as soon as I arrived. I looked around but saw nobody. So I decided to take a seat on one of the hard plastic benches and wait for someone to arrive.

Some time later, I looked at the clock on the wall. Eight fifteen. I thought I heard footsteps coming, so I stood up. But it was nothing. Eight twenty-one. I began to pace. Now it was eight thirty-three, and I was late for class. I decided I would wait ten more minutes before going back to my car to get my cellphone to call and find out what was going on. Then ten minutes passed, and I waited two more. Still nothing.

So I left. I knew if I called the women's facility I would not reach anyone, as the phones rang in the front hall where I was just waiting. So I called the prison's intake center line. I called five times before someone finally answered.

"Hello, I'm supposed to be teaching a class in the women's facility right now. I arrived and waited for about thirty minutes, but no correctional officers showed up to process me through."

"That's because there's no visits and no programs today at women's."

"Uh, do you know why?"

"Staffing issues."

"Is there any way I can be alerted to this in the future so I don't waste my time coming in?"

"Talk to your supervisor, ma'am." Click.

This wouldn't be the last time programming would be cancelled without my knowledge. In fact, it seemed to become more and more common over time. The longer I taught at the facility, the more classes seemed to get cancelled, each time without anyone having alerted me first.

* * *

October 26, 2012
Pablo,

These COs be cancelling class whenever they want. I didn't take my meds so that I could participate in class, but they cancelled for no reason. They say it's for staffing issues, but I think it's bullshit. I think they scared. They don't want us learning too much 'cuz maybe they'll be out of jobs if we get too smart.

And do you know it's like impossible to get a job here? The only jobs they have for women are cooking and cleaning. The dudes get so many options, like they can become plumbers or carpenters or painters and take care of all the issues going on with the prison, but for women they just give us the typical woman jobs

Anyway, how's the baby?

Your wife,

Mindy

* * *

November 2, 2012

Pablo,

So today we actually had class. You know it's really nice to be in class. I am starting to realize that a lot of these women are pretty cool. Maybe I wouldn't trust them with my life, but I feel like a lot of them care, and a lot of them really want to grow and want to help other women learn too. And I think that's pretty fly.

How's the baby? Why won't you bring her to see me?

Your wife,

Mindy

* * *

November 7, 2012

Mindy,

What, now you somebody's bitch in there or something? You a prison dyke or something? I don't know what type of bullshit you taking, that you care about those bitches. That shit sound real dykish. Matter of fact, I want you to quit that fuckin' class and get a job. I'm out here taking care of this kid on my own, and the least you could be doing is making some money and sending it to me to take care of this kid. Who knows if this kid is even mine? While you in there chillin' with your lesbian girlfriends, I'm out here probably taking care of some other man's kid. You think I'm a sucker, huh?

We'll see. This is your last chance. Quit the class and get a job or I'm out. And you definitely won't see your kid again.

Pablo

* * *

The next day, as students entered, I noticed Mindy seemed depressed. She didn't exude the typical spunk I was accustomed to.

“Good morning everyone, anything to report? Any news?”

Mindy hesitated and raised her hand, “So my man told me I needed to quit this class.”

“What? Why?” Ladonna asked.

“So I tell him about the type of stuff we do in the class, and that I care about y’all and it’s like a comfortable place, and he thinks I’m a lesbian and I should get a job and send him money for the baby.”

“Oh, hell no. You are doing time and trying to make your life better for your daughter when you are released, and all he wants is for you to send him the measly \$30 a month we can make in here? That’s not even enough for you to wash your ass!”

“And then he said he thought the baby wasn’t his. And I’ve never been with no one but him.”

“Oh, no. Girl, you need to cut him off and file for visitation with that baby.”

“I can do that?”

“We will figure it out together. I’m sure there is something you can do.”

“Okay everyone, thank you all for supporting Mindy through this rough time. This is actually a great segue into our next activity. Today we’re going to do a life mapping activity. We’ll be creating maps of our life experiences thus far. Then we will look for patterns. Our next writing assignment will be to write about patterns we notice in our lives. They might be patterns we want to change or patterns that define who we are. You may choose the cause and effect style or the process style to write this essay. You decide which works best. So, to begin, I am going to hand everyone a large piece of paper upon which you will do your prewriting. On this paper, I would

like you to create a map of your life. Start from the beginning with everything you can remember. You might wish to include some details or not many details, you decide.”

* * *

Mindy noticed that the map of her life showed patterns of women enduring the abuse of men: her mother enduring the abuse of her boyfriend, Mindy enduring the abuse of her mother’s boyfriend, and Mindy enduring Pablo’s abuse. Ultimately, this is what brought her to prison. Unable to cope anymore, she lashed out in violence against someone else who wasn’t even her abuser—another woman. So Pablo’s abuse not only hurt Mindy, but also hurt the woman upon whom Mindy lashed out. Mindy realized she had just been repeating the behaviors she learned as a child. She endured abusive situations throughout her entire life, and she was continuing to endure them by staying in the relationship with Pablo. This was the epiphany she needed. She wanted to break the cycle. She didn’t want her little girl to endure the same abuse as she. She needed to get that little girl away from Pablo, and she needed to be in that child’s life. And Pablo needed to be out of their lives. She knew what she needed to do.

* * *

The next day, Mindy arrived early to class and asked me to talk privately for a moment, “Sure, of course, let’s step outside of the classroom.”

“I was wondering if I might be able to talk about my situation in class today, with the other women to see if any of them have ever experienced it. I don’t have anyone on the outside around here, and I would really like some support.”

“Sure, is this about your husband and baby?”

“Yeah.”

“Sure, definitely. Why don’t we frame it in the context of last night’s assignment? I will ask if anyone wants to share what they explored with the assignment, and you can share what you came up with.”

“Thanks, Natalia, that sounds good.”

We headed back into the classroom. The rest of the students were chatting quietly.

“Okay everyone, last night you were assigned to write about the patterns you noticed in your lives. Would anyone like to share how the process went or anything they learned that the group might benefit from?”

Mindy’s hand shot up.

“Sure, please share, Mindy.”

“So, last night I realized that the pattern in my life is abuse by men. My mom used to deal with it and I used to see that, and her boyfriend used to abuse me too. And my husband is an abuser, too. And I think he has the potential to abuse my baby. And I can’t let that happen. I have to do something,” she began to cry, “but I don’t have anyone here.”

The class chimed in, “You could call Child Services.”

“But then they’ll take her away.”

“Not necessarily; they might be able to arrange visitation.”

“But it depends on the type of crime you’re convicted of.”

“Girl, you’ll never see her again if you call.”

“But if he’s abusing the baby, it’s for her own good.”

“God knows what could happen if you don’t call.”

“Who stays with her when he’s not home?”

Mindy began to cry more and more. I could tell it was time to end the conversation and switch to a new topic, “Okay everyone, is there anyone else that would like to share?”

A few more students shared, and we continued with the lesson until the G-sharp rang.

* * *

That night, I began to do some research about Mindy’s rights with Child Protective Services. I printed her out some information and gave it to her in class the next day.

* * *

She brought the paperwork back to her cell and began reading. She decided she had to do what was best for her baby even if it meant she might never see her again:

November 21, 2012

Child Protective Services:

My name is Mindy Orellana, and I am presently incarcerated at New England State Prison. I am a mother, and my child is in the custody of my husband. I am concerned that my husband is not providing proper care and living arrangements for my child. Is there any way that you could check on this matter for me?

In addition, my husband refused to bring my daughter for visitation to the prison. I was wondering if you could also help me to visit with my daughter?

*Thank you,
Mindy*

* * *

Anderson gave me a C in his criminal justice class. The first C I had ever received.

Rafael

“You don’t need some stupid classes. What you need is a job. Those bullshit classes are for bitches; they won’t get you anywhere. Not in here anyway. If you get a job at least you’ll have some money to buy food to put some weight on your skinny ass.”

Rafael turned from the water-stained bulletin board upon which were taped outdated class offerings and prison education policies, Xeroxed on sheets of 8.5 by 11 inch white economy copy paper, “Oh yeah, how do I do that?”

“Come back tomorrow,” Officer Jermaine turned and marched, chest puffed out and duck-footed, down the hall toward his office. As he marched, Jermaine passed classrooms on either side of the hall, each with Plexiglas internal windows for easy surveillance. There were no windows to the free world outside.

Rafael lowered his head and ambled along the right edge of the yellow-painted discipline line in the middle of the gray concrete floor, toward the prison library, which was housed within the maximum-security prison’s education building. This was his first bid in an adult facility. He had done some time in *juvie* for selling weed back in middle school, but here was different. Here he felt small. And scared. He was only eighteen, charged as an adult for dealing crack while he was still on probation from his last bid. And he faced deportation because he was not yet a US citizen; Rafael and his mother fled the Dominican Republic seeking asylum from his abusive father. Like his father, Rafael also sold drugs. He kept his head down as he passed the Plexiglas-windowed classroom walls, feeling like a goldfish in a sea of sharks. He held his

breath, certain not to make eye contact. He feared noticing his dread mirrored in someone else's eyes. Rafael was not ready to face that reality.

Rafael was alone here in Max. Outside he had only his mother, but he'd disappointed her so much that she might never speak to him again. She wouldn't respond to his letters, and she wouldn't visit him—probably due, in equal parts, to her own fear of being deported and her disappointment in Rafael.

April 22, 2013

Mami,

I know I hurt you by everything that I have done and it's going to take a long time for you to forgive me but I feel very alone in here and very scared. Please answer my calls or at least write to me. I love you and I'm sorry.

Tu hijo,

Rafael

* * *

The movement bell, an electronic G-sharp seemingly purposefully overextended to add an extra edge of agitation to those within the prison's walls, sounded. Rafael proceeded in line on the right side of the yellow discipline line behind a train of other prisoners; out of the education building; diagonally across the outdoor grassless, treeless recreation yard; and past six pay phones, four picnic tables, and thirteen correctional officers laughing and gossiping. He never raised his eyes enough to notice the two officers armed with rifles patrolling the turreted wall surrounding the rec yard. He hurriedly entered the cellblock and immediately entered his six by eight-foot cell. As soon as he heard the metal-to-metal latch of the cell door lock, he exhaled. Safe.

May 1, 2013

Mami,

A cop today told me I could get a job and I start tomorrow. I know I won't make much money, but at least I'll be able to buy a little food. I go to bed so hungry. The food they give here is disgusting and many times I'm too scared to go to the chow

hall anyway. I think I'm getting skinnier, and I need to gain weight in case anything happens. You can't trust anyone here. I love you and I'm sorry. I miss you so much mami. Please write.

*Tu hijo,
Rafael*

* * *

During the next morning's two-hour recreation period, Rafael, head lowered and shallow-breathed, made his way to the education building for his first day of work. "Inmate, I need you to clean the staff bathrooms and the classrooms. The cleaning shit is over there," Officer Jermaine pointed to a corner of his office, the only room without internal Plexiglas windows.

Rafael got to work, starting first with the staff bathrooms and then moving toward the classrooms, passing the bulletin board on his way. He stopped in his tracks and turned to check if anyone was watching. When he noticed that nobody was watching, he stopped to look at the bulletin board. The last time he looked at the bulletin board, Jermaine stopped him to tell him that education was for bitches and not to bother. But still, Rafael was compelled toward the water-stained bulletin board of prison education information. Though the information listed there was mostly outdated, he noticed one flier that said anyone interested in education should write to Mr. Johnson, coordinator of prison education.

"Didn't I tell you that shit was for bitches? Now get to work, like a man."

Startled, Rafael hurriedly entered the nearest classroom and began wiping down desks. He was the only prisoner in the education building, so he felt a bit of ease in that he didn't have to fear other prisoners who might take advantage of his small size and vulnerability. What he didn't notice were Officer Jermaine's stares through the Plexiglas while Rafael's back was turned. Making his way from classroom

to classroom, Rafael soon heard the familiar sound of the G-sharp movement bell. He lifted his gaze from the desks, gathered the cleaning supplies, and proceeded back to Jermaine's office to return the cleaning supplies, his eyes finally held high, observing the cold drabness of the gray walls, gray doors, gray floors. He knocked on Jermaine's door.

"Come in and close the door."

Rafael did as he was told.

"Put the supplies over there," Jermaine gestured to an open space on the floor in the corner of his office.

Rafael bent down and set the supplies down. When he turned around, he was startled to find Jermaine less than one foot away from him, standing, "Whoa," he jumped back, now cornered.

"Strip."

"What?"

"You heard me. Strip."

"Here? Now?"

"You know insubordination carries time in seg?"

Skeptically, Rafael began to remove his khaki prison issued shirt, waiting for Jermaine to stop him and tell him that he was pulling a prank on him, but he didn't, and he didn't back away to give Rafael space either. Rafael removed his white t-shirt, exposing his chest.

"Turn around."

Hesitantly, Rafael turned, and as he bent to remove his khaki pants, he felt Jermaine press against him, “What the fuck, man?” Rafael turned and lifted his pants and grabbed his other garments from the floor, pushed passed Jermaine, opened the office door, ran toward the locked exit and banged on the door, behind which was stationed another officer. He screamed, “Let me the fuck out of here!”

Jermaine followed and whispered in Rafael’s ear, “Shut the fuck up, inmate. Are you a fag or something, inmate? Do you know what they do to fags in here? I know a guy in here who looked just like you who was gang fucked so bad he nearly died. And you know what the cops did? Nothing. Cuz we don’t like fags either, inmate. So shut your fucking mouth and take your punishment like a man.”

An officer unlocked the exit door and Rafael marched swiftly back to the cellblock, this time noticing the stares of the officers in the rec yard and on the wall surrounding the rec yard.

May 3, 2013

Mami,

Please come visit me as soon as possible. I feel my life is in danger here. There is a cop who has been fucking with me bad. Please, I need to talk to you.

Tu hijo,

Rafael

* * *

“What the fuck are you doing, inmate?” the block officer yelled through the bars of Rafael’s cell, “Why the fuck aren’t you at work?”

“I don’t want that job.”

“You sure about that? Refusing to report to work duty carries seg time, inmate,” the block officer unlocked Rafael’s cell, pulled his handcuffs from his belt, and while he cuffed Rafael, whispered in his ear, “I heard you were a faggot, inmate.

We don't tolerate that shit here." The block officer hauled Rafael violently out of his cell, down the stairs from his second-tier cell, his knees buckling and legs dragging on the floor like ragdoll. As the block officer hauled him past the cells on the flats, other prisoners in their cells shouted sundry comments— "You're breaking his arm!" "Man up, kid!" "Keep your head up, kid!" Others laughed. Some just stared.

When they reached the doorway to seg, another officer unlocked the door. Dragging Rafael, the officers turned right then pushed Rafael in an empty cell. The officer with keys locked the door and said, "Strip."

Again, Rafael did as he was told. This time he was behind a cell door, safe from physical abuse.

After the strip search, an officer threw an orange jumpsuit in the cell. After Rafael changed, he heard an officer demand, "Cuff up."

Rafael turned so his back faced the cell door and inserted his hands through the cuff hole. The same two officers that dragged him to seg then opened the cell door and escorted Rafael to another cell. He entered the cell and heard the door slam behind him. Realizing this would be his home for an indefinite period of time, he stared at the windowless once-white brick walls on three sides of him, now pepper-spray stained yellow and orange. He looked down at the gray floor, paint peeling, exposing bare concrete. He noticed the incessant drip of the sink, directly in front him as he stood with his back to the cell door, attached to the toilet. Turning his head right, he saw the bed: a metal slab the length of the entire cell upon which was strewn a two-inch stained old mattress. On the right, a desk: a concrete slab attached to the wall and a

round metal stool attached to the floor. And that was all he had. No property. No television. No recreation time. Just a tiny, empty, dingy, old cell.

Lack of daylight made Rafael quickly lose track of time. The only way he was able to gain some semblance of time was by the food tray shoved through the cuff hole three times a day. *Breakfast, shove. Lunch, shove. Dinner, shove.* When it wasn't mealtime, he tried to pass time by catching mice or cockroaches that would pass through his cell, but he soon felt like he was going crazy. Pacing back and forth all day and night, his only company was his thoughts—taking him to the dark places he feared. Screaming in his pillow would make the thoughts pause for a moment, but, as soon as he stopped screaming, the thoughts would return. He heard of other prisoners cutting themselves to satisfy the demons their thoughts brought to them. He didn't have access to a razor, but he wanted to try. He then began thinking of other items in his cell he might be able to fashion into a razor for just that.

Suddenly, another correctional officer he didn't recognize stopped in front of his cell, "You know you can get out of here as soon as you man up and go back to work."

Rafael knew what would happen if he *manned up* and went back to work. He would ironically be emasculated more than he already was. He already felt less than a man because he knew how much his fear bled through his face—his emotions were so easy to read. Having done time in juvie, he thought he could hold his own. But he was wrong. He was still a child, and this was obvious by his small frame. He was expected to act like a man, but in reality he had no idea what that even meant. "How do I get a different job?"

“You get what you get, asshole.”

So he went back to pacing. He contemplated what would be worse: seg or general population. Imagining ways he could fashion together a device to begin cutting himself, he realized he could kill or severely hurt himself in seg. Out there, he would be abused, yes, but he had a higher likelihood of staying alive. And he might be able to devise a way to get away from Jermaine.

Another CO passed by his cell without stopping, at which point Rafael yelled to him, “Yo, CO, I want my job back,” the officer turned, rolled his eyes, and kept walking. Rafael wasn’t sure if the officer even heard him. Rafael then walked over to his concrete bed with its two-inch thick mattress pad and flopped down as if his body were unable to remain upright any longer. As he stared at the water-stained ceiling and imagined the peeling paint chips were cloud animals, he fell asleep.

* * *

A few hours later, the metal-on-metal clanking of the cell bar lock opening woke Rafael. He bolted upright and stared in disbelief at the cop.

“What the fuck are you waiting for? Let’s go.”

This time, without handcuffs and deaf to the screams and commentary from the gallery of other seg-bound prisoners, Rafael headed back to his cell, head down and numb. Knowing that the next morning he would return to work to be emasculated and abused, he slept. Back at home he used to smoke weed to forget, to dull the flashbacks of his father’s abuse toward his mother and he, to pretend he didn’t care when teachers looked at him as if he were not fully human but rather a warm-bodied place holder that made their lives more difficult, to dry the tears of his mother’s disappointment in him.

But here he couldn't smoke to forget. Here, all he could do was remember.
Remember, or sleep. So he slept.

* * *

The next day, Rafael went back to work cleaning the education building. Though he attempted to blend into the mass of other prisoners in the movement line toward the education building, he felt Jermaine's eyes on him as their paths crossed. Rafael was thankful that Jermaine didn't immediately approach him, as Jermaine was occupied talking to a rookie CO. They both positioned their hands in their pockets, chests puffed out, and spoke excessively loudly though not seeming to speak to each other. Their projected voices instead seemed to be aimed at the prisoners as they walked in, "I can't believe how much of a bitch my ex is. She's quick to take my money in this divorce, but she was never quick to give me any pussy. If she were quicker to give me pussy, we wouldn't even be in this predicament because I wouldn't have had to go somewhere else for it."

"You can't trust women these days. All this lesbian, man-hating bullshit, they think they run everything."

As the officers projected their voices, each prisoner passing by them in the movement line heard their conversation. Many commented amongst themselves, "Yo, that shit is true, these hoes ain't loyal."

"Trust no bitch," commented another prisoner. Other young men, perhaps never experiencing a positive male role model in their lives, internalized what the officers said. Correctional officers and other prisoners were the only examples of masculinity many prisoners ever experienced.

Rafael was glad there were classes in the education building today. He was also glad the rookie was present. Maybe this meant the rookie would serve as a buffer from Jermaine's abuse. He entered Jermaine's office to retrieve cleaning supplies, and, as he did, Jermaine and the rookie followed him in, "How was your time in seg, inmate?" They cornered Rafael, who began to tremor.

"Whoa, whoa, chill out. We're not going to hurt you, kid. What are you a fag or something?"

Rafael felt Jermaine's eyes boring into his. The officers left the office, joking amongst themselves about Rafael's behavior, calling him 'fag boy' and reenacting the scene in high-pitched falsettos. Rafael quickly retrieved the cleaning supplies and got back to work, this time perpetually alert to his surroundings. Some classrooms were full of students, with classes in session. He noticed one classroom with a female teacher, who he only noticed through the windowed classroom walls because she was the only person in the classroom not wearing prison-issued khakis. She was not immediately obvious as the teacher because she blended in with the students, as everyone sat in a circle, talked, laughed, and smiled. The teacher did not stand at the front of the classroom to lecture at rows of silent students, as Rafael had believed was the only way classrooms were structured.

(What he didn't know was that I – Natalia – this teacher, now working in the men's maximum-security building, intentionally attempted to structure the classroom in a way that was collaborative and non-hierarchical. My rationale behind structuring the class this way was that my prisoner-students had enough hierarchical relationships in which their voices never mattered. In prison [and probably in their lives outside of

prison] they were discouraged from collaboration with each other. I wanted to make sure their experience in my class was different.)

Rafael lingered outside of my classroom for a bit of extra time, intrigued by what he saw happening inside. Though Rafael took heed not to stare uncomfortably, he glanced from side angles but was still surprised that nobody inside the classroom caught him staring. This was unusual in prison, especially a maximum-security men's prison, since prisoners remained hyper-vigilant, constantly surveying their surroundings. It was as if the students had forgotten they were in prison, fixated on whatever they were studying.

Rafael, feeling himself lingering, decided to keep moving and double back later. He heard Jermaine and the rookie talking, so he tiptoed toward Jermaine's office in order to eavesdrop without being seen or heard.

"What's the deal with the hot teacher? What the hell is she doing teaching here?" asked the rookie to Jermaine.

"I don't trust her. I think she has something going on with the inmates because everyone wants to be in her class. Can you believe she even has one-on-one conferences with these animals? There is no reason a good looking young girl has any business in a prison unless she's up to something. And I've heard her speaking Spanish to some of these guys before. There should be a rule that you have to speak English here – for security. God knows what they're plotting in Spanish. I heard she knew a teacher in minimum; he says he doesn't trust her."

Soon after, the G-sharp sounded, and the class was dismissed. Rafael disappeared into the movement crowd, knowing he would now endure the humiliation

of Jermaine's abuse. He maintained hope that maybe Jermaine wouldn't risk it with the rookie present. However, what Rafael didn't know was that the bond of correctional officers was so strong that Jermaine could have done whatever he wanted, and the rookie would not have questioned anything. And in the slim chance that the rookie reported Jermaine's actions, the correctional officer's labor union was even stronger than the bond of officers. The union would have fought for Jermaine to keep his job and brush everything under the rug.

Rafael walked to Jermaine's office and set down the cleaning supplies on his desk. "That's not where they belong, inmate. You in a rush or something?" Jermaine yelled, projecting a performance for the rookie, "You know what's next inmate. Be careful." He turned to the rookie, "This one's a fag.

As Rafael stripped, he felt himself enter into an out-of-body state. It was as if he were observing from above as his body stripped itself naked, enduring the humiliation of the COs. He detached his mind and emotions from the situation as a defense mechanism. Though he physically heard them laughing and joking, he was detached, non-responsive to their antagonism.

Rafael was dismissed from the strip search and slipped into the movement crowd. Many prisoners seemed relatively content. He noticed that those same prisoners were the ones he stared at in my class. He wondered what about my class made the prisoners happy but the correctional officers so uneasy. He focused his attention to listening to the conversations of the students in my class.

"That teacher is real though. She gets it."

"You're right; I like that class. And she's easy on the eyes."

“She gives mad homework though!”

“Yeah, but it’s like she has high expectations of us, and nobody else in here got high expectations for us, so I’ll take it.”

“Yeah, I feel you.”

Rafael moved slowly in order to delay his spot in the movement line so he could walk near some of the students in my class. “Hey, what’s that class about that you’re taking?”

“Writing.”

“What kind of writing?” Rafael asked Kenny, one of the students he overheard talking about the class.

“Well, we talk a lot about making ourselves better, and we talk about how fucked up the system is, and we write about new ideas on how to change it and make it better. And we read some, too. Like we’re reading this book right now called *New Jim Crow*. It’s about how the prison system today is like slavery.”

“Oh, word? Thanks. That’s what’s up,” Rafael entered his cell and began pacing. As he paced, he thought. He thought about his emotional disconnection from Jermaine’s abuse today. He envisioned what would happen if he didn’t obey Jermaine and instead told him to go fuck himself or punch him in the face. He knew that it would be his word against a cop’s, though, and this would certainly land him more time in seg – potentially a great portion, if not all, of his entire bid.

He changed after his first bid in seg. He was more detached now, like a ticking time bomb. He knew that more time there might push him over the edge. He heard

stories where the most stable-seeming people attempted suicide after being down there for long periods of time and knew it was possible for him to go crazy down there, too.

As the students exited with the movement line, so did the teachers, including me. The other teachers, one white female and one white male, had both been teaching at the prison for much more time than I. We crossed diagonally through the recreation yard, passed through the main cell building that housed the antiquated three-tiered cellblocks. As I walked through the recreation yard, I smiled at the prisoners. I smiled not because it made me happy to observe the realities of mass imprisonment, but rather I smiled to remind the prisoners of their humanity. I wasn't scared of them; I was scared of those people controlling their custody. I was scared of the immense power they wielded, and I was scared of their capabilities as people who knowingly enslave and subdue human beings.

Jermaine noticed me smiling at the prisoners I passed. He believed I was making a mockery of the prison by smiling so much, disrespecting the sacrifice he and other correctional officers made by putting their lives on the line everyday to make society safer. To him, the prison was no place to smile. On the other hand, a part of him was scared of the relationships I had with students. He wondered what we talked about in the classroom or in our one-on-one conferences. He feared whether prisoners revealed to me information about the treatment of prisoners by COs, especially him. He decided to act proactively in response to his fears.

Chest-puffed, duck-footed, and nose to the clouds was Jermaine's posture for masking the constant fear in which he lived. At age eighteen, Officer Jermaine went into the military. He felt pressured to enlist because both his father and grandfather

were in the military. While there, Jermaine endured bullying and sexual abuse, but he kept it all a secret. Divorced from his wife of ten years, he lived with another divorced male correctional officer. Nobody knew that he lived with the other correctional officer because Jermaine felt pressured to uphold standards of masculinity. Living with another grown man would make him look gay. His ex-wife filed for divorce because he chose to work so much overtime at the prison that he was never home with her or their children. When she would try to talk to him about it, he became emotionally abusive to her. They had stopped having sex years ago, when she found him looking at gay porn on his computer.

Tap, tap tap. As Jermaine knocked, the captain gestured for Jermaine to enter his office.

“Hey cap, have you seen that young girl teacher?”

“Natalia?”

“Yeah. Did you know that she has one-on-one conference with the inmates? A lot of the guys feel she’s up to something, plotting something with the inmates or maybe she’s got something going on romantically with them. She’s got these inmates salivating over the way she dresses, too.”

“How is she dressing? Is she wearing clothing outside of the dress code?”

“Well, I see inmates staring at her ass a lot. She wears bright colors, and she’s always bouncing around.”

Though it was impossible to be allowed entrance into the prison without abiding by the dress code, Jermaine had already made up his mind that I was a hypersexual being with animalistic tendencies toward fornicating with prisoners who

he also viewed as hypersexual and animalistic. The culture of criminalized sexuality within the prison emboldened Jermaine's imagination of such a narrative.

For three more days, Rafael continued to work cleaning the education building, all the while continuing to endure Jermaine's homophobic remarks and ambiguously homoerotic sexual abuse – Jermaine would push up on him as Rafael stripped and occasionally grab Rafael's balls and ass. And each time, Jermaine's verbal homophobic abuse worsened. As he continued to work, Rafael also continued to observe my classroom. He remembered Jermaine mentioning to him as he began his bid that "education was for bitches," yet he observed plenty of students with reputations to the contrary. In prison, being a *bitch* meant being a coward, someone who was easy to bully. Rafael realized that pursuing education in prison did not transform prisoners into bitches. Rather, he, by working instead of pursuing education, was becoming Jermaine's bitch—someone Jermaine could bully and abuse. He knew there were two options: seg time for refusing to work for Jermaine, or figuring out a way to get into a class. So Rafael continued to observe my class and endured Jermaine's bullying for the time being. He was planning his escape from Jermaine's abuse through education, as prisoners had only two choices: work or education.

Rafael learned that soon my class would come to an end when he overheard some of the students talking about their final paper topics – proposals to the prison administration on how to change something they didn't agree with. Rafael knew that the bulletin board sign said to write to Mr. Johnson if interested in taking classes, but he also began to realize that word travelled fast among correctional officers, and if he wrote to Mr. Johnson, the letter would first have to travel through the hands of other

correctional officers who were sure to tell Jermaine, who would then make the letter disappear or find a way to further harm Rafael.

So, instead of writing the letter to Mr. Johnson, Rafael knew he needed to ask someone else to get the message to Mr. Johnson. Rafael observed that Kenny earned a lot of respect, and that he never fraternized with correctional officers. And Rafael knew Kenny had done a lot of time. Kenny – a tall, thin, black man who worked as a drug dealer in his community – was considered an *OG* – a prisoner who was well respected by fellow prisoners. He seemed like someone Rafael could trust to get a message to Mr. Johnson.

After work, Rafael maneuvered through the movement crowd, shifting his way toward Kenny. Rafael noticed Jermaine staring in his direction, so Rafael waited to talk to Kenny until they were well out of Jermaine’s earshot, making his move as soon as they exited the education building and entered the recreation yard, where it was easy to relay messages you didn’t want intercepted by correctional officers. The yard was spacious, and sound did not travel far.

Rafael mustered the courage, “Hey man, is there any way you can ask that teacher to get me in her next class?”

“Why would I do that?”

“I know these cops won’t let me in it if I write to Johnson.”

“So why don’t you talk to the teacher?”

“Cops.”

“Nothing is free in this place, you know. What can you do for me?”

“I don’t know, what do you want?”

“I’ll let you know,” Kenny walked away confidently and Rafael stayed glued in place, dumbfounded by what Kenny meant. He quickly caught himself standing alone awkwardly, and he knew he needed to move in order not to raise any suspicion. So he walked. As he walked, he wondered what he owed Kenny. He hoped he hadn’t put himself in another position to be someone else’s *bitch*.

* * *

The next morning, Saturday (Rafael didn’t work on weekends), Rafael received inter-institutional correspondence:

June 1, 2013

Rafael,

You’ve been placed in Natalia Gomez’s writing class. It starts on Monday at 8:00am. Please make sure you are there or else you will be replaced and denied a seat in the next class.

Mr. Johnson

Coordinator of Prison Education

Rafael was astounded by the fast turnaround and Kenny’s power. Rafael also knew he would need to prepare himself for Jermaine’s backlash when he didn’t show up in the education building to work on Monday but instead showed up for class. He had trouble sleeping that night. And the next.

* * *

On Monday morning, when he heard the G-sharp movement bell, Rafael walked toward the education building paradoxically as if he were marching in funeral procession and a wedding procession. He knew Jermaine would retaliate, but he also believed this class was his escape from Jermaine’s abuse.

Rafael kept his head down as he walked into the education building. He expected to feel Jermaine’s eyes staring through him when he walked in, but he didn’t.

He looked up to see the rookie there in Jermaine's place. Jermaine had the day off. Rafael felt incredibly relieved on the one hand, but, on the other hand, he knew that relief would not last forever. Jermaine might return to work tomorrow, in a week, or a month. One thing was certain: Jermaine would return, and there would be hell to pay.

Rafael raised his head high and entered the classroom. He saw Kenny there, too. When their eyes met, Rafael nodded so as to say, "Thank you." Kenny nodded back in recognition of Rafael's appreciation but also in acknowledgement that Rafael was indebted to him, in any way Kenny deemed necessary in the future.

"Good morning, gentlemen. I see lots of new faces; welcome to all of you, and quite a few familiar faces too. Welcome back. It's great to see you all."

"Great to see you too, Natalia," Kenny responded, demonstrating his power.

"Thanks, Kenny. I am also very glad to be here. I wasn't sure I would be able to return because I got a phone call after our last class asking me to change the way I dressed because Mr. Johnson received some complaints from the correctional officers."

"What! What was their problem with your clothes?" Kenny shouted.

"Great question. I have no idea. They didn't have any specific feedback for me."

"Sounds like sexual harassment," Kenny remarked.

Everyone got silent.

"Nevertheless, I thought you all should know that I'm probably on watch. I hope this semester goes smoothly and that we're able to accomplish all that we set out to accomplish, but who knows what may arise."

I began passing out the syllabus. “So this semester, we will continue a lot of what we did last semester in exploring how, through writing, we can use our voices to change what we don’t like about the systems we exist within while also growing as individuals. This time we will add to what we were doing by exploring a few different genres of essays and thinking about when it’s most appropriate to use specific genres depending on our objective. We will end the semester with a research paper genre, meaning that not only will we be using our own experience and logic to support our objectives, but we will also use scientific research to support our objectives. So this means you all, with my help, will decide what your topic is, and use other research that has been done to back up your ideas.”

“How are we going to do that if they don’t let us use the internet and all this library has are ‘hood novels and comic books?” Kenny asked.

I paused in disbelief. “Wow, that’s a shame. Really?”

“Yeah, they try to keep us down by restricting our access to education and censoring what we read.”

“Well then, I guess I will have to bring in the information you need. It’ll be more work for me,” I smiled.

“So basically we’re going to write papers that aren’t just backed up by what we think but also what other people think,” Kenny was the most vocal leader of the class.

“That’s exactly right.”

“So maybe we can publish this stuff and people will take our ideas seriously?”

“That would be the best case scenario, absolutely,” I replied.

The class ended after I went over the syllabus, answered student questions, led a short icebreaker activity during which students were instructed to work in groups to create a vision of a prison-less society, and assigned homework – an interest inventory of potential topics the students would like to write about.

Though I had the best intentions for the class to produce abolitionist outcomes and change the course of the criminal justice system, I was naïve to the reality that there were *trustees* in my class. They didn't inform prison officials in exchange for anything tangible per say, but none of them ever ended up in seg, and there was always one planted in every class. Correctional officers were terrified of what could happen if multiple prisoners put their minds together. Many of them believed that was a threat to security because, through education, prisoners could become more savvy criminals. Others complained that prisoners didn't deserve free educations when correctional officers had to pay for their education themselves.

As he walked across the recreation yard back toward the cellblock, Rafael saw Trevor, the trustee – a young, Latino man known for his mental instability – approach the captain. Rafael had seen Trevor talk to quite a few correctional officers before, but this time Rafael felt suspicious that Trevor was informing the CO about something from class today. Rafael walked by them slowly and with his head down, hoping to overhear exactly what the conversation was about. Rafael could only make out a few words – “her clothes” and “publishing what we write” were amongst the words Rafael made out. This confirmed that Trevor was in fact informing the COs as Rafael suspected. Rafael knew he needed to act quickly, because my time at the facility was limited. They would find a reason to get me out of there.

* * *

On Tuesday, Jermaine was out again. Rafael heard, from the chatter of correctional officers arguing over which of them would take Jermaine's post in the education building, that he was on vacation for two weeks. None of the COs wanted a station at Jermaine's post because it required more surveillance than the cellblock, recreation yard, and visitation room. Since only one correctional officer was assigned to the education building, which included many classrooms, officers believed that prisoners could easily congregate and plot insurgence within the classroom walls.

The rookie decided to volunteer to take Jermaine's post. He felt compelled to prove himself worthy of the respect of his correctional officer brothers. His drive to prove himself stemmed from never connecting with a group of friends as a child. His father was in the military and never present. He moved from school to school, never in one place for long. Now was his chance to solidify his connection with a group of people he admired, and to prove how capable he was by taking on this dangerous post. Moreover, from what the rookie heard from Jermaine, there was something going on between my students and me, and the rookie wanted to be the one to expose it, going down in correctional officer history. He knew this was his mission.

I walked in through the visitor's entrance of the prison, my usual route. The prison didn't consider me a real employee of the facility, and, therefore, I entered like a visitor. Each time I entered, I waited for a period of time in the visitor's waiting room until the correctional officer who worked the post arrived. Though I arrived on time every day, the correctional officers never arrived on time. Sometimes I waited for ten minutes, other times twenty. I had even waited a whole hour before. As mentioned

previously, a few times I waited and waited only to be told classes were cancelled that day.

That day, I was surprised to encounter a multitude of correction officers, arms folded, lining either side of the walkway leading up to the visitors entrance of the prison, silently staring at me as I passed.

“Good morning, gentlemen,” I smiled to the group of all male, white correctional officers – one of whom included the captain.

They remained silent and continued to stare at me. I walked in to the visitor’s area to yet another group of correctional officers. Though I heard the men’s voices as I approached, they became silent as I entered. Again they stared at me, arms folded.

“Hello,” I said, my eyes darting from one correctional officer to another in an attempt to address them all. Again, they remained silent. I approached the visitor’s sign-in desk, surprised that a correctional officer was stationed at the post on time. I had become accustomed to waiting. I placed my belongings on the desk, signed my name, date, and time of my arrival on the blue visitor’s log sheet. Then I waited, standing as I usually did for the correctional officer to search my belongings and allow me to pass through the metal detector.

“Have a seat,” the correctional officer hadn’t ever said that before. Usually, I stood by waiting while the correctional officer searched my belongings.

“Do you want me to take my things?”

“Have a seat,” he responded a few decibels louder.

I wasn’t sure what his answer was, so I left my belongings. Apparently this is what he meant because as soon as I sat on the cold plastic visitor’s bench he began

opening my bags. I felt the correctional officers from outside entering the visitor's waiting area. There were now at least ten of them surrounding me in the waiting area. This was highly atypical. I brought with me two canvas bags full of supplies for class. The supplies included photocopied and stapled segments of textbooks that the class would be assigned to read. I had to supply texts because the prison refused to purchase the original texts I needed for class. Their excuse was always budgetary constraints. I also brought pens, notebooks, chalk to make notations on the single green chalkboard in the room, poster-sized pieces of paper for students to use in a group project I had planned, markers for the students to write on the poster paper with, and highlighters for another activity I had planned. The prison provided none of the supplies. I bought them all with my own money.

After about ten minutes of snail-paced searching through each and every single item I had in my bags, the officer beckoned with his index finger for me to approach the table. This was the first time I had experienced this level of scrutiny. I had been teaching at maximum-security for about six months, but never before had I been treated like this. Correctional officers were not exactly friendly, and I knew to be patient with their search procedures, but this search was beyond the level of surveillance I had ever experienced before. The silent eyes of the fifteen correctional officers surrounding me on all sides and the meticulous care with which the officer went through my supplies (the same supplies I always brought with me) made me think that this must be what it felt like to be a prisoner.

I noticed two distinct piles of supplies as I approach the visitor's desk. The officer at the desk pointed to the pile on my left and said, "You can't bring any of this in."

"Why? I've never had a problem with bringing it in before."

The officer doing the search looked at the captain, who then approached the desk and responded, "No metal." He pointed to the staples and paperclips that bound the stacks of texts I had photocopied for the students. "No markers." I was not allowed to bring in the very same markers and highlighters I had brought in countless times before. This meant I was no longer able to execute the lesson I had planned. "You can't give the inmates notebooks and pens from the outside. We have approved school supplies they can buy from the prison commissary."

I knew most of my students had forgone a job in order to take classes, so they weren't making money with which they could buy school supplies. I also knew those students that had families with whom they were in contact could barely afford to make their own ends meet, never mind supporting their imprisoned loved one. I felt obligated to provide for students the supplies I required them to use in class.

"Do you want me to bring it all back to my car?"

"No, you can pick it up when you leave."

I passed through the metal detector. Thankfully, I had heard that correctional officers often increased the sensitivity of the metal detectors, so I made sure never to wear even a fleck of metal on my clothing. No jewelry. No zippers. No buttons. No underwire bra. I also knew that my attire would be scrutinized since I received the phone call that officers were complaining about my attire. I made sure to wear

clothing that was especially drab and baggy. Though my feminist instincts compelled me to file a sexual harassment complaint, I decided that this was a battle I preferred not to fight. However, I must admit that I felt like I sacrificed a little bit of my soul while keeping my mouth shut about this.

I held my breath while passing through the gray arch, and thankfully I passed without a beep. In my usual fashion, I then grabbed my belongings (albeit much less than what I had anticipated), turned right, and mentally prepared for the next phase of the entry gauntlet.

“Uh, not so fast.”

I turned, perplexed about what I could have possibly done wrong now. Typically, after passing through the metal detector, I turned right and waited for the *click*, unlocking sound of the five-inch steel door that was locked and unlocked by control room officers behind two-way mirrors. Once past that door, I would wait in the midst of two-way mirrors for another steel door to unlock. Then I would await another steel door to enter a holding area with a group of gossiping correctional officers who seemed to puff their chests or speak extra loudly whenever I arrived. After the holding area, I would pass through the cellblocks. From the cellblocks, I knew my next route would be diagonally across the recreation yard to the next set of steel doors that marked the entrance to the education building.

“You will be escorted and you’ll need this,” the officer at the visitor’s desk handed me what looked like a black pager-like device on which I noticed a red button labeled PANIC. I had never been provided such a device in the eight months I had

been teaching at the prison. So I wondered whether the phone call I received about my clothing was connected to being provided this device. “Attach it to your belt loop.”

My eyes darted from one officer to the next. They were all staring at me, posturing, some with their hands on their belts, some with their hands folded across their chests. All had their chests puffed and legs squared. I remained silent and was escorted through the cellblock, past five other staring officers, past a group of prisoners showering, diagonally across the recreation yard, and into the education building. I didn’t have time to process all that had just happened; I got right to work readying my classroom and rethinking how I could execute the lesson I had planned.

The lesson was supposed to involve the narrative essay style. In the text I had copied were examples of narratives that we would analyze for the stylistic elements that made them narrative. In the same text were prompts the students could use for their homework: writing a rough draft of a narrative essay.

Since I no longer had access to my materials, I decided I would search the library for some examples of narrative. During our previous class, Kenny had mentioned that the library was full of ‘hood novels – fiction about the experience of living in urban neighborhoods. I was fairly sure those books would demonstrate the stylistic elements of narrative. Hurriedly, I grabbed a few off the shelf, ran back to the classroom, pushed the desks into a circle, and began scribbling the elements of narrative on the blackboard:

1. *Make a point*
2. *Convey action and detail*
3. *Present conflict and create tension*
4. *Sequence events*
5. *Use dialogue*
6. *Tell from a particular point of view*

I was so invested in the lesson that I didn't notice the rookie pacing back and forth outside of my classroom. I also forgot about the panic button attached to my belt. When I finally had the classroom set up how I wanted it, I sat down to write out the changes to my lesson plan, and the device sounded off a high-pitched screech. Startled, I stood, and the sound stopped. The rookie rushed in, "You need to keep it upright."

I looked briefly at him in silence then kept working. Again, I became lost in my work and quickly forgot about the device. Once I heard the sound again, I stood up, noticed the rookie had left, and took it off and placed it on the table. As I was finishing my lesson plan, students began pouring in, "Good morning! I am glad you are all here today. I want to collect homework first." As I wandered around the room collecting homework from students, I felt the rookie's eyes on me as he peered in through the windows. I purposefully ignored his aggressive stare and continued collecting homework.

When I finished collecting homework, I began the lesson by telling students, "Today most of my supplies for the lesson were confiscated when I arrived. The chapter I copied for you was stapled, so unfortunately that was not allowed. Additionally, I brought notebooks and pens because I know how difficult it is for you all to save enough money to buy them from the commissary. Those were not allowed in either. Markers for a group activity were also not allowed. So I'm basically ad-libbing this lesson, and I hope you all will be patient with me."

Many students shook their heads; others snickered; some snarled; and under their breaths, I heard a couple say, "They are so petty," and, "They are so stupid."

“So today’s lesson is about the narrative essay.” I went on, “The narrative tells a story with a point. Can any of you think of a narrative you’ve read?”

“Probably a lot of children’s books, like *The Three Little Pigs* or something.”

A few students snickered.

“Absolutely, you’re right. Any others?”

“I’m reading this novel right now,” said another student, “called *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. That’s probably a narrative because it’s telling a story.”

“Definitely. Most novels are in fact narratives. It sounds like we have a sense for the feel of a narrative. What do you all think will be different about a narrative essay as opposed to a book?”

“Length?”

“That’s right. We’re making our point quicker than we would in a novel. Sometimes, though, if we’re telling a narrative based on a true story, the chain of events and details of our true story didn’t occur that quickly. So what do we do?”

“Cut some out?”

“That’s right. We’re going to use artistic license. For a narrative essay, we want to only use the events and details that best support our point. If they don’t do anything to move our point forward, we can discard them. Any questions so far?” I waited a moment, “Alright, now I’d like to go over in depth some of the elements of narration. We were going to use the text I had brought in for this, but instead we have to go with what we have access to: ‘hood books.” I detailed the meanings of each of the elements of narration that were listed on the board as students scrupulously took notes. I then assigned students to work in small groups to locate some examples of

those elements within the ‘hood novels. As they worked, I circulated the room, checking on the progress of the groups.

After a few minutes had passed in the groups, the G-sharp movement bell sounded. “What?” I was confused.

“They brought us down here late,” one student said.

Since it took so long for my items to be processed, my class, which was supposed to last an hour and a half, only lasted forty minutes. I couldn’t help but feel this wasn’t merely a coincidence. “Okay, homework is to think back on the interest inventory you completed last night and begin drafting a narrative essay on one of those topics.” There was no time for questions or explanation; I couldn’t even return those interest inventories back to the students, so they had something to work with for the homework I had assigned.

As I began packing up the few items I was allowed to bring in, the rookie exploded into the classroom, pushing past students, who backed up, put their hands up, and said, “Whoa!” as they let him pass. Had they not, they could have easily been booked for assaulting a correctional officer and had time added to their sentences. The rookie began tossing chairs and desks back into row formation from the circle formation in which I had positioned the room. If one student didn’t back up in time, a chair would have hit him. I watched the rookie in shock.

“You know these idiots are rapists and murderers and child molesters? Why do you even come here? And bring so much for them when they don’t deserve it? Kids pay for their college education and are in huge debt because of it, and you’re coming in here and rewarding rapists and murderers with education for free?”

I didn't respond. Instead I began packing up my things and let the rookie throw desks around violently. I walked out of the classroom and waited in the movement line with the students. I felt far safer around the students than in the classroom with the rookie who was violently throwing desks and chairs.

As we waited, one student said to me, "We appreciate everything you do for us."

Another said, "Yeah, thank you for being here."

"Sorry about him. He's an asshole, trying to prove himself."

"Yeah, he's a faggot."

I smiled and then felt the rookie's presence approaching, "You want to get killed or something? You need to wait for me."

Again, I elected to remain silent. Ahead of me, the rookie walked, chest-puffed and duck-footed across the recreation yard and back to the main cellblock building. I exited the way I entered and gathered my items that had been confiscated at the visitor's desk. Arms full, I walked past a battery of officers on either side of my pathway out of the building. I kept my head down. As I walked through the parking lot toward my car, I felt in my bones that something was about to happen. I could still feel the officers staring at me even as I unlocked my car door and took a seat. Without waiting for my car to warm up, I sped off and burst into tears. I didn't want to cry in front of them. I wouldn't let them have power over me like that. I was there to teach. I wasn't their subordinate. I wasn't their prisoner. I wailed the entire ride home because I couldn't understand why they needed to be so hateful and sabotage me like this. I

was there to do my job as well as I could, but they would do everything in their power to stop me. I didn't understand why. I drove straight home without stopping.

I left the supplies that were denied entry in my car. I thought that maybe the COs would realize their mistake and change their minds, so I might be able to use them next time. I knew what I needed to do: change my curricular plans in order to achieve the same objectives without any resources. Walking into my house, I dropped my bags next to the desk in my home office and got to work. I pulled out from a canvas bag the stack of interest inventory homework papers I had collected from students. I began thumbing through them and came upon one that had a small piece of paper attached to it by way of the sticky label from a Speed Stick deodorant bar. I peeled off the tiny, meticulously placed Speed Stick label. It was a letter, in Spanish:

June 17, 2013

Dear Natalia,

I hope you don't get offended by me writing to you like this, but I thought it was important to communicate some information to you. You seem like the real deal, someone who is really here to help us lowly inmates, who no one cares about. And you're really good at your job, and it's clear you take it seriously. You don't deserve to be sabotaged. So I want to give you a heads up. Some of the COs have been talking about you, how they think you're up to no good with us. I don't know what their plan is, but you never know with these people. Also, be careful with the guys in the class. You can't trust everybody in the joint.

The letter had no signature, but I knew it was from Rafael because it was attached to his homework. My initial inclination was that he was a trustee and officers forced him to write the letter. I thought the letter was a ploy to coax me to write back a document that the officers would then use as evidence to ruin my career. On the other hand, after the day's chain of events, I toyed with the idea that Rafael was being honest. I pondered what to do while I sat, vacillating between re-working curriculum to re-reading the letter, trying to find clues as to whether his letter was a ploy or not. If

it wasn't a ploy, I knew it would be important to show Rafael that I could be trusted not to inform prison personnel that he had written a letter to me. Day became night, and I was exhausted. Knowing I'd be teaching in the morning, I had to do something. I decided to write a short note back to Rafael in the margin of his homework.

June 17, 2013

Thank you for the information. Do you have any more?

-S

After preparing for the next day a lesson that required no resources, I crashed on my bed, knowing that, inevitably, the next day would be eventful.

I awoke before my alarm, anxious about what type of day it would be at the prison. When I arrived in the parking lot, I breathed deeply and told myself, "Get it together, Natalia. Put your armor on."

I entered the prison to the same battery of officers, all silently posturing with arms crossed and chests puffed. This time I was even more vigilant of my surroundings and cautious of the supplies I brought with me, certain that I would be pushed out of the facility for any tiny reason the COs could muster up – a staple or a metal shirt button. I spoke to nobody, passed the inspection and metal detector, and continued on to be escorted by the rookie through the cell block, recreation yard, and ultimately to the education building.

As students entered, I began passing back homework from the night before. I could feel the rookie's glare through the windows, so I made sure not to make eye contact with Rafael, fearing that a lingering glance would signal suspicion in the rookie.

Students were especially quiet during the lesson. Typically, students became "free" after a few minutes in the classroom: their defense walls came down; they

started participating, asking and answering questions, and working together. But today was different. From the mood of the class, it was evident that students were aware of *something*, hyper-vigilant of their surroundings and unwilling to speak openly. Maybe they were feeding off my energy. Not wanting to seem suspicious, I proceeded on with the lesson as planned.

“Today we’ll be working on some peer review of the narrative essays you worked on last night. I’ve created a peer review guide sheet that lists all the elements of narration.” I began passing out the guide sheet to the students. “In pairs, you will be reviewing each other’s narrative essay according to the guide sheet.”

I circulated the room as the students worked in pairs, “Once you have completed the peer review, you may begin your second draft, using whatever piece of the feedback you received from your peer. Keep in mind that I will grade these papers using a modified version of the guide sheet, so it might behoove you to take the feedback you received from your peer.”

* * *

Many students completed their second draft before the G-sharp sounded. “For those of you who have not finished, please complete your second draft for homework tonight.”

* * *

When I arrived home, again I sat down to rework my lesson plans *sans* resources. I began by flipping through the stack of narrative essays I had received in class, searching for Rafael’s, curious if he had written back. Again, in Spanish:

June 18, 2013
Dear Natalia,

Thank you so much for writing back. Thank you for caring about what I have to say. Things are bad here. Real bad. Much worse than what it seems. Behind closed doors, things happen that the COs don't want people to know about. They do some real ugly shit to us when nobody's watching, and I think that's why they're so bad to you. They see that you care about us and that you listen. That you see us for more than our sentence and that you're here for us, not for them.

One of the guys in this class told a CO about what you're trying to do with us—publish some of our ideas about the problems with this place. So the COs are scared about that. They don't want the truth out there.

When I read his letter, I imagined all the horrible things that could be happening behind closed doors. Officers really could do anything. Their union was so powerful and would fight for the COs even if something heinous were exposed. Nobody believed prisoners when they attempted to expose things. Prisoners were the ultimate vulnerable population: in a position to be taken advantage of in any way possible. What could I do? Talking to prison officials wouldn't do any good. When I had previously attempted to talk to the Deputy Warden about an issue at the women's facility, she did nothing. And the prison officials here at men's maximum already had problems with me.

* * *

The next day of classes, we had one-on-one conferences scheduled. While I conferenced with students who had signed up the previous day, other students worked independently on rough drafts of their next essay. I typically conferenced with students in the classroom adjacent to the classroom we had been using.

The previous semester, Jermaine had been skeptical of these conferences; he had a way of making passive-aggressive comments about my pedagogical choices so as to insinuate that I didn't know how to do my job or that I had something inappropriate going on with students. I asked him, "Officer Jermaine, is there any way

we could use the adjacent classroom in addition to this one? I'm planning one-on-one conferences with my students about their writing."

"One-on-ones? Nobody has ever done that before!" Then he walked away without answering whether he would allow it. The next day the room was unlocked, so I assumed that was my answer. We just used it. Jermaine of course stood watch, arms crossed and chest puffed, outside the window.

This day, I knew I would have to ask the rookie's permission to use the classroom, "Excuse me, could you please unlock the classroom next door for us to use for our one-on-one conferences?"

He looked at me with uncertainty.

"Officer Jermaine has opened it for us in the past."

He unlocked the door and marched away, shaking his head. He marched to Jermaine's office and called Jermaine at home.

"Hey, brother, this teacher asked me to unlock two classrooms so she could have one-on-ones with the inmates."

"Keep a real good eye on them. I know she's got something shady going on, and I'm going to prove it."

"Okay boss; I'll let you know what I see."

I settled the class into their independent work while preparing for conferences. The first on the list for a one-on-one conference was Kenny.

"Hey Kenny, tell me about your narrative."

"I used a lot of what I learned in your class last semester to try to make the point of abolition through the lens of my own story of getting locked up."

“Interesting, tell me more.”

“Well, I sold drugs because it was the only option for me to make money. I became really good at it, so I started making a lot of money quickly. I used a lot of that money to give back to my community and tried to do the right thing by my family. But I got busted. So I’m using that as the story, and the point is to have other opportunities available for young urban kids to make money so that they’re not driven to sell drugs.”

“That sounds great. Is there any place that you are struggling or need my feedback?” We talked through a few minor details. “Okay Kenny, I think you’re ready to write a final draft!”

“Okay Natalia, thanks for everything. Just be careful, okay? You can’t trust everyone here.”

I didn’t notice the rookie peering in because we were so focused on Kenny’s paper, “You’re the second person to mention that this week. Thanks, Kenny. I’ll be alright. You keep focused on your education. You’re doing great work.”

I walked back into the main classroom, checked the sign up sheet, and called, “Rafael,” who was next on the list.

I purposefully sat facing the windows and positioned Rafael’s chair so that his back was to the window so that the rookie couldn’t read his lips. Rafael and I engaged in small talk about his paper for a few minutes, but then I asked him, “What is going on?”

“I don’t know if I’m the only one, *pero el me abusa.*”

“Who?”

“Jermaine.”

“What do you mean when you say he abuses you?”

“I work cleaning this building, and I have to do strip searches after work each day, and *he goes too far*,” he paused and lowered his eyes, fighting back tears. “I tried to transfer to a new job, but they wouldn’t let me. I ended up doing my first bid in seg because I didn’t go to work one day. Taking this class was the only way I could escape it, since you can’t have a job while taking a class. But when he comes back from vacation I know there will be hell to pay. I don’t know what else to do, but I had to tell someone. I’m so sorry for bringing this to you. I’m sure you have enough on your plate with teaching, never mind how they’ve been treating you here.”

“Do you have anyone outside that might help you get this information out?”

“Nah, I only have my mom, but she won’t speak to me because of all I’ve put her through.”

“I am so sorry. I can’t imagine what you’re going through, without any support outside and without anyone here protecting you.”

We paused. I could feel my eyes filling with tears.

Suddenly, I remembered where we were. I looked up and linked eyes with the rookie, who had been watching the whole time. He turned proudly so as to say, “Gotcha.”

“Listen, this CO has been eavesdropping the whole time. I wish I had an answer right now, but I don’t. I promise I won’t forget you or this conversation. I will do anything in my power to fix this. I’m just not sure what that is.” I stood up and ushered Rafael back to the other room.

When we entered, I looked at the clock and noticed that there were only ten minutes left of class. Rafael and I had been chatting for longer than expected. Without time to process at all the information that had just been presented to me, I called the next person on the list, “Trevor.”

While Trevor and I met, the rookie again went to Jermaine’s office to call him at home. “Hey boss, so this teacher had me open up another classroom door for her to have one-on-ones with these animals. If that wasn’t shady enough, she stayed in a one-on-one with that little faggot that cleans the building for about thirty minutes. They were real deep in conversation, too. Something is definitely going on between those two.”

Jermaine responded, “I’m going to call the captain and see if I can get a little overtime tonight.”

“Alright boss, I’ll see you later then.”

I could tell something was off with Trevor. Even though I didn’t know he was a trustee at that point, he showed signs that he was trying to gather some intel from me. “You guys were in here for a while. What was that about?”

“Let’s talk about your paper,” I was thankful to hear the G-sharp of the movement bell in the midst of conferencing with Trevor. Being in his presence made me uncomfortable. I could tell he didn’t care about my feedback, and his intentions in the classroom were not purely to get an education. He had other purposes for being there, though I wasn’t sure what exactly. And though it would never be fully revealed to me, in the end, it became obvious that Trevor played an instrumental role in pushing me out of the facility.

* * *

I left the facility to the same battery of officers to which I had now grown accustomed, staring, lined up with chests out and legs squared.

If I had lingered there for another ten minutes, I would have crossed paths with Jermaine, who, during his vacation, decided to work overtime hours in order to cement his plan of action against me.

As soon as Jermaine arrived, he assembled an impromptu task force, “Rookie, get a few of your buddies from the academy together. You’re going to do your first cell raid.”

“Woohoo!”

The rookie prepared five of his comrades from the correctional officer academy who suited up in full riot gear for the raid. They even brought drug sniffing German Shepherds.

“Something is going on between the teacher and that faggot. You are not to stop until you find something.”

While he was sitting at his desk writing a letter to Natalia, the squad busted into Rafael’s cell, sprayed him with pepper spray, beat him with batons, threw him face first down to the floor, and dragged him to seg. Jermaine sauntered past Rafael, who was being dragged, toward his cell to direct the cell raid.

The only officer not wearing riot gear, Jermaine entered the cell and noticed a letter in Spanish on Rafael’s desk, “Oh look what we have here!”

June 19, 2013

Dear Natalia,

Thank you for meeting with me today. It meant so much to have someone listen. Even if there is nothing you can do, just know that it meant a lot just to talk to you –

Rafael was not finished writing, but Jermaine was ecstatic to find this piece of evidence for his case, "I want every piece of paper in here."

"You got it, boss."

Grinning, Jermaine marched back to his office and waited for the rookies to return with their findings. Jermaine had already begun a case against me with internal affairs the previous semester. Each time what he considered to be a suspicious occurrence happened, he would report it to internal affairs via email. Internal Affairs would add each occurrence to my personnel file. And each time, Internal Affairs would thank Jermaine and explain to him that they needed more physical evidence, as all the evidence he provided was circumstantial and from secondary sources, his trustees.

February 5, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Writing teacher Natalia Gomez required another classroom space for one-on-one conferences with students. During my entire time managing the education building, no other teacher has required extra classroom space nor have they engaged in one-on-one conferences with students. This was quite suspicious to me, and I think it is important that you all are aware.

Sincerely,

Officer J. Jermaine

February 6, 2013

Officer Jermaine,

Thank you for this information. Physical evidence of policy infractions is paramount in cases of disciplining subcontracted employees. Though a discipline investigation cannot proceed simply for suspicion of wrongdoing, we appreciate your vigilance and encourage you to continue to closely monitor the situation.

Inspector Malloy

Internal Affairs

February 10, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Today I heard various inmates conversing about becoming physically aroused by the physical appearance of writing teacher Natalia Gomez. She dresses

inappropriately for her body shape in the context of a prison. These inmates become easily aroused, and she is not taking this into account when she dresses.

*Sincerely,
Officer J. Jermaine*

*February 12, 2013
Officer Jermaine,*

Thank you for this information. All who enter the facility must adhere to the dress code policy. I recommend you mention concerns to your captain, who is responsible for ensuring the enforcement of the dress code policy. We appreciate your vigilance and encourage you to continue to closely monitor the situation.

*Inspector Malloy
Internal Affairs*

March 12, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Today an inmate informant brought to my attention that writing teacher Natalia Gomez is assigning to inmates projects that undermine our authority, asking inmates to write papers that talk about how bad the prison is and how they would change it.

*Sincerely,
Officer J. Jermaine*

March 13, 2013

Officer Jermaine,

Thank you for this information. If you have it, are you able to provide any physical evidence that this teacher is assigning classroom projects against the custody and control mission of the facility? We appreciate your vigilance and encourage you to continue to closely monitor the situation.

*Inspector Malloy
Internal Affairs*

June 3, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Today an inmate informant brought to my attention that, with inmates, writing teacher Natalia Gomez mocked being reprimanded about her clothing last semester. The inmate informant also brought to my attention that the teacher mentioned to inmates that she would publish their writing projects that undermine our authority.

*Sincerely,
Officer J. Jermaine*

June 4, 2013

Officer Jermaine,

Thank you for this information. As we previously mentioned, physical evidence of policy infractions is paramount in cases of disciplining subcontracted employees. Though a discipline investigation cannot proceed simply for suspicion of wrongdoing,

we appreciate your vigilance and encourage you to continue to closely monitor the situation.

*Inspector Malloy
Internal Affairs*

June 19, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

This semester, like last semester, writing teacher Natalia Gomez continues to require another classroom space for one-on-one conferences with students. During a recent one-on-one conference, she spent 30 minutes alone with inmate Rafael Ramirez. Since there have been no repercussions for her actions, teacher Natalia Gomez continues to undermine our authority as correctional officers and poses a threat to the security of the facility.

*Sincerely,
Officer J. Jermaine*

Jermaine felt like Internal Affairs was not taking his concerns seriously, and that they were not treating him as a professional who knew the signs of suspicious activity, so he was determined to win this situation. He also feared that Rafael and I were building a relationship. He wondered what Rafael would tell me or where I would bring this information. Jermaine would do everything in his power to bring physical evidence of me breaking policies to Internal Affairs. He wanted me gone, and he was determined to make it happen.

* * *

The next morning was a no-class day, so I was surprised to receive a phone call from the prison at 8:30am. It was someone named Inspector Malloy. “Ms. Gomez, can you meet with me today?”

“What is this about?”

“We don’t do business over the phone.”

“Am I in trouble or something?”

“We don’t do business over the phone, but you will need to meet with me before you teach your next class.”

“Okay, can I get any information as to what this is about?”

“We don’t do business over the phone. What time are you available to meet?”

“Um, around three o’clock I guess.”

“Okay we’ll see you at the administration building at three o’clock then.”

Click. She hung up.

I had no idea what this was all about. I had suspicions that this had something to do with the letter to Rafael, but I couldn’t be certain. I hadn’t done anything wrong, so what could they have against me?

* * *

I arrived at the administration building at 2:50, and Inspector Malloy was outside waiting for me. She reached out her hand to shake mine, “Natalia? Inspector Malloy. Nice to meet you. Right this way.” She ushered me into the building, introduced me to some other inspectors we passed in the hall, and asked me to take a seat in a small room, furnitureless except for a table with four chairs around it. “I’ll be right back,” she said after I took a seat. I sat alone in silence for ten minutes until Inspector Malloy returned with another inspector wearing a suit. “Natalia, this is Chief Inspector Charles.”

He reached out his hand to shake mine.

Inspector Malloy carried a manila file folder about an inch and a half thick with documents. She placed the file on the table. I noticed my name on the tab of the file folder. She opened the folder, and I noticed photographs of me. I had no idea when

or where these photographs were taken. Then she pulled out Rafael's homework that I had written the note on in the margin:

June 17, 2013

Thank you for the information. Do you have any more?

-S

"Ms. Gomez, did you write this?"

"Yes. What's the problem? Why am I here?"

"Tell us about your relationship with inmate Ramirez."

"He's a student in my class."

"Why are you writing personal letters to your students?"

I didn't know whether these people could be trusted to explain what was going on with Rafael or whether I should make up another reason for why I wrote a note in the margin of Rafael's paper. I remained silent.

Inspector Malloy pulled out other documents from the file and began reading, "Engages in one-on-one conferences with students... dresses inappropriately... assigns inmates projects that undermine correctional officers... spends time alone with inmates. Ms. Gomez, can you explain these complaints that we've received?"

"I teach writing, so I meet one-on-one with students about their work. My assignments are connected to the lived experience of the students; I'm not undermining anyone. I engage students in a dialogue about changing systems to make them better. And I never received any specific feedback about what's wrong with the way I dress. I follow the dress code, and your officers allow me in the facility each time I come here, so I don't know what the problem is. I wonder if this would be a problem if I were a different race or age or gender."

“Ms. Gomez, you have no idea the type of security threat you have posed here. I’m going to have to ask you for your visitor’s badge back.”

“Wait, you’re firing me?”

“Yes, Ms. Gomez. I’m sorry it had to come to this, but you should be happy we caught it in time so that things didn’t go any further. This could have easily escalated to the point where the inmates used you for much more. Have you seen the recent news about Joyce Mitchell, the woman who was in a relationship with two inmates who eventually escaped, and one was killed? You are very lucky that isn’t you, Ms. Gomez. Here we expect our teachers to come in, teach the inmates what they’re expected to teach, and get out. No communication outside of those terms.”

“You’re making a big mistake. I am a damn good teacher.”

“I am sure you are, Ms. Gomez. You have to understand that there are very different boundaries that must be maintained with inmates. You do not know whom you’re dealing with.”

“Your badge, Ms. Gomez?”

“It’s in the car.”

“Very well, I will walk you out.” I held back tears as she followed me out to my car. I got in, handed her the badge out of the driver’s side window, and again she repeated, “I’m sorry it had to come to this.”

I knew this feeling all too well. I needed to get off the prison property before I began to cry. As soon as I hit the road, again I wailed. I wondered what happened to Rafael.

Re-entry

August 13, 2013

Hey Nate,

I was wondering if you could check out a guy named Rafael Ramirez for the program. He is in Max, and I think he would make a great candidate. He was one of my students while I taught there, and he showed a lot of growth and promise while I was working with him. Plus, he's really young and small; I think getting him out of that environment and into a safer, more supportive environment would be really beneficial.

Thanks,

Natalia

August 15, 2013

Hi Natalia,

Thanks for reaching out. Sure, I'll connect with him and see if he would make a good candidate.

Take care,

Nate

After my termination, Rafael's words about the strip searches he endured by Officer Jermaine stayed on my mind: *he goes too far*. Although Rafael never specified what he meant, anything I could imagine was enough to make me want to do something about it.

On the other hand, I still wondered whether Rafael had been the reason I was fired. Did he cooperate with the administration on an elaborate scheme to push me out of the institution? Was everything he said part of a grand fictional plot coordinated with prison officials to fire me? Though I would never know, I still felt that, on the chance that Rafael was telling the truth, I needed to do something. So I contacted Nate.

Nate was the coordinator of an abolitionist re-entry program. He was Ivy-league educated but did not have much employment experience. Recently graduated from a renowned Ivy-league institution and interested in abolitionist work, he wrote a grant to establish a re-entry program whose purpose was to demonstrate that, through

addressing the ecology of systemic factors influencing re-imprisonment, people would not go back to prison. His program selected imprisoned men with sentences of five years or less and posed to them the option of continuing their sentence or partaking in the program. In the program, participants would need to comply with a variety of rules: work full time or part time if going to school, live at the program house, engage in case management, and undergo probation and parole supervision.

This was Nate's first time doing this work. He was a white male who stood at six feet tall with light brown hair and blue eyes. He wore suits and boasted an air of confidence. Nate grew up in the Midwest but came to New England for college and decided to stay. Though the program was a great idea, Nate had trouble connecting with participants, as he was from a vastly different world than they. On the other hand, Nate was well-respected by the prison administration, as he was able to speak the language of the prison establishment and looked like those in charge.

* * *

"Rafael Ramirez to the visiting room," the loudspeaker screeched. Rafael's cell door clicked open, and he made his way to the visiting room, wondering what was about to happen.

A white guy in a suit stood up and put out his hand for a shake, "Rafael Ramirez?"

Rafael did not reach his hand back, fearful of what this was all about, "Yeah?"

"My name is Nate, and I work with a re-entry program here. You might be a good candidate for our program, so I wanted to talk to you about whether you're interested."

“What’s a re-entry program?”

“A program designed to give you a smooth transition back into the community and ensure that you don’t come back here ever again.”

“Wait, are you saying I’m going home?”

“First we need to determine if you’re a good fit for the program. Does it sound like something you would be interested in?”

“Is this some kind of scheme or something?” With all he’d experienced thus far, Rafael was extremely paranoid.

“No, no scheme man. You’ve got people who care about you and want you to succeed, man.”

“Wait. Who?”

“Listen, I’m going to leave the paperwork with you. You make your decision about whether you want to apply, and I’ll be back in a week to get your decision,” Nate walked out.

Rafael, stunned, sat immobile. “Inmate, let’s go,” the correctional officer’s voice stunned him back into reality.

Pensive and stunned, Rafael walked back to his cell with the forms Nate provided. He sat at his desk and began reading. *A pilot program to test the effectiveness of a re-entry program with a mission to end re-incarceration. Participants will be placed in jobs, school, engage in case management, and parole or probation supervision upon release... Intensive preparation classes while in prison starting six months before release...*

Rafael couldn't help but wonder what Nate meant when he said there were people outside who cared about him and wanted him to succeed. Was this all part of a scheme?

* * *

September 21, 2013

Natalia,

I met with Rafael Ramirez yesterday. He seemed really skeptical about the program and whether I was part of some scheme against him. I left the application forms with him and committed to meeting with him again in a week. I'll let you know how it goes.

Nate

September 22, 2013

Nate,

Thank you so much for meeting with Rafael. I can understand his skepticism, especially after everything I've been through in the last few months. That prison is one sick and twisted place. Please let me know how I can help. I still hope I can be involved with the program even though the prison gave me the boot.

Looking forward to it,

Natalia

Over the next week, Rafael perseverated on his meeting with Nate. Should he apply? Was this all a big scheme? Who was the person was who supposedly cared about him? Ultimately, he decided that anything was better than what he was enduring. The time he could handle. It was Jermaine's emotional and sexual abuse that might drive him to harm himself. He had already begun cutting himself with blunted single-use shaving razors he bought at the commissary. The blood and the pain helped him to forget about Jermaine's abuse. Any pain was better than that.

He also began blacking out when he would go to work – a defense mechanism so as not to recall the abuse he was enduring. He stopped fighting it; he would just go to another place in his mind while it was happening. Then he started questioning his sexuality for enduring the abuse. He wondered if it made him gay. Or less than a man.

* * *

When Nate returned the next week, Rafael sat across from him in the same seat in the visitor's room. Rafael placed the application forms down on the table and slid them toward Nate. Nate picked up the forms, thumbed through them for completeness, and asked Rafael, "Do you have any questions?"

"Does this mean I don't have to work anymore?"

"That's right. You will begin intensive preparation next week. Since you'll be in classes, you don't have to work. That will continue for six months. If all goes as planned, you'll then be granted parole and move into the program house outside."

"Thanks for this."

"You're welcome. People care about you. Make sure you keep up your end of the deal." By 'the deal,' Nate meant that Rafael needed to attend the prep classes offered inside and, once a parolee, comply with the protocol outside. Rafael had no idea how complex it would be to live 'without incident' as a parolee.

Rafael walked back to his cell with slightly more confidence in his gait.

* * *

The following week, Rafael began his intensive preparation classes. Classes involved jobs readiness skills, social skills, and skills for dealing with the parole board.

One day when walking back to his cell from class, Rafael passed Kenny, who looked him in the eye and nodded. Later that day, Rafael received a *kite*—a folded letter attached to a string passed down the line of cells until it reached its destination.

October 11, 2013

What's good with this new program? Time to cash in on what you owe.

Rafael knew the kite was from Kenny. Kenny sought Rafael's help to get into the re-entry program, and Rafael was obligated to help him since it was Kenny who got him into Natalia's class. At the next preparation class, Nate mentioned that one of the other prisoners in the program was transferred out to a Supermax facility, so he would no longer be eligible for the program. Rafael's ears perked up when he heard this. He immediately thought that Kenny might be eligible to take this spot.

October 17, 2013

Hey Nate,

Since there is an opening in the program, I was wondering if you might consider Kenny Smith for the program. He was a student with me in another class, and I think he meets the eligibility requirements for the program.

Thanks for considering,

Rafael Ramirez

October 29, 2013

Hey Natalia,

Do you know anything about a guy named Kenny Smith? Rafael Ramirez referred him to me.

Thanks,

Nate

October 30, 2013

Hey Nate,

Kenny is great. He is super bright and motivated. I have no doubt that he would make a great candidate.

Take care,

Natalia

* * *

Though Rafael experienced some verbal harassment and an inordinate number of cell searches, over the next six months he endured much less physical abuse than previously. It seemed as if Jermaine and his cronies knew that somebody knew about their abusive ways, so they kept their abuse to a minimum. Before Rafael's involvement in the re-entry program, prison officials recognized that Rafael did not

get any visitors or mail. Those were signs that nobody was watching, that Rafael was an easy target. Now people were watching, so he wasn't so easy a target anymore.

Then the day came. The day of Rafael's hearing with the parole board. He had prepared for this day for the last six months. Even though he was as ready as he could be, Rafael still felt anxious. Nate stayed with him during the hearing, as an advocate to attest to Rafael's preparation as well as his plan upon release.

"Mr. Ramirez, have you complied with the in-house requirements of this re-entry program?"

"Yes, sir."

"As the program manager, I can also attest to that," Nate commented.

"What is your plan upon release, Mr. Ramirez?"

"I'll be living in the house the program has provided, and I'll have a job right when I'm released."

"What will you be doing in that job?"

"I will be working in a recycling center, doing manual labor."

"Do you know how much you will be paid?"

"Minimum wage."

"I see you are here for drug distribution charges. What about your plan will ensure that you won't go back to that?"

"Well, the reason I started selling drugs in the first place was to make money. I lived with my mother who worked three jobs just to make ends meet, and I didn't have any supervision or guidance, so I got mixed up with the wrong crowd and started

selling drugs. This program will give me the opportunity to make money and get guidance so I don't slip into the same easy way out."

"Are you aware of the stipulations of your parole? An open phone line for communicating with your parole officer, drug testing, no traveling outside of the state, curfew of 9:00pm, weekly schedule of your travel?"

"Yes, I understand."

"Mr. Ramirez, if you are granted parole today, are you prepared to comply with the stipulations of your parole in addition to the requirements of this program?"

"Yes, I am."

"Okay, Mr. Ramirez, this is your shot. If the stipulations of your parole are violated, you will return to prison and immediately carry out the remainder of your five-year sentence. Additionally, as your immigration case is pending, it is possible that you will also face federal penalties, including deportation."

"I understand. Thank you."

"Well, then, we will grant your parole starting tomorrow. Good luck to you, Mr. Ramirez."

"Thank you." Rafael walked out of the hearing room, using all his might to contain his excitement until he arrived back in the safety of his cell. He walked with his head down, not planting one foot on the floor until he moved the next, speed walking. He entered his cell. As soon as he heard the metal-to-metal clang of the cell door lock, he grabbed his pillow and screamed into it. Tomorrow would start the first day of the rest of his life. He was committed to leaving this place behind him and forgetting everything that happened here.

* * *

The next morning, Rafael did not leave his cell. He wanted to prevent any potential problems that would delay his release. At noon, Rafael heard the metal-to-metal unlocking of his cell door lock. He pushed it open and breathed deeply. He held his breath as he walked toward the exit, from the cellblock to the holding pen through two thick metal doors, and out through the front door. Free.

Nate was waiting for him, “Are you ready?”

“As ready as I’ll ever be.” He entered the passenger’s seat of Nate’s car. They rode in silence, Rafael entranced by the scenery they passed outside the car window.

Nate pulled into a small parking lot to the right of a robin’s egg blue three-family house, “Welcome home.”

“This is it?” Rafael was surprised by the proximity of the house to his old neighborhood. He imagined the house would be somewhere much further way from his old romps, somewhere without temptation, somewhere it wouldn’t be so easy to get back into the same old game.

“Yeah.”

Rafael followed Nate as he walked up the three-step concrete stoop, unlocked the deadbolt and then the doorknob lock, and pushed the door into the unfurnished mid-twentieth century shingled house.

“There’s no fucking toilet paper!” yelled a husky, muscular young man who stood five feet nine and whose eyes matched the house’s paintjob.

“Okay, let’s make a list of everything we need,” Nate replied.

“A fucking list? Are you kidding me? We just got out of prison and you’re asking us to make a fucking list? I thought we would at least be comfortable when we got here. This fucking place is worse than the joint. There’s nothing here! Did you do anything before we moved in? Is this the new guy? Good luck in this shithole!”

“Rafael, this is Ryan.”

Rafael put out his hand to shake Ryan’s.

“Listen new guy, don’t touch my fucking shit and we won’t have problems.”

“So is there anything else we need besides toilet paper?” Nate asked.

“Are you fucking kidding me? We need everything! How about food! And mattresses! And furniture! This place has nothing!”

“I see you’ve really checked out the place thoroughly, Ryan,” Nate muttered sarcastically.

That night, Ryan and Rafael slept on the floor. Nate hadn’t considered the logistics of being in charge of a re-entry program from the ground up. Nate was the sole staff person on site at the house, and he didn’t account for the fact that people would be released at different times. Now he had two participants with less than they had in prison. Rafael was in prison for selling drugs because he lacked resources, and in the same neighborhood as the house was located. And Ryan had some serious issues with anxiety. Without his basic needs met, his anxiety went off the wall.

* * *

The next day, Ryan and Rafael showered and used t-shirts as towels, as towels were another item that Nate had forgotten to purchase for the house. They went to work at a recycling center at six in the morning.

The foreman at the recycling center came out to train them, “Okay all you need to do is pile up everything metal over here, plastic over here, and glass over here.”

“What if it ain’t any of those?” Ryan asked.

“Then you don’t pile it up,” the foreman snapped back, turned, and walked away.

“Asshole,” Ryan muttered under his breath.

“What did you say?” the foreman turned back to face Ryan.

“You heard me, asshole.”

“Get the fuck out of here. Matter of fact, both of you get the fuck out of here. I should have never agreed to have you fuck ups work here anyway.”

As Ryan walked out, he punched and kicked everything that stood in his path – recyclables, barrels, chairs. As onlookers watched, he also yelled at them, “What the fuck you looking at?”

Rafael stood stunned, “Listen man, I’m sorry about him, but we really need this job or else we go back to prison. I’m sorry you got a bad impression.”

“We’ll see if you can do the job; now get to work.” Rafael began working, without Ryan. He stayed until five at night. Then he caught the bus back with the two dollars that Nate had provided him earlier that day. He had to take two busses, which took about an hour for him to arrive back at the program house.

He arrived, exhausted. Too exhausted to notice that another guy had moved in. This one was another muscular white guy who fraternized with Ryan. His name was Danny. They had come from the medium-security facility where they knew each other and worked out together. Rafael entered his unfurnished bedroom, dropped to the

floor, and passed out. Soon, he was awoken by footsteps past his door. The newest housemate opened and shut his door, and then Rafael heard Ryan's voice, "Oh, that's this faggot who went to work with me today. The bitch foreman tried to intimidate me so I left. I'm not going to put up with that shit. I don't give a fuck. I'll do more time before someone thinks they can intimidate me."

Though Rafael's instinctual reaction was to stand up and confront Ryan, he didn't have the energy after the long day at work. He slid over to the door and turned the lock on the knob. Safe. Then he went back to sleep.

The next morning, he again awoke to get ready for work. He found a note under his door:

*April 8, 2014
House meeting/dinner 7:00pm tonight
-Nate*

Work was no different than the day before. The only difference was that the new guy, Danny, showed up. He and Rafael did not socialize or even acknowledge each other's existence. Rafael knew he needed this job to stay out of prison, and, if Danny was Ryan's friend, they probably had similar personalities, and Rafael didn't want to lose his job over another problem like the one with Ryan yesterday.

Rafael survived day two of work without incident. Again, he stayed until five and arrived back at the program house around six. He entered his room, remembering to lock the door after yesterday's issue, and passed out on the floor again. Soon after passing out, he remembered the note he received about the house meeting. He lay awake for a few moments then checked his watch: 6:48, "Ugh." Twelve more minutes to rest.

At 7:00 he arose and walked downstairs to the kitchen for the house meeting. This was the first day anyone had cooked in the house. It had been a while since Rafael smelled home cooked food. Rafael took a seat at the table without looking anyone in the eye. He had become accustomed to that while in prison: feeling like he was invisible if he didn't look anyone in the eye.

"You can't say hello?" the new guy Danny asked.

"What's up?" Rafael responded.

Ryan chuckled and looked at Danny. Rafael could feel them staring at each other, making fun of him with their eyes. He looked up to notice but decided not to confront them. It wasn't worth it, and he was too tired.

Nate brought the food over to the table.

"Thanks, man," Rafael said.

"Thanks for meeting tonight guys. I just wanted to check in with you all to set some house rules and talk about how we can live together peacefully."

"I already said just don't touch my shit and we'll be cool," Ryan chuckled.

"Okay, aside from not touching each other's belongings, what else should we establish?"

"No homo," Danny laughed.

"Do you mean no significant others in the house?"

"No, I mean no homo. Don't bring that shit around me. I don't play that."

"Okay, so why don't we say no significant others in the house; any sexual activity should take place somewhere else so that everyone feels comfortable."

Danny raised his voice, “No, that’s not what I said! I said no homos in the house!”

Rafael looked up and snapped his teeth, obviously getting annoyed by Danny’s insistence on repeating the homophobic remarks.

Suddenly, Danny pushed the table out of his way, stood up to posture, and yelled down at Rafael, “What are you a fucking faggot?”

* * *

The next thing Rafael remembered was waking up on the floor of his room with a sore face. He walked out of his room and to the bathroom to notice he had a black eye and swollen lip. Nate heard him and came to talk to him. Rafael asked, “Yo, what the hell happened?”

“You punched Danny, and he hit you back and knocked you out. We carried you over to your room.”

“Thanks for not calling the cops.”

“Yeah, you got pissed because he called you a faggot. He’s a brute, don’t pay him any mind.”

“Yeah, thanks,” but Rafael did pay him mind. Quite a bit in fact. He stayed in his room and replayed all the times he had been called a faggot while in prison. And then came the memories of Jermaine’s abuse. Cornered, naked, Jermaine’s filthy hands on his body. Nobody to tell because the prison officials didn’t care, and he couldn’t trust any of the guys inside because they would spread rumors about his sexuality, too. And in prison, being known as gay and as a victim was a recipe for more violence. Over and over again, he replayed the scenarios, each time thinking

about what he could have done differently. He should have hit Jermaine. And the rookie who called him a faggot.

He couldn't handle the thinking anymore. It was too much. He left the house. And he walked, trying to walk off the thoughts that kept recurring, but it wasn't enough. After a couple of miles, he passed by a bar where a woman stood outside. She smiled at him, but Rafael kept moving. Not having received a smile from anyone in a long time, he seemed to forget how to notice and appreciate the gesture. "You can't say hi?" she yelled as he walked past, now about twenty feet ahead of her.

Rafael stopped walking, turned around, confused, "Oh, sorry, hi," and kept walking.

"You seem stressed, why don't you come in for a drink?"

Again, he stopped walking, wondering what was happening. He had forgotten what flirtation felt like. He wondered if this was another set up, "Do I know you?"

"No, I just thought you were cute and seemed like you could use a drink."

Cute? Rafael thought. It had been so long since he had received compliments from women and so long that he was assumed heterosexual that he thought this was all a setup. Maybe a setup from his parole officer. According to the stipulations of his parole, he was not supposed to drink or be in any establishments that served alcohol. He didn't really care though. He saw this as an opportunity to vindicate his sexuality and masculinity.

He walked toward the woman.

"What's your name?" she asked.

"Rafael."

“What you drinking?”

“Uh, beer.” He was too young to have ever ordered a drink at a bar before.

Rafael felt nervous, quiet, paranoid. He drank the beer quickly and remained alert, looking around for signs that he was being setup.

“Wow, you must have needed a drink! Bartender, another please?”

Again, Rafael drank the beer quickly and without much chatter.

“I like you, you’re kind of mysterious.”

Rafael snickered.

The beers kept coming and soon Rafael gave up his paranoia for intoxication. He and the woman, Kelly, had mindless chatter until she said, “You wanna come back to my place?”

“Let’s go.”

They had unprotected sex and fell asleep. Rafael woke up when his intoxication abated, realizing that he had missed curfew. He ran back to the program house, slipped in quietly, and locked himself in his room. He lay on the floor, feeling like he had redeemed his manhood and heterosexuality.

* * *

The next morning he heard whispers from his housemates, “Did you hear the faggot come in last night?”

Rafael became enraged. Though he may have proven his manhood and heterosexuality to himself, apparently he didn’t prove it to the others. He knew what he needed to do.

Later that day, he again left on foot. This time it was the middle of the day. He headed over to the same bar. He began drinking quickly again and noticed another woman looking at him. He made eye contact with her. She walked over and introduced herself, “Hi, I’m Reina.”

“Nice to meet you.”

They continued to drink and engage in small talk. Feeling more confident, Rafael decided to ask, “You want to come back to my place?”

“Okay.”

This time, they arrived in the house and made a lot of noise. Rafael’s intention was to show to the other guys in the house that he wasn’t gay by having sex with a woman in the house. He also wanted to prove his masculinity by blatantly breaking the house rules that they had set during the house meetings a few days prior.

They passed Ryan on their way in, rushed into Rafael’s room, and thrashed about loudly. Coincidentally, Nate was not at the house. Rafael could hear the guys downstairs cheering him on. He felt vindicated.

* * *

The next day was Monday, and Rafael went back to work. Danny went with him. They took the two busses in silence and worked the majority of the day in silence until the end of their shift when Danny muttered, “Listen man, I know we fought and whatever, but if you ever want to get big, let me know, I can hook you up.”

“What do you mean?”

“I can get you big quick.”

“You mean at the gym or something?”

“Well, you’ll have to work out, but I have access to shit that will make things go quicker.”

Danny was talking about steroids, his *side hustle*. Again Rafael wondered whether this was all a setup, so Rafael kept quiet and observed.

Previously, Rafael had been keeping his head down when he entered the house. This time he decided to notice his housemates. He had also been locking himself in his room every time he arrived. This time he decided to linger outside his room a bit. He wanted to see if he could learn whether there was a setup happening. He noticed that Ryan looked awfully large and muscularly defined for someone having just been released from prison—more so than would have been possible in prison, as the nutrition offered there could not facilitate that level of muscular growth and definition. He also heard Ryan and Danny incessantly talking about each other’s muscular definition and different exercises to do in order to achieve the body they wanted. Their talk seemed almost obsessive. Rafael came to the conclusion that they must be doing steroids. So maybe this wasn’t a setup.

* * *

The next day, Rafael went to work again with Danny, “Hey man, so what’s the deal with that stuff you were talking about?”

“I’ll take care of it.” And it was done. The ball was in motion.

After work, Rafael found himself in a locked room at the house with Danny and Ryan, taking turns shooting steroids into each other’s rear ends. Once they shot the drugs, they all felt a crazy rush and began lifting weights in the basement of the house.

Ryan looked at his phone while the others were lifting, “My BM is such a bitch and won’t let me see the kids unless I fuck her.”

“Then go handle that!” Danny responded.

“What’s the deal with you and that hoe the other night, man?” Danny asked Rafael.

“I met her at the bar.”

“You handled that?”

“Oh yeah.”

“That’s what’s up.”

* * *

Weeks passed, and Rafael noticed himself growing larger and larger, and he grew pleased. Whenever he had flashbacks to his time in prison, he would either shoot some steroids and work out or go to the bar and bring home Kelly, Reina, or some other woman to have risky sex with.

Rafael continued to acquire his steroid supply from Danny, but he noticed that Danny and Ryan were not around as much anymore. They were often out of the house, not keeping up with their weight training, and not engaging in shooting steroids together with Rafael anymore. They seemed to be losing weight and growing quite tired lately. Rafael didn’t question what was going on. Instead, he kept to his routine of escaping his insecurities through steroids and risky, drunken sex.

* * *

More time passed, and Rafael noticed that Ryan hadn’t been around for a while. He continued to purchase his supply of steroids from Danny, who continued to

seem withdrawn and not his usual hyper self. But Rafael didn't ask any questions. He just noticed. He was happy he wasn't the butt of anyone's jokes anymore. Now the only insecurities he had were internal, and he was coping with them through the steroids and sex.

* * *

Nate arrived a few days later and introduced the newest member of the house, Kenny. Rafael was shocked to see him, and happy that he might now have an ally in the house. Though his relationship with Ryan and Danny was stable at the moment, Rafael knew that wasn't sustainable because it was based in a drug transaction. They weren't true friends. Just associates who couldn't be trusted. Plus Ryan and Danny seemed strange lately. Something was going on with them.

"Hey man, welcome," Rafael shook Kenny's hand.

"Damn kid, you got big."

"Yeah, been working out," Rafael scanned Nate's countenance to gauge his believability. Nate didn't seem fazed.

"So where am I staying?"

"You can pick an open room," Nate responded.

"I'll show you around." Rafael gave Kenny a tour. "Listen man, this place has about the same resources as the joint. This prick didn't furnish the place at all. We all gotta buy our own food and hygiene and shit."

"Damn man, you're real big. What's going on with you?"

"You know, I've been working in this recycling place where we gotta do a lot of lifting and whatnot. And I've been working out in the basement."

Kenny didn't believe that was it. He knew better.

"So, have you guys been taking classes and going to counseling and shit?"

"Nah, not at all. We were supposed to do all that, but Nate is so disorganized.

We didn't even have toilet paper when we moved in. And you know how we were supposed to have rules and shit? Well, nobody follows any rules because there's nobody watching. Nate is rarely ever here. All we've been doing is working and doing our own thing."

"How about parole? Have they been around?"

"Nah, not at all. I haven't even had to do a urine yet."

"Damn, I thought they would have been down our throats."

"Yeah, I don't know what's up."

"You better watch it man. They could show up at any time and haul any one of us or all of us back. We're still under their watch because none of us have flattened our bids."

"Yeah, I feel you." Rafael changed the subject, recognizing that Kenny knew he was doing steroids, but not wanting to admit it, "Well, these are the open rooms."

"Alright, thanks, man. Be easy."

Rafael walked away and locked himself in his room. Kenny's arrival prompted flashbacks of his time inside. He went to the basement to workout. It didn't work to ease his flashbacks. He still couldn't quiet his mind. So he left. He walked to the bar. Kelly was there. They sat, had small talk, and drank. Then, like clockwork, they headed back to the program house.

* * *

When they arrived, they noticed three police cruisers and two black unmarked sedans parked in front of the house.

“Shit, let’s get out of here.” They walked back toward the bar. As they walked, Rafael’s phone began ringing. He didn’t answer. It rang again. He refused the call. Then he turned his phone to silent mode. They arrived back at the bar, and they sat. Rafael thought about what he should do. He noticed a voicemail message came up on his phone. And then he started receiving text messages from Nate:

Where are you?

There is an emergency, and I need you here now.

Rafael left Kelly, ran to the bathroom, washed his hands and face, looked at himself in the mirror, and told himself to get it together. He knew he couldn’t run. If he didn’t return back to the program house, he would probably get locked up again. If they smelled the booze on him, he could also get locked up again. But he might be able to hide the smell of alcohol. So he left the bar, bought some mouthwash and gum at a nearby convenience store, and began walking back to the house again. He texted Nate back:

On my way.

The cruisers and black sedans were still there when he returned. He breathed deeply.

I’m outside. What’s going on?

Nate met him outside, “Ryan’s dead.”

“What? How?”

“Heroin overdose. They found him with a needle in his arm in an alley down the street. Did you know he was using again?”

“Not at all. Oh my God. What’s going to happen now?”

“I don’t know. They might shut down the program. I don’t know,” Nate was distraught. “We need to go in. Parole officers are here, and they’re going to be in charge for now. They think I can’t run this program, so they’re going to for now, I think. I don’t know.”

“Do I need to talk to them now?”

“They probably want to ask you questions,” they headed inside. Rafael breathed deeply and opened another stick of gum.

“Mr. Ramirez, where have you been?” Parole Officer DelTore asked Rafael.

“I was out for a walk.”

“Any chance you were out for a walk with Ryan Gilroy?”

“No,” Rafael knew to keep his answers minimal when talking to cops.

“All of you need to come with me for questioning and urines,” he escorted them all to his black sedan.

Kenny, Rafael, and Danny sat in the back seat of the car, plexiglas separating them from Officer DelTore driving. They rode in silence to the parole building. Ironically, this building was within the same complex as the prison facilities from which they all came. You could feel the tension as they approached the prison. They all feared returning to this place.

“You all have a quick trip back to prison if you don’t cooperate today,” DelTore uttered.

They followed him into the parole building where other parole officers were waiting. The officers escorted them all to separate rooms for questioning.

DelTore questioned Rafael, “So you and Ryan Gilroy did drugs together at the program?”

“Nope.”

“Then which one of these other guys were doing drugs with him?”

“Don’t know.”

“Okay then, we’ll just test all of you.” DelTore walked out the interrogation room, leaving Rafael there. Rafael knew this tactic. He had experienced it before. Leaving him alone to his thoughts was one was the police could coax a confession out of someone.

Rafael paced in the locked interrogation room for nearly an hour. When DelTore finally returned, his demeanor was calm, compassionate. He brought Rafael a soda to drink. He said to Rafael, “Take a seat.”

Rafael sat, arms folded and leaned back in his chair.

DelTore leaned in, his voice so low Rafael had to strain to hear, “I can’t imagine what you’re going through, a friend who you see day in and day out, the next minute he’s dead. We know he was with someone when he died. We have the DNA evidence to prove it, so it’s best for you if you explain what happened to us now. If you don’t cooperate with us now, there is no way we can help you. I know you’re facing deportation if you don’t fulfill the obligations of this program, and I’d hate to see that happen if you don’t cooperate with us.”

“Listen, I wasn’t with him! I don’t know what happened to the guy!”

“Okay, Mr. Ramirez. You had your chance. Now we’re just going to have to do things the hard way.” Again, DeTore left Rafael in the room alone for nearly an hour.

Another man came back for Rafael. He was wearing scrubs. “Follow me please.”

Rafael followed him into a laboratory that had a bathroom without a door. The man handed Rafael a urine cup, “I have to watch.”

The urine cup in his right hand, he felt the man following him to the bathroom. Suddenly he had a flashback to being in Jermaine’s office. Rafael turned around suddenly, “Nah man, I can’t do this.”

“There’s some water over there if you need it.”

“Nah, I mean I can’t do this with you behind me like that.”

“You have to provide a sample within two hours or you’ll go back to prison.”

Rafael took a seat in the chairs in the laboratory. He began drinking water, hoping that would help quell his flashbacks and stage fright.

* * *

An hour passed. Rafael had drunk so much water his kidneys began to hurt, “Listen man, do you think you could stand like in front of me instead of behind me?”

“Uh, okay.”

Rafael closed his eyes and began to hyperventilate, only able to squeeze out a small amount of urine for the laboratory technician.

“Is that enough?”

“Yeah, that should work.”

He washed his hands and left the laboratory. There was a bathroom right in front of him upon exiting the lab. He locked the door, entered the bathroom, and looked in the mirror to his red-eyed, sweaty visage. He washed his face and breathed for a few moments. He was then able to use the bathroom, without anyone watching, in the safety of the locked stall.

When he exited the bathroom, he saw Kenny and Danny seated on timeworn orange plastic chairs with metal legs.

“What took so long, man?” Kenny whispered to Rafael.

“I couldn’t piss.”

“Damn, they had you in there for a minute.”

“Okay gentlemen. We’re heading back to the program house right now. But things are going to be very different from now on,” DeTore told the group.

When they arrived, the police cruisers were gone, but the second black sedan was still there. They entered the house to another parole officer, an Italian-American guy named Bianchi.

“Take a seat, fellas.” Thankfully, a few days prior, Nate had acquired a second-hand couch for the living room area. Had he not have brought this couch, they would have all been sitting on the bare, hardwood floor.

“Here’s the rules: you will all be placed on electronic monitoring. That means you’ll all be wearing ankle bracelets. If you go out of the range of what’s approved on your schedules, you will automatically go back to prison. We will be making surprise visits and doing urines any time of the day or night that we please. In addition, there

will be a guard at the house twenty-four hours a day to see to it that there are no guests entering the house and that you are all on your best behavior.

“The investigation surrounding Ryan Gilroy’s death is still pending. The results of the urines we did today will certainly influence the trajectory of that investigation. So, I’m going to give you all my card, and I suggest you get in contact with me sooner rather than later about any information you have.” DelTore and Bianchi turned and left the house.

* * *

“You guys, they really hate me. Please you have to be on your best behavior,” Nate remarked after the parole officers left.

“You’re worried about your job when we have a dude who’s dead?” Kenny asked.

Nate looked down at the floor, turned around, and headed upstairs.

Kenny got up off the couch and headed to his room.

Danny and Rafael stayed seated on the couch, “Hey man, what’s the deal with the urine?”

“Well, the urines they usually run don’t include that shit, but, with everything that’s going on, they might do the deep test where they can detect it.”

“What’s that mean?”

“That you’re fucked. And me too.”

Rafael got up and walked to his room. He wrote his mother a letter:

July 4, 2014

Mami,

I want you to know how much I love you and I how sorry I am for everything I’ve done. I had a chance to start my life over through this program I was selected for,

but I blew it. And it's all my fault. You did your best, so I don't want you to ever think that anything that has happened to me is your fault. I love you, and I hope to see you again one day.

*Tu hijo,
Rafael*

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. From a balanced consideration of external and self-reflective data sources, I identified eight themes, first laid out in Chapter 3, which I then instantiated in Chapter 4 by way of fictionalized narratives. Each narrative – *Professor Anderson*, *Mindy*, *Rafael*, and *Re-entry* – explored either one or two of the study’s three research questions: (1) *How did institutional gatekeepers influence my experience with gender’s role in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy* or (2) *In my experiences within the cultures of different prison facilities and programs, what role did gender play in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?*

Chapter 5 is organized into nine sections, beginning with an exploration of Research Question Three: *What role did gender play in my overall experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy?* It does so by way of an expository analysis that examines the eight themes from Chapter Two in the context of the fictionalized narratives from Chapter 4. In the second section, I summarize the findings of the study and then relate those findings to theory and literature in the third section. Fourth, I discuss the limitations of the study. Fifth, I examine the study’s trustworthiness. Finally, I explore the implications of the study before making recommendations and considering the study’s contributions to research and practice. I end with an autobiographical reflection. Overall, the findings of this study would seem to support an argument for dramatic changes to the gendered structured and cultures of the prison regime.

Analysis of Findings

As discussed in Chapter 2, eight themes emerged through focused data analysis of the role of gender in my overall experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. Those eight themes are: (1) *Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions*, (2) *Dualistic Paternalism*, (3) *Dualistic Sexualization*, (4) *Sexual Abuse of Power*, (5) *Necessity of Doing Gender*, (6) *Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime*, (7) *Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures*, and (8) *Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope*. In total, 289 discrete chunks of data were each categorized into one of those eight themes. Figure 12 explores the salience (relative frequency) of each emergent theme, or how many times that theme emerged from the overall data set.

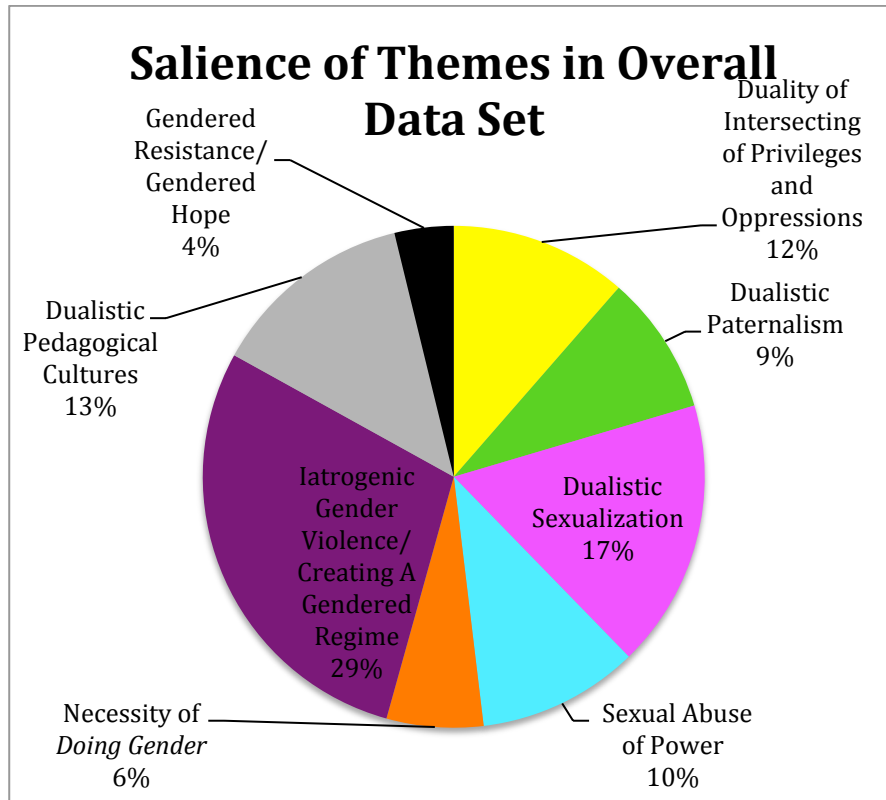


Figure 8. Salience of themes in overall data set.

The theme *Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime* accounted for the highest frequency of data points: 83 of 289, or 28% of the data set. *Dualistic Sexualization* was second highest: 50 of 289, or 15% of the data set. *Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures* accounted for 38 of the 289 data points, or 13% of the data set. *Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions* accounted for 33 of the 289 data points, or 11% of the data set. *Sexual Abuse of Power* accounted for 30 of the 289 data points, or 10% of the data set. *Dualistic Paternalism* accounted for 28 of the 289 data points, or 9% of the data set. *Necessity of Doing Gender* accounted for 18 of the 289 data points, or 6% of the data set, and *Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope* accounted for 11 of the 289 data points, or 4% of the data set. I will now explore the meaning of each theme in detail, offering examples from the previous four narratives.

1. Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions

In my experience, the intersectionality of privileges and oppression functioned as a substantial barrier to abolitionist pedagogy. From the overall data set there emerged an intersecting relationship between power and privilege (or lack thereof, referred to here as *oppression*). Possessing intersecting characteristics of privilege (such as whiteness, maleness, able-bodied-ness, having a build that is not targeted by prejudicial social norms) increased an individual's power exponentially. This increase of power also intensified the potential of that same individual to abuse their power without suspicion and therefore without consequence. If abuse of power by an individual with intersecting privileges was discovered, that same individual was unlikely to endure consequences for the abuse. One example of this is Officer Jermaine's abuse of Rafael from the *Rafael* narrative:

Soon after, the G-sharp sounded, and the class was dismissed. Rafael disappeared into the movement crowd, knowing he would now endure the humiliation of Jermaine's abuse. He maintained hope that maybe Jermaine wouldn't risk it with the rookie present. However, what Rafael didn't know was that the bond of correctional officers was so strong that Jermaine could have done whatever he wanted, and the rookie would not have questioned anything. And on the slim chance that the rookie reported Jermaine's actions, the correctional officer's labor union was even stronger than the bond of brothers. The union would have fought for Jermaine to keep his job and brush everything under the rug.

Jermaine, a man of intersecting privileges, exerted his power by abusing Rafael, a prisoner with relatively little power. Though prison officials had some knowledge of Jermaine's abuse of Rafael, Jermaine did not endure consequence for the abuse.

The converse was also true. Possessing intersecting characteristics of oppression (such as minority status by race, gender, sexual orientation, language or dialect, physical or cognitive disability, addiction, mental illness, citizenship, and, of course, imprisonment itself) *decreased* an individual's power exponentially, increasing the potential for suspicion and negative consequences toward that individual. Take, for example Natalia Gomez' response to Internal Affairs investigators when they interrogated and, ultimately, terminated her in the *Rafael* narrative:

"I teach writing, so I meet one-on-one with students about their work. My assignments are connected to the lived experience of the students; I'm not

undermining anyone. I engage students in a dialogue about changing systems to make them better. And I never received any specific feedback about what's wrong with the way I dress. I follow the dress code, and your officers allow me in the facility each time I come here, so I don't know what the problem is. I wonder if this would be a problem if I were a different race or age or gender.”

In comparison to the unaddressed yet extreme physical, sexual, and emotional abuse committed by Officer Jermaine, Natalia, a young, Latina woman, faced termination for the mere suspicion of wrongdoing.

These findings suggest that both the intersecting privileges possessed by Officer Jermaine as well as the intersecting oppressions faced by Natalia function as barriers to abolitionist pedagogy. In the case of the former, Rafael's preoccupation with Jermaine's abuse prevented Rafael from harnessing the transformative potential of abolitionist pedagogy. In the case of the latter, the prison officials' suspicion of Natalia drove her termination, in effect dismissing her efforts to cultivate a culture not only of abolitionism but of basic humanity.

2. Dualistic Paternalism

In my experience, the prison's value of paternalism served dual roles: on the one hand, paternalism played the role of well-intentioned guardian of prisoners and public safety; on the other hand, paternalism played the role of a tool of oppression. In the first place, simultaneous guardianship of prisoners and public safety resulted in conflict of interest and a barrier to abolitionist pedagogy. Take the following example of the rookie correctional officer's frustration with Natalia's work in the *Rafael*

narrative: “Kids pay for their college education and are in huge debt because of it, and you're coming in here and rewarding rapists and murderers with education for free?”

While serving as guardians of the public, the correctional officers deemed the educational growth of prisoners as unimportant and undeserved. This resulted in a conflict between the rookie and Natalia, because Natalia’s purpose was to support the educational growth of the prisoners. Ultimately, this conflict undermined Natalia’s attempts to foster abolitionist pedagogy.

Second, the prison’s value of guardianship of prisoners in its custody served as a tool of oppression. Take this quotation said by Officer Jermaine to Rafael in the *Rafael* narrative:

“You don’t need some stupid classes. What you need is a job. Those bullshit classes are for bitches; they won’t get you anywhere. Not in here anyway. If you get a job at least you’ll have some money to buy food to put some weight on your skinny ass.”

Before Jermaine began his abuse of Rafael, Rafael had looked to Officer Jermaine for advice about how to spend his time in prison. Jermaine used his power as a tool of oppression, discouraging Rafael from engaging in education, perhaps because Jermaine planned to oppress Rafael in order to abuse him.

As a final example, in my experience, prison officials also ascribed the paternalistic mindset toward program staff, such as teachers. Take the following example of Natalia, when presented with a panic button device in the *Rafael* narrative:

“You will be escorted and you’ll need this.” The officer at the visitor’s desk handed me what looked like a black pager-like device on which I noticed a red

button labeled PANIC. I had never before been provided such a device in the eight months I had been teaching at the prison. So I wondered whether the phone call I received about my clothing was connected to being provided this device. “Attach it to your belt loop.”

Natalia had worked at the prison for eight months before being escorted to her classroom and charged to use this panic button device. Nevertheless, prison officials seem to have assumed that Natalia needed guardianship and therefore escorted her and required the use of the panic device.

These findings suggest that this dualistic paternalism – serving as well-intentioned guardianship on the one hand and tool of oppression on the other – functions as a barrier to abolitionist pedagogy. In the first case, paternalism bred conflict between a prison official and an abolitionist educator. In the second case, Jermaine discouraged Rafael from engaging in abolitionist pedagogy and pushed Natalia out of the prison, blocking the cultivation of abolitionist pedagogy in the facility. In the third case, even if the prison officials had been well intentioned in escorting Natalia and charging her to use the panic device, their timing was late at best. Additionally, the prison officials did not take the time to consider Natalia’s professional expertise in managing classroom behavior and whether the panic device was necessary or helpful. The panic device made Natalia uncomfortable and encouraged suspicion by the rookie CO, a tension the students observed, rendering them feeling unsafe in an environment that prior had been a safe one for them and unable to engage in abolitionist pedagogy.

3. Dualistic Sexualization

From the overall data set there emerged a paradox of sexualization of prisoners and women working in the prison. On the one hand, the prisoners and women were hyper-sexualized, and, on the other hand, they were asexualized. First, the prisoners were perceived as animalistic sexual deviants lacking control over their sexual urges. From the *Rafael* narrative, take the rookie's response to Natalia's commitment to her pedagogy: "You know these idiots are rapists and murderers and child molesters? Why do you even come here? And bring so much for them when they don't deserve it?" The rookie saw the prisoners not as human beings but rather as defined by their crimes, and of only the most heinous of crimes at that, specifically highlighting murder and sex crimes although students in Natalia's class were likely imprisoned for a variety of reasons.

On the other hand, prisoners were treated as if they were asexual beings, their sexuality invalidated and discounted. Take the example of Natalia being escorted past a group of showering prisoners in the *Rafael* narrative: "I remained silent and was escorted through the cellblock, past five other staring officers, past a group of prisoners showering." Prison officials showed no care for the privacy of the prisoners who were showering when they escorted Natalia by the group. It was as if the prison officials considered them bathing animals, without regard for exposing their naked bodies.

Data suggest the same duality for women working in the prison. Take the example of Jermaine's suspicion of Natalia in the *Rafael* narrative:

“I don’t trust her. I think she has something going on with the inmates because everyone wants to be in her class. Can you believe she even has one-on-one conferences with these animals? There is no reason a good looking young girl has any business in a prison unless she’s up to something. And I’ve heard her speaking Spanish to some of these guys before. There should be a rule that you have to speak English here – for security. God knows what they’re plotting in Spanish. I heard she knew a teacher in minimum; he says he doesn’t trust her.”

Here, Jermaine regarded Natalia as a sexual deviant because she was a “good looking young woman” working in the prison, a foreign and incomprehensible notion to Jermaine. Since prison culture valued masculinity, punitive justice, and whiteness, Natalia’s gender, ethic of care, and ethnicity were unaligned with the prison’s values. Therefore, Jermaine regarded her as suspicious.

On the other hand, Natalia was asexualized. Take Jermaine’s conversation with the captain about Natalia’s clothing and body shape in the *Rafael* narrative:

“Hey cap, have you seen that young girl teacher?”

“Natalia?”

“Yeah. Did you know that she has one-on-one conference with the inmates? A lot of the guys feel she’s up to something, plotting something with the inmates or maybe she’s got something going on romantically with them. She’s got these inmates salivating over the way she dresses, too.”

“How is she dressing? Is she wearing clothing outside of the dress code?”

“Well, I see inmates staring at her ass a lot. She wears bright colors, and she’s always bouncing around.”

When Jermaine learned that the prisoners looked at Natalia sexually, a deviation from the asexuality that prison culture ascribed her to perform, he considered her suspicious.

These findings suggest that this dualistic sexualization of both prisoners and Natalia functions as a mechanism to dehumanize those same individuals and ultimately discourage abolitionist pedagogy. In considering both prisoners and women working in the prison, on the one hand, as hypersexual deviants and, on the other, as asexual beings, the prison personnel did not regard prisoners or Natalia as humans, who are intrinsically sexual beings. Provided the assumption that acknowledging the humanity of students is the first step toward education, the prison personnel therefore did not consider prisoners worthy of prison education, let alone abolitionist pedagogy. Similarly, the prison personnel dehumanized Natalia and did not consider her a legitimate professional.

4. Sexual Abuse of Power

From the overall data set emerged a theme of prison officials holding positions of power over prisoners and women working in the prison. In many cases, this power maintained an environment ripe for sexual abuse.

First, take the following dialogue between Professor Anderson and Natalia from the *Professor Anderson* narrative:

“Well, you know, I teach classes at the local prison and I’d love for you to teach there sometime.”

“Oh, wow, that would be amazing. Thank you.”

“Repay me later, Ms. Gomez,” he laughed off this again sexually ambiguous comment as if it were a joke, turned, and walked out of the lecture hall. ...

[continuing further]

“Why don’t we schedule lunch tomorrow to debrief and plan for the class you’ll be teaching? Meet me here at noon tomorrow.”

He didn’t leave any room for negotiation. And since he still held the power of my grade, I begrudgingly affirmed, “Okay,” remembering some of the questionably sexual comments he had made previously. But maybe it was all in my head.

Not only did Professor Anderson, as a white, male institutional gatekeeper of the prison in which he worked, hold power over Natalia, but he also held power over Natalia as her university professor. This led to circumstances in which Anderson took liberty to use sexually harassing language to Natalia and thereafter direct her to go on a lunch date with him without her consent.

Second, the most striking example of sexual abuse of power was clearly Officer Jermaine’s sexual abuse of Rafael in the *Rafael* narrative:

For three more days, Rafael continued to work cleaning the education building, all the while continuing to endure Jermaine’s homophobic remarks ambiguously homoerotic sexual abuse – Jermaine would push up on him as Rafael stripped and occasionally grab Rafael’s balls and ass. And each time, Jermaine’s verbal homophobic abuse increased.

Jermaine's sexual abuse of Rafael was made possible by his position of dominance.

These findings suggest that, for those in power, sexual abuse functions as a form of leverage to maintain their power and can effectively undermine abolitionist pedagogy. For Natalia, Anderson's sexual abuse of power functioned as her rite of passage into the prison and the key to her completion of her graduate class.

Ultimately, because Natalia resisted Anderson's sexual abuse, negative rumors about her contributed to her termination, undermining her instruction of abolitionist pedagogy. Similarly, Jermaine's abuse of Rafael undermined Rafael's personal transformation through abolitionist pedagogy, as Rafael became preoccupied with his own survival over his education.

5. Necessity of *Doing Gender*

From the overall data set there emerged a theme of people performing stereotypical gender roles, both according to male and female norms, as a means of survival. On one hand, there was a need to perform gender according to masculine norms. When male prison officials performed a hyper-masculine, violent version of gender, they were rewarded with job security and advancement. Therefore, the institution compelled male prison officials to *do gender* in a manner that easily resulted in abuse or oppression of others. Take the following example of a conversation between Officer Jermaine and the rookie CO in the *Rafael* narrative:

They both positioned their hands in their pockets, chests puffed out, and spoke excessively loudly though not seeming to speak to each other. Their projected voices instead seemed to be aimed at the prisoners as they walked in, "I can't believe how much of a bitch my ex is. She's quick to take my money

in this divorce, but she was never quick to give me any pussy. If she were quicker to give me pussy, we wouldn't even be in this predicament because I wouldn't have had to go somewhere else for it.”

“You can't trust women these days. All this lesbian man hating bullshit, they think they run everything.”

As the officers projected their voices, each prisoner passing by them in the movement line heard their conversation. Many commented amongst themselves, “Yo, that shit is true, these hoes ain't loyal.”

“Trust no bitch,” commented another prisoner. Other young men, never having a father figure or male role model in their lives internalized what the officers said. Correctional officers and other prisoners were the only examples of masculinity many prisoners ever had.

Here, it was possible that Jermaine used misogynistic and homophobic language to maintain job security by seeming like a straight, hyper-masculine male, the expected gender performance of correctional officers. The rookie may have also been performing, as he sought career advancement. His performance was likely based on an attempt to build community with his correctional officer brothers, as this notion of brotherhood was the expected gender performance among correctional officers.

When prisoners heard this language from the officers, who unconsciously functioned as their role models, those same prisoners perpetuated the misogynistic language. With their role models setting an example of misogyny, prisoners maintained the same culture of misogyny.

Male prisoners also performed a stereotypical version of gender as a means of survival. Take the example of Ryan in the *Re-Entry* narrative:

As Ryan walked out, he punched and kicked everything that stood in his path – recyclables, barrels, chairs. As onlookers watched, he also yelled at them, “What the fuck you looking at?”

Recently released from prison and under the custody and control of the parole board, Ryan’s violent behavior was influenced by the need to perform a hyper-masculine and violent version of gender, which he likely experienced as a means of survival in prison.

On the other hand, just as there was an unspoken need to *do gender* according to masculine norms, so too was there a need to perform gender according to feminine norms. An example of the necessity of *doing gender* is the overmedication of female prisoners from the *Mindy* narrative:

She began to tell me, “You know, Natalia, everything that they were saying today about the pills is true. They try to get everyone to take those pills. It doesn’t matter if you’ve never even taken meds on the outside. They tried it with me, and I don’t have any kind of medical issues or psych issues. And when you try to question it, they bully you into taking them, like Mindy was saying. They make you think that you can get in trouble for not taking them. They say things like, ‘If you don’t take them you might end up losing your mind and hurting yourself or hurting other people, so it’s mandatory for you to take them.’ Some people believe them and end up taking the pills. They just

become like zombies in here. And I've heard that they totally kill your sex drive.”

Female prisoners are prescribed psychotropic drugs at much higher rates than male prisoners while confined within institutions that value masculinity, a confounding of prison norms. In my experience, female prisoners were assumed to be overemotional and were therefore medicated, under the assumption that masculinity involved emotionlessness, to better conform to the masculinity of the institution. Medicated female students therefore experienced disturbing challenges when participating in class, though the problem obviously has resounding consequences for their well-being overall.

These findings suggest that the necessity to *do gender* for prison officials and prisoners functions as a barrier to abolitionist pedagogy, both inside and outside of prison. Inside of prison, many female prisoners were unable to participate in abolitionist pedagogy because they were too medicated – under the assumption that their gender would render them overemotional and therefore dangerous. The prison's culture supports stereotypical versions of gender, and people in prison often bring that culture home with them. For Jermaine, this manifested as internalized homophobia. For Ryan, this manifested as violent behavior. As those people bring the gender violence of prison culture home with them, these versions of gender become iatrogenic – perpetuating the same behaviors of misogyny, violence, and addiction that prisons are meant to protect them from.

6. Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating A Gender Regime

As explored in the previous section, prison culture exacerbates and reproduces the same behaviors the prison was designed to prevent. The most salient of those behaviors that emerged from the overall data was *gender violence* – violence that serves to maintain oppressive gender inequalities, and includes violence against people of all genders and sexualities. The reproduction of gender violence within prison perpetuates the cycle of re-imprisonment, effectively positioning the prison as a gender regime – an institution that maintains gender inequities both inside its walls and in society at large. Rafael’s narrative provides a striking example of this phenomenon: through his father’s abuse of his mother, he witnessed gender violence as a child; through Officer Jermaine’s sexual abuse, he became a victim of gender violence as a prisoner; and after release he continued to self-inflict gender violence through risky sexual encounters and the use of steroids to become more physically aligned with a hyper-masculine ideal. Ultimately, this attempt to survive through gendered expectations led to his re-imprisonment. In effect, Rafael’s imprisonment positioned him within the iatrogenic gender regime, reproducing more of the same gender violence Rafael had experienced prior to his imprisonment.

Iatrogenic gender violence also affected female prisoners. Take the example of a letter written from Mindy to Pablo in the women’s facility narrative:

Pablo,

How are you? How’s the baby? I hope you are doing good. I know you probably hate me, and you probably fuckin’ with someone else by now, but I want you to know that I still love you, and I will never do you wrong the way you did me. My mom hates me, and she won’t write back to me, so I ain’t got nobody else to write to. And I can’t trust none of these bitches in the joint. You’re all I got.

So I got placed in this writing class here. We had one class so far, and it seems pretty fly, but they got me on these meds to calm me down, and I can't focus on what we be doing in class when I take my meds. And if I don't take my meds, they will throw me in seg 'cuz they're scared I'm gonna kill myself or something. But I never took them shits on the outside, so I don't know what the fuck they talking about anyway.

*Your wife,
Mindy*

Before she encountered a sense of community within Natalia's class, Mindy chose to stay in a relationship with Pablo, a husband who treated her poorly, and whose extramarital love affair sparked an altercation leading to Mindy's imprisonment. Mindy believed Pablo was her only ally and that she therefore had to stay with him. This can be considered *automisogyny*, self-defeating behavior caused by isolation from positive influences, rendering Mindy in need of Pablo because she lacked other personal connections. This lack of personal connection was perpetuated by the prison culture of mistrust between prisoners. Mindy felt she could not trust any of her fellow prisoners, that she only had Pablo. Through her experience in abolitionist pedagogy, Mindy made personal connections with fellow prisoners and eventually broke ties with Pablo.

These findings suggest that iatrogenic gender violence may be mediated by the gender of the prisoner resisting the gender regime. In the first case, although abolitionist pedagogy supported Rafael in escaping temporarily from the gender violence of Jermaine, ultimately he returned to prison because of iatrogenic gender violence. With Mindy, on the other hand, abolitionist pedagogy functioned as an escape from iatrogenic gender violence.

7. Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures

From the overall data set there emerged dual pedagogical cultures. On the one hand, the prison officials maintained a culture of low expectations for the imprisoned students. In contrast, the students involved in abolitionist pedagogy often exemplified a culture of high academic achievement. Take the example of low expectations exemplified by Professor Anderson's lesson in the *Professor Anderson* narrative:

“Oh, all of those students have not yet achieved their high school credential. And they're all at really low levels. There's not much you can do with them, but I like to give them the power of deciding what we work on in class.”

“Is the class like this every day?”

“Oh yes, for the most part. Sometimes the students prefer to work on reading, writing, social studies, or science. And in those cases we'll just use the books for those subjects.”

“So you rotate the books depending on what the students want to work on that day?”

“That's right. I find they appreciate giving them that power of deciding what we're doing in class. This is a group of people who have by and large never had to make their own decisions. So I really feel like giving them the power to decide what they'd like to study that day is teaching them decision making in addition to the content.”

This all seemed like an excuse not to plan. It also seemed like Anderson didn't believe in the abilities of these students, as if he believed they were incapable of engaging in material that was deeper than their textbooks. Anderson upheld the institutional culture of low expectations for imprisoned students and chose not to use his pedagogical expertise to plan dynamic lessons. He assumed that his students were at very low academic levels and therefore weren't worth the trouble of planning.

Denying resources, exercising censorship, and decreasing interactions from the outside to the inside of prison also maintained low expectations. Any deviation from these practices was suspect. Take the example of the resources Natalia brought into the maximum-security facility and their subsequent confiscation by prison officials:

After about ten minutes of snail-paced searching through each and every single item I had in my bags, the officer beckoned with his index finger for me to approach the table. This was the first time I had experienced this level of scrutiny. I had been teaching at maximum-security for about six months, but never before had I been treated like this. Correctional officers were never exactly friendly, and I knew to be patient with their search procedures, but this was beyond the level of surveillance I had ever experienced before. The silent eyes of the fifteen correctional officers surrounding me on all sides and the meticulous care with which the officer went through my supplies (the same supplies I always brought with me) made me think that this must be what it must feel like to be a prisoner.

I noticed two distinct piles of supplies as I approach the visitor's desk. The officer at the desk pointed to the pile on my left and said, "You can't bring any of this in."

"Why? I've never had a problem with bringing it in before."

The officer doing the search looked at the captain, who then approached the desk, "No metal," he pointed to the staples and paperclips that bound the stacks of texts I had photocopied for the students, "No markers." I was not allowed to bring in the very same markers and highlighters I had brought in countless times before. This meant I was no longer able to execute the lesson I had planned. "You can't give the inmates notebooks and pens from the outside. We have approved school supplies they can buy from the prison commissary."

I knew most of my students had forgone a job in order to take classes, so they weren't making any money to buy school supplies. I also knew those students that had families with whom they were in contact could barely afford to make their own ends meet, never mind supporting their imprisoned loved one. I felt obligated to provide for students the supplies I required them to use in class.

The prison provided so few resources that Natalia brought her own. When she did, the resources were confiscated and she became suspect by prison officials for having provided students with the necessary class materials.

On the other hand, one student involved in abolitionist pedagogy exceeded the low expectations imposed on her. Take the example of Mindy, who, over the course of

a class in abolitionist pedagogy, took a critical look at her life experiences, decided to disconnect from Pablo, her abusive husband, and finally chose to pursue a legal avenue to afford her daughter a better life:

“So, last night I realized that the pattern in my life is abuse by men. My mom used to deal with it and I used to see that, and her boyfriend used to abuse me too. And my husband is an abuser too. And I think he has the potential to abuse my baby. And I can’t let that happen. I have to do something.”

Here Mindy demonstrates ownership of her education, critical thinking, and feminist thinking. If her plan to end the cycle of gender violence for her child actually comes to fruition, she will have challenged that status quo and made changes in her family’s cycle of gender violence.

These findings suggest that, although the prison as an institution maintains low expectations for imprisoned students, those same students are capable of high academic achievement when involved in abolitionist pedagogy.

8. Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope

Those involved in abolitionist pedagogy not only resisted the institution’s culture of low pedagogical expectations, but also the institution’s culture of stereotypical gender performance. One example is Natalia’s email to the Deputy Warden from the *Mindy* narrative. Here, Natalia questioned the prison’s practice of overmedicating female prisoners:

*Dear Deputy Warden,
Thank you for meeting informally with me today. Just to reiterate, many of my students seemed highly medicated and unable to participate in class today.*

Would you please let me know if there is anything I can do to support their ability to participate in class?

Thank you so much,

Natalia Gomez

She never wrote back.

Even though the Deputy Warden did not respond, the fact that Natalia addressed her concerns sent a message of resistance toward the practice of overmedicating female prisoners. The message was gendered in its resistance, as Natalia required her students to engage emotionally while institutional culture eschewed emotional engagement.

Another example of gender resistance includes Natalia's referral of Rafael to the re-entry program even though she had been terminated from her job teaching at the prison:

Hey Nate,

I was wondering if you could check out a guy named Rafael Ramirez for the program. He is in max, and I think he would make a great candidate. He was one of my students while I taught there, and he showed a lot of growth and promise while I was working with him. Plus, he's really young and small; I think getting him out of that environment and into a safer, more supportive environment would be really beneficial.

Thanks,

Natalia

Here, Natalia resisted the gender violence she knew Rafael was enduring at the hands of Officer Jermaine.

These findings suggest that abolitionist pedagogy offers hope in its resistance of the stereotypical gender norms maintained by the prison.

Summary of Findings

The previous section analyzed both the definitions of the aforementioned eight themes as well as their roles in my experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. Table 4 below summarizes each theme's definition and role.

Table 4

Summary of Themes and Their Respective Roles in Abolitionist Pedagogy

Theme	Definition	Role in My Overall Experience with Prison-Based Abolitionist Pedagogy
Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions	On the one hand, possessing intersecting characteristics of privilege increased power and potential to abuse power without consequence. On the other hand, possessing intersecting characteristics of oppression decreased power and increased potential to be considered suspect and endure consequence.	Functioned as barrier to individual transformation of students engaged in abolitionist pedagogy and a barrier to the efforts of abolitionist educator to cultivate a culture of abolitionism
Dualistic Paternalism	On one hand, serving as well-intentioned guardian of the public. On the other hand, serving as tool of oppression	Breeding conflict between prison officials and abolitionist educators, undermining attempts to cultivate abolitionist pedagogy. Discouraging students from engaging in abolitionist pedagogy
Dualistic Sexualization	On one hand, prisoners and women working in the prison were considered hypersexual. On the other hand, they were regarded as asexual	Dehumanizing prisoners and women working in the prison, illegitimizing attempts to cultivate a culture of abolitionism
Sexual Abuse of Power	Prison officials holding positions of power over the prisoners and the women working in the prison maintained an environment ripe for sexual abuse	Undermined individual transformation for students of abolitionist pedagogy, served as a rite of passage for women seeking to cultivate abolitionist pedagogy
Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>	Performing stereotypical gender roles as a means of survival	Cultivating iatrogenic gender violence from inside to outside of prison, maintaining a cycle of re-

		imprisonment and undermining abolitionist pedagogy
Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime	The prison's oppressively gendered culture exacerbated the same gender violence it is meant to prevent. This violence spilled over into the community and brought people back to prison, creating a gender regime of imprisonment	Mediated by gender of prisoner. For some women, abolitionist pedagogy functioned as a break away from gender violence and the gender regime of imprisonment. For many men, the depth of the gender violence to which they were exposed diluted the impact of abolitionist pedagogy
Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures	On the one hand, prison officials maintained low pedagogical expectations for imprisoned students. On the other hand, many students who engaged in abolitionist pedagogy exceeded those low expectations	Offered hope for abolitionist pedagogy as a means to defeat the CTPER, as students engaged in abolitionist pedagogy were capable of reaching high pedagogical expectations
Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope	Students and educators of abolitionist pedagogy resisted the institutional culture of stereotypical gender performance	Offered hope for defeating institutional gender oppressions

I will now explore how the findings of this study as they relate to the theory and literature explored in Chapters 1 and 2.

Relating to Theory and Literature

This study was set through the theoretical lenses of ecological systems theory, social reconstruction theory, prison abolition theory, and gender theory – all explored in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, this study explored the existing and emerging literature on the subjects of the state of mass imprisonment today, prison reform, prison education, and prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. In doing so, the literature review identified a

gap related to the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the role of gender in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy.

The next section identifies this study's consistencies with and developments upon previous theory and literature. I will first explore this study's consistencies with theory and literature. Then I will explore the ways in which this study develops upon that theory and literature.

Consistencies with Previous Literature

This study's findings are consistent with three areas of the existing theory and literature explored in Chapters 1 and 2. First, the findings are consistent with gender theory's position that the gender norms specific to prison create a gender regime that exacerbates and reproduces gender violence within and outside its walls (Acker, 1990; Britton, 2003; Connell, 1996; 2006; Harris, 2011). Specifically, from the emergent theme *Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime*, this study found that the prison's oppressively gendered culture exacerbated the same gender violence it was meant to prevent. In turn, this violence spilled over into the community and brought people back to prison, creating a gendered regime of imprisonment. An example of this is Rafael's journey to prison and eventual return to prison, explored in the *Rafael* and *Re-Entry* narratives in Chapter 4.

Second, this study's findings are consistent with literature that posits that the gendered structure of the prison functions as a barrier to prison education. (Britton, 2003; Case & Fasenfest, 2004; Lempert, Bergeron, & Linker, 2005; Richards-Allerton, 1994; Wilson, 1994; Wright, 2004). This study found five specific

manifestations of how the gendered structure of the prison functions as a barrier to prison-based abolitionist pedagogy: (1) *Duality Of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions*, (2) *Dualistic Paternalism*, (3) *Dualistic Sexualization*, (4) *Sexual Abuse of Power*, and (5) *Necessity of Doing Gender*.

Finally, these findings are consistent with the existing literature surrounding abolitionist pedagogy that explores resistance to banking pedagogy, in the Freirean sense (Harkins & Meiners, 2014; Larson, 2011). Specifically, the present study found *Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures* when it came to prison education. On the one hand, prison officials maintained low pedagogical expectations for imprisoned students. On the other hand, many students who engaged in abolitionist pedagogy exceeded those low expectations. This duality is explored by Professor Anderson's low expectations of his students as told in the *Professor Anderson* narrative, juxtaposed with the exceptional achievements of a student explored in the *Mindy* narrative.

Developments Upon Previous Literature

The findings of this study not only confirm but develop upon the previous literature in the same three areas mentioned above: (1) theory surrounding the prison as a gendered organization, (2) the gendered structure of the prison as a barrier to prison education, and (3) characteristics of abolitionist pedagogy.

Theory surrounding the prison as a gendered organization. Britton (2000) recommended that future research develop the relationship between gendered occupations and the masculinized organization in which they are performed. The present study explored this recommendation through the finding that the *Sexual Abuse of Power* functioned as a rite of passage for a female teacher in prison. Specifically,

Natalia Gomez underwent sexual harassment from an institutional gatekeeper in order to gain access to teaching prison-based abolitionist pedagogy.

Britton and Logan (2008) further recommended that future research develop upon the intersectionality in gendered organizations. The present study explored this recommendation through the emergent theme of the *Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions*, finding, on the one hand, intersecting characteristics of privilege (e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation), increased power, and the potential to abuse that power without consequence. On the other hand, the possession of intersecting characteristics of oppression decreased one's power and increased the potential of that same individual to be considered suspect and to endure oppressive consequences.

In the same vein, Huggins and Glebbeek (2003) found that cross-gendered dynamics in research by women studying organizations dominated by men were unexplored in theory and literature. The present study explored this gap through a few emergent themes. First, this study found *Dualistic Sexualization*, which revealed that women working and researching in the prison were treated paradoxically both hypersexually and asexually, which, in the case of this study, ultimately functioned to illegitimize attempts to reach the goals of abolitionist pedagogy. Second, the theme *Sexual Abuse of Power* revealed that the ways in which prison officials who hold positions of power over women working and researching in the prison maintained an environment ripe for sexual abuse. This was an environment in which women working and researching in the prison had to traverse as a rite of passage in order to attempt to cultivate abolitionist pedagogy. Third, the theme *Necessity of Doing Gender* revealed

that women working and researching in the prison needed to perform stereotypical gender roles as a means of surviving the hyper-masculine prison culture.

Gendered structure of the prison as barrier to prison education. To previous literature that documents the ways in which the gendered structure of the prison functions as a barrier to prison education (Britton, 2003; Case & Fasenfest, 2004; Gehring & Eggleston, 2007; Lempert, Bergeron, & Linker, 2005; Richards-Allerton, 1994; Wilson, 1994; Wright, 2004), the present study contributes from the theme *Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime*, the notion that the gender of the prisoner-student mediates their experience of abolitionist pedagogy. The gender of the prisoner-student may contribute to the how intensely the gendered structure of the prison functions as a barrier to prison education. For example, as explored in the *Rafael* narrative in Chapter 4, Rafael – a male – ultimately returned to prison after his experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. With the *Mindy* narrative, on the other hand, abolitionist pedagogy functioned as an escape from iatrogenic gender violence.

Moreover, this study contributes new insights to the theme of *Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope*: the emergence of resistance and hope against the gendered structure of the prison's function as barrier to prison education. An example of this theme is Natalia's outspokenness about the overmedicated states in which she encountered her students in the *Mindy* narrative.

Abolitionist Pedagogy. As explored in Chapter 2, the literature surrounding abolitionist pedagogy is sparse, suggesting many barriers to its implementation and success. Literature has previously explored the prison's competing interests with the

goals of abolitionist pedagogy (Bordt & Carceral, 2012; Kilgore, 2011; Larson, 2011; Scott, 2014) as a barrier to abolitionist pedagogy. This study suggests several other barriers, including the *Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions*, *Dualistic Paternalism*, *Dualistic Sexualization*, the *Sexual Abuse of Power*, and the *Necessity of Doing Gender*.

Limitations

I should stress that, while carefully situated within the larger context of prison abolition pedagogical theory and practice, my study focused primarily on my own, “subjective” experiences as a prison educator and researcher. My findings, therefore, should not be read as generalizable to all experiences of the role of gender in abolitionist pedagogy. However, as explored in greater detail in Chapter 3, this study’s autoethnographic methodology is based on the notion of “strong objectivity” (Harding 1992; 1995), which questions the worth of the standard of value-neutral objectivity advanced by traditional empirical research. Simultaneously, I have attempted to bolster the trustworthiness of the study according to Guba’s (1981) trustworthiness framework.

Trustworthiness

According to Guba (1981), the trustworthiness of naturalistic studies comprises four tenets: (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) confirmability. *Credibility* refers to the study’s account of the array of thematic patternings in data. *Transferability* refers the study’s account of the situational uniqueness of the study’s context. *Dependability* refers to the study’s account of instrumental changes. *Confirmability* refers to the study’s account of investigator predilections.

In order to maximize the present study's *credibility*, I used member checking when possible and collected data from my own first-hand experience over an extended period, approximately three years. I addressed *transferability* through thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of findings by way of letters from prison, a counternarrative unique to the study's context, always bearing in mind that it is incumbent on the readers to decide what is transferable to their own contexts. I accounted for the study's *dependability* by organizing my analysis in a data log and keeping analytic memos. Finally, I *confirmed* observational/self-reflective data through external data sources. For more information about how this study confirmed its trustworthiness, see Table 5.

Table 5

Trustworthiness

Tenet of Trustworthiness	Definition of Tenet	Account in my study
Credibility	Study's account for the array of factor patternings in data	Member checking & extended period of data collection
Transferability	Study's account for situational uniqueness of the study's context	Thick description of findings by way of letters from prison, a counternarrative unique to the context
Dependability	Study's account for instrumental changes	Organizing analysis in a data log & keeping analytic memos
Confirmability	Study's account for investigator predilections	Confirmation of observational/self-reflective data through external data sources

Implications

Provided the strong evidence suggesting that prison education boasts myriad positive outcomes yet suffers from barriers to its success, this study would seem to support the argument for a change in the gendered structures and cultures of the prison regime. Abolitionist pedagogy intends to abolish the systems fostering the epidemic of mass imprisonment, yet, like all prison education, it suffers gendered barriers to its success. Due to its blatant disagreement with the systems fostering mass imprisonment, and as evidenced by the existing literature on the subject, abolitionist pedagogy suffers perhaps even more intensely gendered barriers to its success. However, this study also offers suggestive evidence that abolitionist pedagogy fosters hope in its resistance of the gendered systems fostering the epidemic of mass imprisonment.

Unfortunately, abolishing the gendered structure and culture of the prison is not so easy as revamping the prison system, only because the prison system is so inherently intertwined in a much broader system of intersecting privileges and oppressions. As explored in Chapter 1, I have named this relationship between the prison system and other ecological systems the Community-to-Prison Ecological Regime (CTPER). As such, a sustainable change to the gendered structures and cultures of the prison regime would also mean much wider ecological changes to the structures and cultures present in our society.

Such a transformation is not completely feasible in the here and now, so in the following Recommendations section I offer ideas about what to can be done right now.

Recommendations

The following recommendations fall into two categories: research and practice. Future *research* into prison-based abolitionist pedagogy might usefully focus on the following:

1. The role of race in prison-based abolitionist pedagogy;
2. How the gender of the prisoner-student mediates the experience of abolitionist pedagogy
3. Uncovering further first-person accounts of those involved in abolitionist pedagogy. My fictionalized account is one of many possible stories. With more accounts, we might begin to build a more comprehensive and usable theory surrounding abolitionist pedagogy;
4. Successful examples of abolitionist pedagogy for the purposes of replication.

Future *practice* of prison-based abolitionist pedagogy might usefully consider following:

1. None of recommendations proposed here negate the imperative of drastically reducing the number of imprisoned people. This may be achieved in a number of ways, including but not limited to redefining our notion of crime, ending rewards to prosecutors for convictions, and ending specific targeting of vulnerable communities
2. The recommendations explored below that are derived from this study's eight emergent themes. These recommendations are further detailed in Table 6.

Recommendations Based on Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions

From the finding that, on the one hand, possessing intersecting characteristics of privilege increased power and the potential to abuse that power without consequence and, on the other hand, possessing intersecting characteristics of oppression decreased power and increased the potential to be considered suspect and to endure negative consequences emerge three recommendations. First, it is imperative that within prisons there be established checks and balances to the power of prison personnel, such as a prisoners' council and/or an unaffiliated organization that checks for prison personnel accountability. Second, I recommend that quotas of the race and gender of prison personnel be established. Finally, I recommend that, instead of providing training to prison personnel based in military philosophy, we must instead train prison personnel in ethics, counseling, and social services.

Recommendations Based on Dualistic Paternalism

From the finding that the prison and its personnel, on the one hand, served as a well-intentioned guardian of the public and, on the other hand, served as tools of oppression, I propose one recommendation. Change the mission of the prison to include the education, healing, and growth of prisoners instead of guardianship of the public alone. As it now stands, the mission of guardianship of the public functions to dehumanize prisoners because it allows prison personnel to abuse their power.

Recommendations Based on Dualistic Sexualization

From the finding that, on the one hand, prisoners and women working in the prison were considered hypersexual and, on the other hand, they were regarded as asexual, I propose five recommendations. First, reevaluate the notion and practice of

gender segregation of prisoners. Second, support a sex-positive culture within the prison. Third, support safe-sex practices within the prison. Fourth, cultivate a culture that affirms the innate sexuality of prisoners. Finally, allow family and conjugal visits for adults who are consenting and safe.

Recommendations Based on Sexual Abuse of Power

From the finding that prison officials holding positions of power over prisoners and women working in the prison maintained an environment ripe for sexual abuse, I propose three recommendations, two of which have already been mentioned. First, establish checks and balances to the power of prison personnel, such as a prisoners' council and/or an unaffiliated organization that checks for prison personnel accountability. Second, train prison personnel in ethics, counseling, and social services. Third, train and enforce accountability of prison personnel surrounding matters of sexual harassment.

Recommendations Based on Necessity of *Doing Gender*

From the finding that prisoners and prison personnel performed stereotypical gender roles as means of survival, I propose three recommendations, the first of which has already been mentioned. First, I recommend a reevaluation of gender segregation in prisons. Second, it is imperative that prisons ensure that all prisoners' basic needs are met by using a social service model instead of a military model. Finally, prisons must function on a model based in overabundance of support and healing instead of scarcity or deprivation, in order that prisoners are not compelled toward oppressive, dangerous survival behaviors.

Recommendations Based on Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime

From the finding that the prison's oppressively gendered culture exacerbated the same gender violence it was meant to prevent and thereafter this violence spilled over into the community and brought people back to prison, creating a gender regime of imprisonment, I propose three recommendations, two of which overlap with recommendations that emerged from other themes. First, create a prison mission that includes healing, in order that people may return to their communities less wounded and on a healthier track. Second, establish checks and balances to the power of prison personnel, such as a prisoner's council and/or an unaffiliated organization that checks for prison personnel accountability. Finally, train prison personnel in ethics, counseling, and social services.

Recommendations Based on Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures

From the finding that, on the one hand, prison officials maintained low pedagogical expectations for imprisoned students, and, on the other hand, many students who engaged in abolitionist pedagogy exceeded those low expectations, I propose five recommendations. First, all prison education must advance and maintain a mission of abolition. Second, all prison education must maintain consistently high expectations, including, but not limited to, the institution of national standards of prison education. Third, standards for prison education should be enforced via an outside accountability organization. Fourth, prison educators should be trained in programs specific to prison education. Finally, a prison-as-university think tank that

includes prisoner-students should be established to create of a new prison education model based in abolition.

Recommendations Based on Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope

From the finding that students and educators of abolitionist pedagogy resisted the institutional culture of stereotypical gender performance, I propose one recommendation: that explicit gender studies education should be established as a cornerstone of abolitionist education.

Table 6

Recommendations

Theme	Recommendations
Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks and balances to the power of prison personnel, such as a prisoner’s council and outside accountability • Quotas of race and gender of prison personnel • Training of prison personnel around issues of ethics and counseling instead of militaristic training
Dualistic Paternalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change mission of prison to include education, growth and healing of prisoners instead of guardianship of the public because guardianship of the public functions to dehumanize prisoners because it allows prison personnel to abuse their power
Dualistic Sexualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reevaluate the worth of gender segregation of prisoners • Sex positivity with prisoners • Support safe sex in prison • Affirm the innate sexuality of prisoners • Allow family and conjugal visits for everyone consenting and safe
Sexual Abuse of Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks and balances to the power of prison personnel, such as a prisoner’s council and outside accountability • Training of prison personnel around issues of ethics and counseling instead of militaristic training • Train and enforce accountability of prison personnel surrounding sexual harassment
Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reevaluate the worth of gender segregation in prison • Make sure everyone’s basic needs are met, use a social service model instead of a military model

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scarcity or deprivation but rather overabundance of support and healing so person don't have to perform a certain oppressive way to survive
Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission of prison to include healing so people can return healed to their communities • Checks and balances to the power of prison personnel, such as a prisoner's council and outside accountability • Training of prison personnel around issues of ethics and counseling instead of militaristic training
Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All prison education has mission of abolition • All prison education to have consistent high expectations (national standards of prison education) • Outside accountability of prison education standards • Specific prison educator preparation programs • Prison-as-university think tank to include prisoner-students in the creation of a new prison education model that is based in abolition
Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit gender studies education as part of abolitionist pedagogy

Contributions

In addition to the provision of some directions for future research, my study has made three significant contributions to the literature on prison education, specifically prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. First, to the best of my knowledge, this study's methodology – fictionalized autoethnography – constitutes within this area the first of its kind. This method may offer an opportunity to widen authorship and research on the topic of abolitionist pedagogy. More specifically, the inclusion of gender and sexuality within this topic can bring up issues counterproductively deemed taboo. Fictionalization constitutes a less-threatening method of exploring these experiences.

Second, this study has catalogued barriers to abolitionist pedagogy that have not been explored up to this point, specifically, barriers related to gender. Future

researchers should continue to contribute their own experiences with gender and abolitionist pedagogy.

Finally, the differing experiences of male and female prisoner-students illuminates the notion that gender may mediate one's experience with prison-based abolitionist pedagogy. This study strongly suggests that future research should look deeper into this.

Autobiographical Reflection

I made the decision to study prison education because I believed in Freire's (1983) notion of education as the practice of freedom. It occurred to me, as an educator having worked with a variety of vulnerable populations, that the population with which to truly test this notion was the population I understood to be most definitionally "un-free": prisoners. However, none of my previous experiences could have prepared me for this. I had no idea what I was getting myself into.

Though I characterized Natalia Gomez to some extent in my likeness, her fictionalized experiences illustrate only a modicum of what I experienced as a prison educator and researcher. Prison, as it presently stands in the U.S. and most of the world, is hell on earth. And once you have experienced hell, you remain forever changed, forever aware that a human-made hell exists, forever mindful that your fellow human beings are responsible for subjecting other fellow human beings to horror.

To future prison educators and researchers, I warn you that you must prepare mentally and emotionally for the hell to which you will bear witness if you choose this

path. To experience it will move you, inevitably, to do something, lest you become responsible for subjecting others to the worst of which we humans have to offer.

Appendix A
Compiled External Data Table

Please note that information has been redacted to protect the confidentiality of participants.

Data Number	Source
1.	Gehring's <i>Handbook for Correctional Education Leaders</i>
2.	Gehring's <i>Workbook to Accompany the Handbook for Correctional Education Leaders</i>
3.	Child Welfare Fatherhood project literature
4.	Student interest inventories
5.	<i>Prisoner Committees in Women's Prisons</i> report by Amanda George
6.	<i>Captive Minds Truth Behind Bars: Realities of Women's Imprisonment in South Australia</i>
7.	Prison abolition conference program
8.	<i>ACT Women and Prisons Invisible Bars: The Stories behind the Stats</i>
9.	My hiring paperwork from the prison
10.	Schedules of courses taught at the prison Fall 2012, Spring 2013
11.	Paper written by prison educator colleague
12.	Notes from new employee training
13.	Notes from meeting with prison administrator, 11/13/12
14.	Field observation notes in prison educator's class January 2012
15.	Notes from meeting with prison program director 1/3/13
16.	Notes from meeting with prison program director 1/16/13
17.	Doran Larson's <i>Abolition from Within: Enabling the Citizen Convict</i>
18.	Notes from prison education conference
19.	Notes from correctional education course
20.	LSIR, standardized measure of likelihood of recidivism
21.	Copy of re-entry program study proposal
22.	Various documents from re-entry program
23.	Documents from prison abolition conference
24.	Documents from independent study project about working in women's facility
25.	Field notes from re-entry program
26.	Interview questions from re-entry program
27.	Student notebook presented to me in men's maximum-security
28.	Student autobiography presented to me in men's medium-security
29.	Letters from student in men's maximum-security
30.	Letters/poems written by student in men's maximum-security
31.	Short note from student in men's maximum-security
32.	Letter from student in men's maximum-security
33.	Poems by student in men's maximum-security
34.	Student papers written for class
35.	Lesson plans from writing class in men's maximum-security
36.	Personal journal

37.	Teaching journal
38.	Research question notes from re-entry program
39.	Researcher identity notes
40.	Progress notes from re-entry program participant
41.	Consent forms from re-entry program participants
42.	Article from university magazine about graduates working at the prison
43.	Letters from student in men's maximum-security
44.	Documents from teaching writing class in men's maximum-security
45.	Documents from teaching other writing class in men's maximum-security
46.	Documents from teaching writing class in men's medium-security
47.	Documents about Ban the Box initiative
48.	Letters to/from personal friend in another prison
49.	Document entitled "Prison-Based Academic Mentorship Project (PBAMP)"
50.	Articles about children with incarcerated parents
51.	Angela Davis Keynote Speech at women's conference
52.	Self-recorded memo
53.	Self-recorded memo
54.	Cornell West speech at Albany prison justice rally
55.	Self-recorded memo
56.	Interview with my mother
57.	Self-recorded memo
58.	First interview with re-entry program participant 1
59.	Interview with re-entry program participant 2
60.	Second interview with re-entry program participant 1
61.	Texts with re-entry program participant 1
62.	Texts with re-entry program participant 1
63.	Memo on the sequence of events that occurred with re-entry program participant 2
64.	Email I sent to quit the re-entry program study
65.	Email I sent to my advisor to quit the re-entry program study
66.	Emails with re-entry program administrators
67.	Field notes from a phone conversation with re-entry program participant 1
68.	Field notes from field observation at re-entry program
69.	Texts with re-entry program participant 2
70.	Transcribed interview with re-entry program participant 1
71.	Piece written by re-entry program intern
72.	List of re-entry program participants and statuses
73.	Personal field notes that I wrote after deciding to be quit working with re-entry program
74.	Newspaper article about re-entry program
75.	Field note data from my time teaching in men's medium-security
76.	A poem student wrote in men's maximum-security
77.	Field notes from my time teaching in men's maximum-security and women's
78.	Poem that student from women's presented to me

79.	Letter to student in men's medium-security
80.	Letter to student in men's maximum-security
81.	Letter to student in men's maximum-security
82.	Poem that student from women's presented to me
83.	Field notes from a conversation I had with student in men's maximum-security
84.	Field notes I took about re-entry program
85.	Websites connected to female prison workers in the media for negative things
86.	Field notes I took about students in men's medium-security
87.	Notes from training
88.	Email correspondence with prison administrator
89.	Letter to me from prison administrator
90.	Documents from prison administrators
91.	Emails with prison educator
92.	Emails with re-entry program intern
93.	Letter to student in men's maximum-security
94.	Children's book a student in men's medium-security presented to me
95.	Emails with prison administrator
96.	Emails with prison administrator
97.	Article about garden at prison
98.	Email from ex-student
99.	Emails with prison administrator

Appendix B

Self Reflective Data Table and Corresponding External Confirmatory Data
Please note that information has been redacted to protect the confidentiality of participants.

Number of First Person Account	Topic of First-Person Account, Comprising Observational/ Self-Reflective Data	Number of Corresponding External Data to Confirm First Person Account (As Numbered on Compiled Data Table)
1.	Meeting prison educator at conference	90
2.	Emailing prison educator to come to the prison	90, 95, 96
3.	Observing prison educator's class	14, 90, 94, 24
4.	Prison educator introducing me to other teachers at prison	90, 94, 9
5.	Teaching in women's vs. teaching in men's	37
6.	Correctional officers in women's prison	37
7.	Concerns of women prisoners	24, 37
8.	Presentations at women's prison	24
9.	Results of the study I did at women's	37, 24
10.	Meeting with prison educator about conference	18, 14
11.	Going to lunch with prison educator	90
12.	When I "quit" from working with prison educator because I was uncomfortable with him	90
13.	Officer at men's maximum-security	37, 76
14.	The yard at men's maximum-security	37
15.	Student AP at men's maximum-security	37
16.	Problems with entering max	76, 37, 44
17.	Being reprimanded in Max	37
18.	Class being canceled, nobody ever told me, showing up and waiting, being sent home	37
19.	Captain of correctional officers	76, 37, 98
20.	Reading <i>New Jim Crow</i> with students	76, 37
21.	First day at men's maximum-security	37
22.	Presenting at conference	23
23.	Education program director	76, 37
24.	Student MJ at men's maximum-security	27, 43, 37
25.	Sharing my writing with students	37
26.	DW children's book	93

27.	Student JR at men's maximum-security	80, 79, 29, 37
28.	Student Mr. R at men's maximum-security	92, 37
29.	Student AP at men's maximum-security	76, 37
30.	Prison educator RC at men's maximum-security	76, 37, 44
31.	Going to medium-security to work with students from max who had been moved	85
32.	Teaching in men's medium-security	25, 46
33.	Meeting re-entry program director	21
34.	Dinner at re-entry program	25
35.	Re-entry program participant DL	25
36.	Friendship with DL	58, 63, 68, 69, 83, 40
37.	DL back in prison	
38.	Call from investigator	87, 88, 53
39.	Presenting at prison abolition conference	5, 6, 7, 8
40.	Training at prison	12, 86
41.	AA's Correctional Ed course	1, 2, 19, 11
42.	Fatherhood programs with prison administrators and program directors	3, 13, 15, 16, 17, 37
43.	LSIR tool	20, 89
44.	Re-entry program and DL	
45.	Re-entry program and WR	59, 60, 61, 62, 67, 70, 25
46.	First time seeing DL outside of prison	25, 68
47.	DL's girlfriend	25, 63, 69
48.	First phenomenological interview with DL	69, 25, 58, 26, 38
49.	What actually happened to the re-entry participants	67, 25
50.	Parole board and me	25
51.	Meeting with re-entry program directory	25
52.	Re-entry program intern	25, 91
53.	Another re-entry program intern	71
54.	Ankle bracelets	
55.	Re-entry program director treating the guys as inferior	

56.	First phenomenological interview with WR	26, 59, 38
57.	Second phenomenological interview with WR	70, 25, 62, 26, 38
58.	Quitting re-entry program	64, 65, 73, 25
59.	Students and Facebook	31
60.	HM	30
61.	PH	48, 55
62.	My personal journal	37, 39, 36, 56, 57
63.	Papers from men's maximum (first semester)	4, 44
64.	Papers from men's maximum (second semester)	34, 35, 37, 45, 31, 32, 33
65.	Re-entry program BBQ	72, 25, 41
66.	Prison-based academic mentorship program proposal	49
67.	Prison justice rally, Ban the Box	54, 47, 25
68.	University magazine article about women in corrections	42, 47
69.	SR poem	75, 44
70.	KW poem	77, 37
71.	DC memoir	78, 28
72.	MO poem	81, 24, 37
73.	Courses offered at prison	10
74.	Current events with gender and prison	84
75.	PJ poem	81, 24
76.	University and the re-entry program	47, 25, 64

Appendix C
Gender Theories for Analysis

Number of Gender Theory	Theory	Citation
1.	Prisons regulate sexuality	(Richie, 2005)
2.	Prisons regulate gender	(Richie, 2005)
3.	Dependency/lack of power as a feminine trait > need to hyper masculinize > spill over into already vulnerable communities	(Appell & Davis, 2011)
4.	Paternalism in criminal justice system: Victims have no choice in what happens to the people convicted	(Appell & Davis, 2011)
5.	Iatrogenic gender violence (gender violence spillover that is [supposedly] caused by the system trying to stop it)	(Harris, 2011)
6.	Heteropatriarchy as foundational to the CJ system: sex & gender binary, biology controls sexuality, men and women are opposites, opposites attract, and men are the privileged gender and therefore masculinity is also privileged	(Harris, 2011)
7.	Functioning as a gendered institution= 1. Gendered processes; 2. Images of hegemonic masculinity; 3. Interactions= “doing gender;” 4. Internalized process of appropriate identity and behavior according to gender	(Acker, 1992)
8.	Unclear relationship between gendered occupations that the masculinized organization in which they are performed (like teaching in prison)	(Britton, 2000)
9.	Gendered organizations as a framework for perceiving inequality	(Britton & Logan, 2008)
10.	Intersectionality in gendered organizations needs to be looked at (Acker called these “inequality regimes”)	(Britton & Logan, 2008)
11.	Gender regime= 1. Division of power; 2. Relations of power; 3. Emotion and human relations; 4. Culture and symbolism	(Connell, 2006)
12.	Policy must appraise balance between processes that either sustains or undermines gender divisions	(Connell, 2006)
13.	Cultural connection between power and masculinity, which can manifest as problems with established authority of women managers	(Connell, 2006)
14.	Conventional policy doesn’t account for emotions	(Connell,

	stirred up with gender transition, but it must because it is significant	2006)
15.	Organizations willing to endorse equal opportunities but not affirmative action	(Connell, 2006)
16.	Cross-gendered dynamics or research are unexplored in theory and literature	(Huggins & Glebbeek, 2003)
17.	“Doing gender”	(West & Zimmerman, 1987) Butler too
18.	How gendered an organization is > measured by 1. Pervasiveness; 2. Elusiveness; 3. Ambiguity	(Gherardi, 1994)
19.	Sexuality, procreation, emotion disrupts the ideal functioning of the organization. An abstract, bodiless, emotionless worker is the ideal	(Acker, 1990)
20.	Gender resistance	(Holler, 2002)
21.	Traditional pedagogy reproduces gender	(Martin, 1994; Connell, 1996)
22.	Traditional pedagogy positions teacher/student in hierarchal relationship	(Blackburn, 2007)
23.	Absence of discourse of desire/anti-sex rhetoric in school	(Fine, 2002)
24.	Different femininities depending on social class	(Brown, 2005)
25.	Need to “queer” prison studies because of how rigid the gender/sex binary is in prison	(Richie, 2005; Vitulli, 2013)
26.	Violence so connected to hegemonic masculinity that a real man by definition is someone who knows how to use violence and be willing to do so real prison guards use violence too, so prison guard is a gendered job	(Britton, 2003)
27.	Women criminals more aberrant than men, and so are women COs because they don’t correspond with their gender ideal	(Britton, 2003)
28.	Women’s prisons synonymous with sexual innuendos, as are women workers in men’s prisons	(Britton, 2003)
29.	All social ills are magnified in prison	(Britton,

		2003)
30.	Militarization of prison	(Britton, 2003)
31.	Multiple consciousness=counterpositions of intimacy of close contact/communication and institutional goals of incarceration and dehumanization: COs	(Britton, 2003)
32.	Preference of men and women to work in men's prisons because it fits	(Britton, 2003)
33.	Cat fights for women vs. real fights for men	(Britton, 2003)
34.	Prisons conflate gender and sexuality: homosexual males not viewed as men and homosexual females viewed as trivial	(Britton, 2003)
35.	Wage gap in prison like everywhere else	(Britton, 2003)
36.	Double bind for women working in prisons: too violent or too caring	(Britton, 2003)
37.	Feminism as liberation for all	(hooks, 2000)

Appendix D
Data Log Setup

Source (number of first person account)	Content	Code(s)	Analytic Memo

Appendix E
Codes and Themes

	Codes that Emerged from Holistic Analysis (Analysis Step 1)	Themes that Emerged from Focused Analysis (Analysis Step 2)
1.	Absence of discourse of desire in traditional research	Dualistic Sexualization
2.	Cross gendered dynamics unclear	Dualistic Sexualization
3.	Abuse of male prisoners normalized	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
4.	Abuse of power	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
5.	Violence	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
6.	Sexual abuse	Sexual Abuse of Power
7.	Addiction	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
8.	Discounting sexuality of prisoners	Dualistic Sexualization
9.	Asserting power just to show dominance	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
10.	Caring women suspect by uncaring men not suspect	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
11.	Connection over common ethnicity with other women	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
12.	Correctional officers insecure about education	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
13.	Criminalizing care	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
14.	Women working in prisons suspect	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
15.	CTPER	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
16.	Sociopathology	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime

17.	Iatrogenic gender violence	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
18.	Iatrogenic culture	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
19.	Dehumanizing mechanisms of control	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
20.	Dehumanization	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
21.	Discomfort working with female prisoners	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
22.	<i>Doing gender</i>	Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>
23.	<i>Doing gender</i> for survival	Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>
24.	Making culture an amusement	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
25.	Emotional rape	Sexual Abuse of Power
26.	Hyper masculinity	Dualistic Sexualization
27.	Feeding into sexualization	Dualistic Sexualization
28.	Unclear relations in re-entry program	
29.	Sexless body is ideal	Dualistic Sexualization
30.	Prison regulates sexuality	Dualistic Sexualization
31.	Effortless institutionalization	Dualistic Sexualization
32.	Male privilege	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
33.	Heteropresumptivity	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
34.	Fathers not valued as parents once imprisoned	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
35.	Female correctional officers do female gender in male role	Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>
36.	Feminism as liberation for all	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
37.	Gender regime	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
38.	White privilege	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
39.	Gendered abuse of power	Sexual Abuse of Power
40.	Gendered community of practice	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
41.	Gendered hope	Gendered

		Resistance/Gendered Hope
42.	Gendered humiliation	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
43.	Gendered intimidation	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
44.	Gendered inequality of class offerings	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
45.	Gendered perceptions of conflict	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
46.	Gendered resistance	Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope
47.	Need to be explicitly abolitionist	Gendered Resistance/Gendered Hope
48.	Gendering inanimate objects	Dualistic Sexualization
49.	Homophobia	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
50.	Internalized gender violence	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
51.	Intersectionality	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
52.	Women presumed to lack power	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
53.	Different femininities depend on race/class	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
54.	Male gaze	Dualistic Sexualization
55.	Males loyal to institution of masculinity	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
56.	Males lacking professionalism downplayed	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
57.	Male prisoners as animals	Dualistic Sexualization
58.	Women fragmenting with other women	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
59.	Feeding into misogyny for survival	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
60.	Feeding into paternalism for survival	Dualistic Paternalism
61.	Feeding into gender roles for survival	Necessity of <i>Doing Gender</i>
62.	Militarized institution	Iatrogenic Gender

		Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
63.	Misaligned personal and professional values	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
64.	Misalignment when women question male authority	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
65.	Misogyny normalized	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
66.	Assumption of power due to gender	Duality of Intersecting Privileges And Oppressions
67.	Downplaying emotional violation	Sexual Abuse of Power
68.	Necessary risk of abolitionist pedagogy	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
69.	Need for more traffic inside/outside	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
70.	Need for more abolitionist resources	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
71.	Need to be explicitly abolitionist	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
72.	Need to talk about abolition earlier	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
73.	Need to subvert sexuality	Dualistic Sexualization
74.	Seeking paternalistic approval	Dualistic Paternalism
75.	No plan for emotions	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
76.	Paternalism	Dualistic Paternalism
77.	Power of abolitionist pedagogy	Pedagogy
78.	Prison as male space	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
79.	Double bind for women in prison	Dualistic Sexualization
80.	Public education policy need to take a stance on mass imprisonment	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
81.	Sexualization of the female body	Dualistic Sexualization
82.	Stroking egos for survival	Dualistic Paternalism
83.	Students capable of thinking well beyond traditional pedagogy	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
84.	Using the classroom to move past the gender regime	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
85.	Traditional pedagogy reproduces gender	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures
86.	Using code privilege	Duality of Intersecting

		Privileges and Oppressions
87.	Women considered over emotional	Iatrogenic Gender Violence/Creating a Gender Regime
88.	Women less suspect depending on facility	Duality of Intersecting Privileges and Oppressions
89.	Impact of children and families	Dualistic Pedagogical Cultures

Bibliography

- A Brief History of the Drug War. (2015). Retrieved from
<http://www.drugpolicy.org/new-solutions-drug-policy/brief-history-drug-war>
- A Call for Excellence in Early Childhood Education. (n.d.). Retrieved from
<http://www.naeyc.org/policy/excellence>
- Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations.
Gender & Society, 4(2), 139-158. doi:
<https://doi.org/10.1177/089124390004002002>
- Acker, J. (1992). From sex roles to gendered institutions. *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews, 565-569*. Retrieved from
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2075528>
- ACLU. (2011). Smart reform is possible: States reducing incarceration rates and costs while protecting communities (Policy brief). Retrieved from
<https://www.aclu.org/files/assets/smartreformispossible.pdf>
- Alexander, M. (2010). *The new Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York: New Press.
- American Council for Drug Education. (1999). *A physician's guide to youth substance abuse*. Retrieved from www.acde.org/health/drguide.htm
- Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35*(4), 373-395. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241605280449>
- Andrews, D. A., Zinger, I., Hoge, R. D., Bonta, J., Gendreau, P., & Cullen, F. T. (1990). Does correctional treatment work? A clinically and psychologically

relevant meta-analysis. *Criminology*, 28(3), 369-404. doi: 10.1111/j.1745-9125.1990.tb01330.x

Anyon, J. (1980). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. *Journal of Education*, 162 (1), 67-92. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42741976>

Aos, S., Miller, M., & Drake, E. (2006). Evidence-based public policy options to reduce future prison construction, criminal justice costs, and crime rates. *Fed. Sent. R.*, 19, 275.

Appell, A. R., & Davis, A. D. (2011). Access to justice: Mass incarceration and masculinity through a black feminist lens. *Washington University Journal of Law and Policy*, 37(1).

Atkinson, P. (1997) Narrative turn or blind alley? *Qualitative Health Research*, 7, 325-344. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/204973239700700302>

Bamberg, M., & Andrews, M. (2004). *Considering counter-narratives: Narrating, resisting, making sense*. John Benjamins Publishing.

Bandelet, A. (1999). *The prisoner's wife: A memoir*. New York: Scribner.

Barnes, J. C., Beaver, K. M., & Boutwell, B. B. (2011). Examining the genetic underpinnings to Moffitt's developmental taxonomy: A behavioral genetic analysis. *Criminology*, 49(4), 923-954. doi: 10.1111/j.1745.9125.2011.000243.x

Barone, T. (2001). Pragmatizing the imaginary: A response to a fictionalized case study of teaching. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(4), 734-742. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17763/haer.71.4.254711411187p4m8>

- Barraclough, L. (2010). Reflections on teaching prison abolition. *Radical Teacher*, 88(1), 42-52. doi: 10.1353/rdt.2010.0002
- Baszile, D. T. (2005). Pedagogy born of struggle: From the notebook of a black professor. *What We Still Don't Know about Teaching Race: How to Talk about it in the Classroom*, 75.
- Behan, C. (2014). Learning to escape: Prison education, rehabilitation and the potential for transformation. *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*, 1(1), 20-31. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15845/jper.v1i1.594>
- Biddle, B. J., & Berliner, D. C. (2002). What research says about unequal funding for schools in America. *In Pursuit of Better Schools: What Research Says*.
- Blackburn, M. (2007). Talking together for change: Examining positioning between teachers and queer youth. In J. Vadeboncoeur & L. Patel-Stevens (Eds.), *Re/constructing the adolescent: Sign, symbol, body*. NY: Peter Lang.
- Bochner, A. P. (2000). Criteria against ourselves. *Qualitative Inquiry* 6(2), 266-272. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040000600209>
- Boler, M. (2005). All speech is not free: The ethics of “affirmative action pedagogy.” In M. Boler (Ed.), *Democratic dialogue in education: Troubling speech, disturbing silence* (pp. 3-13). NY: Peter Lang.
- Bonhoeffer, D. (1971). *Letters and papers from prison*. Edited by Eberhard Bethge. Macmillan C.
- Bordt, R. L., & Carceral, K. C. (2012). A teaching collaboration with a prison writer. *Radical Teacher*, (94), 24-33.

- Bradshaw, W., & Roseborough, D. (2005). Restorative justice dialogue: The impact of mediation and conferencing on juvenile recidivism. *Fed. Probation*, 69, 15.
- Britton, D. M. (2000). The epistemology of the gendered organization. *Gender & Society*, 14(3), 418-434. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124300014003004>
- Britton, D. (2003). *At work in the iron cage: The prison as gendered organization*. NY: New York University Press.
- Britton, D. M., & Logan, L. (2008). Gendered organizations: Progress and prospects. *Sociology Compass*, 2(1), 107-121. doi: 10.1111/j.1751-9020.2007.00071.x
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brookfield, S. (1985). The continuing educator and self-directed learning in the community. In Brookfield (Ed.), *New Directions for Continuing Education*, (25), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brooks-Gunn, J., & Markman, L. (2005). The contribution of parenting to ethnic and racial gaps in school readiness. *The Future of Children*, 15(1), 139-168.
Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1602666>
- Brown, L. (2005). In the bad or good of girlhood: Social class, schooling, and white femininities. In M. Fine & L. Weis, (Eds.), *Beyond silenced voices: Class, race, and gender in United States schools*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Butler, J. (1990). Gender trouble, feminist theory, and psychoanalytic discourse. *Feminism/postmodernism*, 324-340.

- Carey, G. (1994). A view from higher education. In Williford, M. (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 73-85). Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Case, P., & Fassenfest, D. (2004). Expectations for opportunities following prison education: A discussion of race and gender. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 24-39. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23292123>
- Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as method*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Coffey, O. (1994). A view from corrections. In Williford, M. (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 73-85). Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Coffey, A. (1999). *The ethnographic self: Fieldwork and the representation of identity*. Sage.
- Collier, L. (2014). Incarceration nation. *Monitor on Psychology*, 45(9), 56-56.
- Collins, P. H. (1999). Learning from the outsider within: The sociological significance of Black feminist thought. *Feminist Approaches to Theory and Methodology: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, 155-178. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/800672>
- Connell, R. (1996). Teaching the boys: New research on masculinity, and gender strategies for schools. *Teachers College Record* 98(2): 206-235.
- Connell, R. (2006). Glass ceilings or gendered institutions? Mapping the gender regimes of public sector worksites. *Public Administration Review*, 66(6), 837-849. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00652.x
- Council, C. J. P., & Fabelo, T. (2002). Overview of the InnerChange Freedom Initiative: The faith-based prison program within the Texas Department of

Criminal Justice. Retrieved from http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/Public_Safety_Criminal_Justice/Reports/IFI.pdf

Corr, E., Kraemer, K., Lankford, N., Roberts, N., & Lai, P. (2010). A student roundtable on prison abolition and imprisonment writing. *Radical Teacher*, 88(1), 52-63. doi: 10.1353/rdt.2010.0003

Criminal Justice? New Fast facts about Transgender People, Police, and Incarceration. (n.d.) *Forge*. Retrieved from http://www.avp.org/storage/documents/Training%20and%20TA%20Center/FORGE_Trans_People_Police_Incarceration_Facts.pdf

Critical Resistance. (2015). Retrieved from <http://criticalresistance.org/>

Cullen, F., Jonson, C., & Eck, J. (2013). The accountable prison. In F. Cullen, C. Jonson, & M. Stohr (Eds.), *The American prison: Imagining a different future*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Cullen, F. T., Jonson, C. L., & Stohr, M. K. (Eds.). (2013). *The American prison: Imagining a different future*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Davis, A. Y. (2003). *Are prisons obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press.

Davis, L. M., Bozick, R, Steele, J.L., Saunders, J., & Miles, J. (2013). *Evaluating the effectiveness of correctional education: A meta-analysis of programs that provide education to incarcerated adults*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. New York: The Free Press.

Doloriert, C, & Sambrook, S. (2009). Ethical confessions of the "I" of autoethnography: The student's dilemma," *Qualitative Research in*

Organizations and Management: An international journal, 4(1), 27-45. doi:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17465640910951435>

Dubow, E. F., Boxer, P., & Huesmann, L. R. (2009). Long-term effects of parents' education on children's educational and occupational success: Mediation by family interactions, child aggression, and teenage aspirations. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly (Wayne State University. Press)*, 55(3), 224. doi:
10.1353/mpg.0.0030

Eggleston, C., & Gehring, T. (2000). Democracy in prison and prison education. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 51(3), 306-10. Retrieved from
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41971033>

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung*, 273-290. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23032294>

Ellis, C. & Rawicki, J. (2013). Collaborative witnessing of survival during the holocaust: An exemplar of relational autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 19(5), 366-380. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800413479562>

Ending mass incarceration: Social interventions that work. (n.d.). Retrieved from
[http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/publications/inc_Ending
Mass Incarceration.pdf](http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/publications/inc_Ending_Mass_Incarceration.pdf)

Esperian, J. (2010). The effect of prison education programs on recidivism. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 61(4), 316-334. Retrieved from
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23282764>

Fact sheet: Education as crime prevention. (2011). Retrieved from

<http://www.wesleyan.edu/cpe/documents/CPEFactSheet2011.pdf>

FAMM. (2011). *Alternatives to incarceration in a nutshell*. Retrieved from <http://famm.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/FS-Alternatives-in-a-Nutshell-7.8.pdf>

Federal crack cocaine sentencing. (2010). Retrieved from http://sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/dp_CrackBriefingSheet.pdf

Fine, M. (2002). Sexuality, schooling, and adolescent females: The missing discourse of desire. *Harvard Educational Review*, 58(1), 29-53. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17763/haer.58.1.u0468k1v2n2n8242>

Flores, G., Bauchner, H., Feinstein, A. R., & Nguyen, U. S. (1999). The impact of ethnicity, family income, and parental education on children's health and use of health services. *American Journal of Public Health*, 89(7), 1066-1071. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.89.7.1066

Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (trans. A. Sheridan), New York: Vintage Books.

Fowler, D. (2011). School discipline feeds the “pipeline to prison.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, 93(2), 14-19.

Fowles, R. (2012). Corrections education in Utah: Measuring return on investment. Retrieved from <http://www.schools.utah.gov/adulted/DOCS/Corrections/TheBenefitsofCorrectionsEducation.aspx>

Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 20th anniversary ed. New York: Continuum.

- Friedman, A. (2012). *Desperado's wife: A memoir*. Amy Friedman.
- Geertz, C. (1973) *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gehring, T., & Eggleston, C. (2007). *Teaching within prison walls: A history*. San Bernardino: California State University.
- Geller, A., Garfinkel, I., & Western, B. (2011). Paternal incarceration and support for children in fragile families. *Demography*, 48(1), 25-47. doi: 10.1007/s13524-010-0009-9
- George, E. (2004). *Write away: One novelist's approach to fiction and the writing life*. Hodder & Stoughton.
- Gherardi, S. (1994). The gender we think, the gender we do in our everyday organizational lives. *Human Relations*, 47(6), 591-610. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679404700602>
- Glaze, L., & Kaeble, D. (2014). *Correctional populations in the United States, 2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=5177>
- Gottschalk, M. (2006). *The prison and the gallows: The politics of mass incarceration in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Greene, M. (1988). *The dialectic of freedom*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Greenfield, P. M. (2009). Linking social change and developmental change: Shifting pathways of human development. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(2), 401. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0014726>
- Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *ECTJ*, 29(2), 75-91. doi: 10.1007/BF02766777

- Hagan, J., & Foster, H. (2012). Intergenerational educational effects of mass imprisonment in America. *Sociology of Education*, 85(3), 259-286. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040711431587>
- Haney, C. (2003). The psychological impact of incarceration: Implications for post-prison adjustment. *Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities*, 33-66.
- Harding, S. (1992). Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is "strong objectivity?" *Centennial Review*, 437-470. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23739232>
- Harding, S. (1995). "Strong objectivity": A response to the new objectivity question. *Synthese*, 104(3), 331-349. doi: 10.1007/BF1064504
- Harkins, G., & Meiners, E. (2014). *Beyond crisis: College in prison through the abolition undercommons*. Retrieved from <http://lateral.culturalstudiesassociation.org/issue3/theory/harkins-meiners>
- Harper, H. (2013). *Letters to an incarcerated brother: Encouragement, hope, and healing for inmates and their loved ones*. Penguin.
- Harris, A. P. (2011). Heteropatriarchy kills: Challenging gender violence in a prison nation. *Wash.UJL & Pol'y*, 37, 13.
- Hartnett, S. J. (2011). *Challenging the prison industrial complex: Activism, arts, and educational alternatives*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Hawkins, S. (2010). *Education vs. incarceration*. Retrieved from <http://prospect.org/article/education-vs-incarceration>

- Herrmann, A. F. (2012). "Criteria against ourselves?": Embracing the opportunities of qualitative inquiry. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 5, 135-152.
- Hill, M. L. (2013). A world without prisons: Teaching confinement literature and the promise of prison abolition. *English Journal*, 102(4), 19.
- Hodges, N. (2015a). The American dental dream. *Health Communication*, 30, 943-950. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2014.914621>
- Hodges, N. (2015b). The chemical life. *Health Communication*, 30, 627-634. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2013.861288>
- Holsinger, K. (2013). The feminist prison. In F. Cullen, C. Jonson, & M. Stohr (Eds.), *The American prison: Imagining a different future*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.
- Hollander, J. A. (2002). Resisting vulnerability: The social reconstruction of gender in interaction. *Social Problems*, 49(4), 474-496. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/sp.2002.49.4.474>
- hooks, B. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. Pluto Press.
- Huggins, M. K., & Glebbeek, M. L. (2003). Women studying violent male institutions: Cross-gendered dynamics in police research on secrecy and danger. *Theoretical Criminology*, 7(3), 363-387. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/13624806030073006>
- Humphreys, M. (2005). Getting personal: Reflexivity and autoethnographic vignettes. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11, 840-860. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800404269425>
- Illich, I. (1971). *Deschooling society* (1st ed.). New York: Harper & Row.

- Incarcerated women. (2012). *Sentencing Project*. Retrieved from <http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publ>.
- Jackson, J. L., & Meiners, E. R. (2010). Feeling like a failure: Teaching/Learning abolition through the good the bad and the innocent. *Radical Teacher*, 88(1), 20-30. doi: 10.1353/rdt.2010.0008
- Johnson, A. (2008). *The forest and the trees: Sociology as life, practice, and promise*, Revised & Expanded Edition. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Pr.
- Johnson, R., Dobrzanska, A., & Palla, S. (2005). The American prison in historical perspective: Race, gender, and adjustment. *Prisons: Today and Tomorrow*, 26-51.
- Jones, R. & d'Errico, P. (1994). The paradox of higher education in prisons. In Williford, M. (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 1-16). Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Jonson, C., Eck, J., & Cullen, F. (2013). The small prison. In F. Cullen, C. Jonson, & M. Stohr (Eds.), *The American prison: Imagining a different future*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.
- Karpowitz, D., Kenner, M., & Initiative, B. P. (1995). Education as crime prevention: The case for reinstating Pell Grant eligibility for the incarcerated. *Evaluation*, 1-8.
- Kilgore, J. (2011). Bringing Freire behind the walls: The perils and pluses of critical pedagogy in prison education. *Radical Teacher*, (90), 57-66.
- Klein, S., Tolbert, M., Bugarin, R., Cataldi, E. F., & Tauschek, G. (2004). Correctional

education: Assessing the status of prison programs and information needs.
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, US Department of Education.

Knowles, M. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: Andragogy versus pedagogy*. Rev. and updated ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Cambridge Adult Education.

Knowles, M. and Associates (1984). *Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kohlberg, L., & Mayer, R. (1972). Development as the aim of education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 42, 449-496. doi:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.17763/haer.42.4.kj6q8743rj00j60>

Kozol, J. (2012). *Savage inequalities: Children in America's schools*. New York: Broadway Paperbacks.

Kronsell, A. (2005). Gendered practices in institutions of hegemonic masculinity: Reflections from feminist standpoint theory. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 7(2), 280-298. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14616740500065170>

Lapadat, J. C. (2009). Writing our way into shared understanding: Collaborative autobiographical writing in the qualitative methods class. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15, 955-979. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800409334185>

Larson, D. (2011). Abolition from within: Enabling the citizen convict. *Radical Teacher*, (91), 4-15.

Lawner, L. (1973). Letters from Prison, Antonio Gramsci. *R: E*.

- Lawston, J. M., & Meiners, E. R. (2014). Ending our expertise: Feminists, scholarship, and prison abolition. *Feminist Formations*, 26(2), 1-25. doi: 10.1353/ff.2014.0012
- Lempert, L., Bergeron, S., & Linker, M. (2005). Negotiating the politics of space: Teaching women's studies in a women's prison. *NWSA Journal*, 17(2), 199-207.
- Lengyel, T. E. (2006). Spreading the pain: The social cost of incarcerating parents. Unpublished manuscript. September. *Alliance for Children and Families, Department of Research and Evaluation Services*, Milwaukee, WI. Retrieved from <http://www.convictcriminology.org/pdf/SpreadingthePain.pdf>.
- Licence, J. (1994). An experiment in liberal studies. In Williford, M. (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 73-85). Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & Davis, J. H. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (Vol. 75). Sage.
- Lochner, L. (2010). Education policy and crime. In *controlling crime: Strategies and tradeoffs* (pp. 465-515). University of Chicago Press.
- Lochner, L., & Moretti, E. (2001). The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self-reports (No. w8605). *National Bureau of Economic Research*.
- Lockard, J., & Rankins-Robertson, S. (2011). The right to education, prison university

partnerships, and online writing pedagogy in the US. *Critical Survey*, 23(3), 23-39.

Lupton, R. (1993). *Return flight: Community development through reneighboring our cities*. Atlanta: FCS Urban Ministries.

Lyons, C. J., & Pettit, B. (2011). Compounded disadvantage: Race, incarceration, and wage growth. *Social Problems*, 58(2), 257-280. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/sp.2011.58.2.257>

Manger, T., Eikeland, O. J., Diseth, Å., Hetland, H., & Asbjørnsen, A. (2010). Prison inmates' educational motives: Are they pushed or pulled?. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 54(6), 535-547. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2010.522844>

Martin, J. R. (1994). The radical future of gender enrichment. In J. R. Martin, *Changing the educational landscape: Philosophy, women, and curriculum*. NY: Routledge.

Martinson, R. (1974). What works? Questions and answers about prison reform. *The Public Interest*, 35(2), 22-54. Martinson, R. (1978). New findings, new views: A note of caution regarding sentencing reform. *Hofstra L. Rev.*, 7, 243.

McCarty, H. (2006). Educating felons: Reflections on higher education in prison. *Radical History Review*, (96), 87-94. doi: 10.1215/01636545-2006-005

McKinney, D. & Cotronea, M. (2011). Self-determination theory in correctional programs. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 62(3), 175-193. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23282711>

- Meiners, E. (2009). Resisting civil death: Organizing for access to education in our prison nation. *DePaul Journal for Social Justice*, 3(1), 79-95.
- Meiners, E. (2011). Ending the school-to-prison pipeline/Building abolition futures. *Urban Review*, 43(4), 547-565. doi: 10.1007/s11256-011-0187-9
- Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. *New directions for adult and continuing education*, 1997(74), 5-12. doi: 10.1002/ace.7401
- Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Mitchell, O., Wilson, D. B., Eggers, A., & MacKenzie, D. L. (2012). Assessing the effectiveness of drug courts on recidivism: A meta-analytic review of traditional and non-traditional drug courts. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40(1), 60-71.
- Moore, M. (1999). Return on investment for correctional education in Florida. Retrieved from <http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/taxwatch/>
- Nally, J., Lockwood, S., Knutson, K., & Ho, T. (2012). An evaluation of the effect of correctional education programs on post-release recidivism and employment: An empirical study in Indiana. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 63(1), 69-89.
- Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education*. New York and London: Teacher's College Press.
- Olinger, A., Bishop, H., Cabrales, J., Ginsburg, R., Mapp, J., Mayorga, O., Nunez, E., Rosas, O., Slater, A., Sorenson, L., Sosnowski, J., & Torres, A. (2012).

- Prisoners teaching ESL: A learning community among" language partners."
Teaching English in the Two-Year College, 40(1), 68-83.
- Palmer, S. (2012). Postsecondary correctional education. *Adult Learning*, 23(4), 163-169. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1045159512457918>
- Pettit, B., & Western, B. (2004). Mass imprisonment and the life course: Race and class inequality in US incarceration. *American Sociological Review*, 69(2), 151-169. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900201>
- Pfaff, J. F. (2013). The micro and macro causes of prison growth. *Georgia State University Law Review*, 28(4), 9.
- Pratt, T. C., Gau, J. M., & Franklin, T. W. (2010). *Key ideas in criminology and criminal justice*. Sage.
- Prison Research Education Action Project. (2005). *Instead of prisons: A handbook for abolitionists*. Critical Resistance.
- Purcell-Gates, V. (2002). "As soon as she opened her mouth!" Issues of language, literacy, and power. In L. Delpit & J. K. Dowdy (Eds.), *The skin that we speak: Thoughts on language and culture in the classroom*. NY: New Press.
- Racial Disparity. *Sentencing Project*. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.sentencingproject.org/template/page.cfm?id=122>
- Recidivism. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.nij.gov/topics/corrections/recidivism/Pages/welcome.aspx>
- Research findings. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.doc.state.mn.us/PAGES/>
- Rhodes, R. (2000). *Why they kill: The discoveries of a maverick criminologist*. Random House LLC.

- Richards-Allerton, J. (1994). Technology and progress: A questionable experience. In Williford, M. (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 73-85). Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Richie, B. (2005). Queering antiprison work. *Global lockdown: Race, gender, and the prison-industrial complex*, 73-85.
- Rodríguez, D. (2010). The disorientation of the teaching act: Abolition as pedagogical position. *Radical Teacher*, 88(1), 7-19. doi: 10.1353/rdt.2010.0006
- Roeder, O. K., Eisen, L. B., Bowling, J., Stiglitz, J. E., & Chettiar, I. M. (2015). *What caused the crime decline?* (Available at SSRN 2566965). Retrieved from http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Papers.cfm?abstract_id=2566965
- Rogers, L. (2008). Finding our way from within: Critical pedagogy in a prison writing class. *Open Words: Access and English Studies*, 2, 22-48.
- Rothstein, R. (2013). Why our schools are segregated. *Educational Leadership*, 70(8), 50-55.
- Rotman, E. (1990). *Beyond punishment: A new view on the rehabilitation of criminal offenders*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Sadeh, N., & McNiel, D. E. (2015). Posttraumatic stress disorder increases risk of criminal recidivism among justice-involved persons with mental disorders. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 42(6), 573-586. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854814556880>
- Schenwar, M. (2014). *Locked down, locked out: Why prison doesn't work and how we can do better*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Schiro, M. S. (2012). *Curriculum theory: Conflicting visions and enduring concerns*.

Sage.

- Sconiers, Z. D., & Rosiek, J. L. (2000). Historical perspective as an important element of teachers' knowledge: A sonata-form case study of equity issues in a chemistry classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*, 70(3), 370-405. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17763/haer.70.3.h6608mh361t7u41w>
- Scott, R. (2014). Using critical pedagogy to connect prison education and prison abolitionism. *St. Louis U. Pub. L. Rev.*, 33, 401-519.
- Schweinhart, L. J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W. S., Belfield, C. R., & Nores, M. (2005). Lifetime effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool study through age 40. Retrieved from http://www.highscope.org/file/Research/PerryProject/specialsummary_rev2011_02_2.pdf
- Siennick, S. E., Stewart, E. A., & Staff, J. (2014). Explaining the association between incarceration and divorce. *Criminology*, 52(3), 371-398. doi: 10.1111/1745-9125.12040
- Silva, W. (1994). A brief history of prison higher education in the United States. In Williford, M. (Ed.), *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* (pp. 1-16). Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Smith-Bowen, E. (1964). *Return to laughter*. Double Day: New York.
- Spelman, W. (2009). Crime, cash, and limited options: Explaining the prison boom*. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 8(1), 29-77. doi: 10.1111/j.1745-9133.2009.00546.x

Staff, T. C. (2011). Teal center fact sheet no. 11: Adult learning theories. Retrieved from <http://www.commission.wcc.edu/Data/Sites/1/commissionFiles/abe/training/abe-ntt/mod-6-articles/ntt---module-6---fs-11-teal-center-adult-learning-theoryfact-sheet-air-logo-rev12-06-11.pdf>.

Steurer, S. J., Linton, J., Nally, J., & Lockwood, S. (2010). The top-nine reasons to increase correctional education programs. *Corrections Today*, 72(4), 40-43.

Retrieved

from <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxyum.researchport.umd.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=53304671&site=ehost-live>.

Sudbury, J. (2002). Celling black bodies: Black women in the global prison industrial complex. *Feminist Review*, 70(1), 57-74. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.fr.9400006

The Sentencing Project. (n.d.) *Trends in U. S. corrections*. Retrieved from

http://sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/inc_Trends_in_Corrections_Fact_sheet.pdf

Three Strikes Basics. (2015). Retrieved from

<https://www.law.stanford.edu/organizations/programs-and-centers/stanford-three-strikes-project/three-strikes-basics>

Torre, M. E., & Fine, M. (2005). Bar none: Extending affirmative action to higher education in prison. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(3), 569-594. doi:

10.1111/j.1540-4560.2005.00421.x

Travis, J., McBride E.C., & Solomon, A. L. (2005). Families left behind: The hidden costs of incarceration and reentry. Retrieved from

<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/310882-Families-Left-Behind.PDF>

Tulman, J. B., & Weck, D. M. (2009). Shutting off the school-to-prison pipeline for status offenders with education-related disabilities. *NYL Sch. L. Rev.*, *54*, 875.

Ubah, C. (2004) Abolition of Pell grants for higher education of prisoners. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, *39*(2), 73-85. doi:

http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J076v39n02_05

USA QuickFacts. *US Census Bureau*. (2015). Retrieved from

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>

Valencia, R. R. (1997). Conceptualizing the notion of deficit thinking. In R. Valencia (Ed.), *The evolution of deficit thinking*. London: Falmer.

Vitulli, E. W. (2013). Queering the carceral: Intersecting queer/trans studies and critical prison studies. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *19*(1), 111-123. doi: 10.1215/10642684-1729563

Wagner, P., & Sakala, L. (2014). Hyper incarceration: The whole pie. Retrieved from <http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie.html>

Walmsley, R. (2013). *World prison population list* (tenth edition). Retrieved from http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wppl_10.pdf

Ward, S. A. (2009). Career and technical education in United States prisons: What have we learned? *Journal of Correctional Education*, *60*(3), 191-200.

Retrieved from <http://jstor.org/stable/23282743>

- Warner, K. (2007). Against the narrowing of perspectives: How do we see learning, prisons and prisoners? *Journal of Correctional Education*, 170-183. Retrieved from <http://jstor.org/stable/23282735>
- Weiner, D. A., Lutz, B. F., & Ludwig, J. (2009). *The effects of school desegregation on crime* (No. w15380). National Bureau of Economic Research. doi: 10.3386/w15380
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 1(2), 125-151. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243287001002002>
- Western, B. (2007). Mass imprisonment and economic inequality. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 74(2), 509-532. Retrieved from <http://jstor.org/stable/40971942>
- Western, B., & Pettit, B. (2010). Incarceration & social inequality. *Daedalus*, 139(3), 8-19. doi: 10.1162/DAED_a_00019
- What are Mandatory Minimums? (2014). Retrieved from <http://famm.org/mandatory-minimums/>
- Wilde, O. (2000). *De profundis*. New York: The Modern Library.
- Williford, M. (1994). *Higher education in prison: A contradiction in terms?* Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Wilson, C. (1994). Women offenders: A population overlooked. In Williford, M. (Ed.), *Higher Education in Prison: A Contradiction in Terms?* (pp. 73-85). Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.

Wright, R. (2004). Care as the “heart” of prison teaching. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55(3), 191-209. Retrieved from

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23292135>

Wright, R. (2014). Identities, education and reentry: Performative spaces and enclosures. *Journal of Prison Education and Reentry*, 1(1), 32-41. Retrieved from <https://jper.uib.no/jper/article/view/609/643>