Interpreting Incarceration: How Historical Prison Museums are Addressing the Social Aspects of Criminal Justice

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

University of Washington

2015

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Program authorized to offer degree:

Museology

University of Washington

Abstract

Interpreting Incarceration: How Historical Prison Museums are Addressing the Social Aspects of Criminal Justice

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We are living through an era entirely unprecedented in the field of criminal justice. Never before has an industrialized nation incarcerated its citizens to an extent matching that of the United States in the last three decades. Yet while many museum professionals champion the potential for museums to impact the social wellbeing of their visitors and of larger society, little is said in the literature about the practical implementation of this goal. The purpose of this study was to help bridge this gap between theory and practice, by describing the ways in which historical prison museums interpret the social aspects of incarceration. Data were collected through group interviews with staff, and content analysis of audio tours, at three historical prison museums that are recognized for their interpretation of social content. Study results suggest that interpretation of social issues requires both strong leadership and high-quality front-line staff; that the individuals who perform this work largely perceive the benefits of doing so as outweighing the risks; and that mission-enabling activities are an essential companion to mission-fulfilling ones.

Acknowledgements

I owe notes of personal gratitude to countless individuals and parties who have helped me to make this research a reality over the past year. I cannot possibly thank everyone who deserves it—but this page is, I hope, at least a good first attempt at doing so.

I am immensely thankful to the members of my thesis committee: Kris Morrissey from University of Washington Museology, Mimi Kahn from the University of Washington Department of Anthropology, and especially my chair, Jessica J. Luke from University of Washington Museology. Their expertise, patience, and guidance were invaluable, and I cannot thank them enough for both challenging and supporting me throughout this process.

I would also like to thank the fantastic museum professionals who participated in interviews for this research. I was amazed and humbled by your hospitality, earnestness, and enthusiasm. As an emerging museum professional, it has been especially inspiring to me to learn about all of the thoughtful, innovative work that is being done in our field to address issues of social importance. Additional thanks go out to all of the museum staff and volunteers who helped to me to have a great visitor experience during all of my research trips.

The most heartfelt thanks, of course, go to all of the friends and family who celebrated my victories and coached me through challenges—not just during the thesis process, but for the past two years of graduate school. I couldn't have done it without all of my loved ones behind me. A very special thanks goes out to my parents, and to my Weasel (you know who you are).

I would be remiss not to give a shout-out to all of the hard-working baristas in the Greater Seattle area, whose efforts fueled this research to a greater extent than they may ever be aware.

And last, but certainly not least: this research would not have been possible without travel funding from the University of Washington Museology.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Never before has an industrialized nation incarcerated its citizens to an extent matching that of the United States in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The U.S. is currently home to less than 5 percent of the world's population, but over 23 percent of all prisoners (Hartney, 2006). At the same time that our country is sentencing vast swaths of our population, however, research studies point toward the negative social consequences of doing so (Chomsky, 2003; Clear, 2007; Davis, 2003; Foucault, 1977; Johnson, 2014; Klein, 2014; Western, 2006). The statistics on American incarceration belie a system which is not only rooted in, but perpetuates, discrimination against those among us who are economically disadvantaged, poorly educated, suffering from addiction or mental illness, or are racial/ethnic minorities (Alexander, 2003; Bright, 2003; Chomsky, 2003; Currie, 1998; Davis, 2003; Smith, 2003; Street, 2003; Western, 2006). Incarcerated individuals are subjected to physical violence (Johnson, 2014; Nellis, 2012), psychological torment (DePoy, 2012), and a dearth of social services such as addiction counseling and educational programming (Alexander, 2003; Christian, 2009; Wisely, 2003). The consequences of incarceration reverberate well beyond the prison walls into entire families, neighborhoods, and communities (Western, 2006).

Many museological scholars champion the potential for museums to tackle problematic issues and urge museums to work toward a greater social good (Anderson, 2012; Nightingale & Sandell, 2012; Schwarzer, 2011). In the 2006 special volume of *Museums & Social Issues* dedicated to the topic of incarceration, Marjorie Schwarzer describes the growing impact of mass incarceration on American society, and asks, "Can museums help to enlighten the public and serve as a call to action for prison reform, compassion and debate about justice" (p. 11)? Several

authors in that volume assert that historical prison museums –museums located on the grounds of formerly operational prisons–provide a unique, immersive visitor experience and present opportunities for visitors to draw connections between the social implications of past and present events (Kelley, 2011; Schwarzer, 2011; Yun Lee, 2011).

However, while museum professionals have hypothesized about the potential for historical prison museums to interpret the social aspects of incarceration, empirical research into this topic is extremely limited. Data regarding institutional perceptions around this topic–particularly the realities of how and why these museums interpret social issues–are still lacking. There is little information available regarding the interpretive techniques that historical prison museums utilize, the internal decision-making processes around interpretation, the perceived risks and benefits of this work on an institutional level, or museum staffs' reflections on such work before and after it has been completed.

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which historical prison museums interpret the social aspects of incarceration. This research was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the interpretation of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?
2. How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?
3. What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?

The stakeholders that stand to benefit the most from this research are museum professionals –particularly those working in the field of interpretation– who seek to bring greater social

meaning into their institutions. While this study focuses on social issues related to the U.S. criminal justice system, and the ways that these issues are brought to visitors' attention specifically on the premises of formerly operational prisons, the potential impact of the data gathered is much broader. The ultimate aim of this study is both to describe the state of the field, and to provide a set of guidelines that may be useful for a variety of institutions seeking to highlight many different types of social content.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The purpose of this research study was to explore the ways in which historical prison museums interpret the social aspects of incarceration. This topic is situated at the intersection of several interrelated bodies of literature: museums and social good; the social impacts of incarceration; the politics of historical interpretation; dark tourism; and the status of contemporary historical prison museums. The following chapter will position this research within the existing literature, concluding with a description of gaps in the literature which leave room for this study to contribute to current museological knowledge.

Museums and social good

The main theoretical foundation of this study is that museums have the potential to impact the social wellbeing of their visitors, and of larger society. This idea, which began to gain credence in the 1970s and is now frequently cited by museum professionals, is the embodiment of the "new museology," (Macdonald, 2011; Ross, 2004) or, in the words of Gail Anderson (2012), "the reinvented museum" (p. 3). Anderson describes the reinvented museum as one that places its values at the forefront of practice. Further, she delineates multiple institutional values displayed by reinvented museums, including: civic engagement; social responsibility; broad representation; community participation; reflective practice; fostering multiple viewpoints and a culture of inquiry; and remaining relevant, forward-looking , and compassionate. Nightingale and Sandell (2012) portray the concept of the new museology explicitly within a human rights framework, charging museums with the task of addressing social inequalities, in the name of creating more just societies. Stephen E. Weil (2002) describes the progressive museum as one that "through its public service orientation, use[s] its very special competencies in dealing with

objects to contribute positively to the quality of individual human lives and to enhance the wellbeing of human communities" (p. 29). In contrast, Gurian (2011), Kreps (2011), Low (2012), Ross (2004), Sandell (2012), and Weil (2002) describe traditional museums as risk-averse institutions, typically reflecting the opinions and values of the social elite, and focused not on serving the public or spurring change, but on maintaining social and political stability through an almost exclusive focus on the preservation, acquisition, and exhibition of objects.

Anderson (2012) describes the shift toward outward-facing, values-driven practice as a necessity for those museums that wish to remain culturally relevant and impactful in the face of changing world events, issues, and trends. While Elaine Gurian (2011) counts "inclusionist museums" as the numerical minority, she optimistically follows this thought with the assertion that these institutions "are more influential than one might think" (p. 148), as ideas that were once relatively radical within the field are eventually emulated by more mainstream museums, creating gradual but recognizable overall change. Low (2012), Cameron (2012), and Weil (2002) describe the shift toward social relevance as a moral responsibility that museums, as public institutions, owe to the communities that they serve. Finally, for Stephen E. Weil (2012), the shift toward the new museology represents a means of demonstrating, for the public, a concept that museum professionals have always felt intuitively: that museums make an important contribution to society.

Incarceration and social issues

For the purposes of this study, a social issue is defined as a condition or set of conditions that influences the wellbeing–physical, emotional, or otherwise–of a considerable number of individuals within a society, is largely beyond an individual's control, and is disputed or considered problematic by some segment of society. This definition is based on the

constructionist theory espoused, for example, by sociologist Scott Harris (2013). Constructionist theory allows for flexibility in the ways that individuals and groups identify social issues: in Harris's (2013) words, "We don't have time to pay close attention to everything that might bother us, whether as individuals or groups. Even the US federal government–with its millions of employees and a budget in the trillions–must select which problem to work on and which to ignore" (p.4). It is this subjectivity and openness to interpretation that makes Harris's definition an appropriate fit for this research: within constructionist philosophy, individual museums have the freedom to identify and address those social issues that are particularly relevant for their given situation. In light of this definition, the contemporary American system of incarceration may be understood either as a social issue unto itself, or in broader terms, as an "umbrella" institution that is comprised of many interrelated, constituent issues.

Sociologists LeMoyne and Davis (2011) note that the discourse on social issues often revolves around social structures and power relations—and in fact, there is substantial evidence in the literature that the contemporary system of American incarceration is both rooted in, and reinforces, systemic inequalities in power and privilege (Bright, 2003; Chomsky, 2003; Currie, 1998; Street, 2003; Virella, 2003; Western, 2006; Wright, 2003). Further, many theorists believe that inequality is not incidental, but integral, to the system of American crime and punishment (Bright, 2003; Chomsky, 2003; Western, 2006). In the words of Bruce Western (2006), "state power flows along the contours of social inequality" (p. 4). Furthermore, the sheer numbers of incarcerated individuals in the U.S. raises the stakes of this already troubling dynamic to arguably tragic proportions.

Racial inequality is one of the most frequently cited social issues related to incarceration (Chomsky, 2003; Currie, 1998; Davis, 2003; Smith, 2003; Street, 2003; Western, 2006). African

American and Hispanic inmates account for about two thirds of American prisoners, and black men, in particular, are eight times as likely to be incarcerated as their white counterparts (Western, 2006). A major factor in the criminalization of minority citizens began with the "war on drugs" policies of Nixon and Reagan administrations, which saw a huge increase in drug convictions during the last few decades of the 20th century (Chomsky, 2003; Western, 2006; Wood, 2003). However, while multiple surveys have pointed to roughly equivalent proportions of drug use between white and black Americans, blacks are, by far, disproportionately arrested and convicted of drug-related offenses (Chomsky, 2003; Western, 2006). After African Americans, Native Americans rank as the second most frequently imprisoned racial group, per capita, while comprising a very small number of the American populace in absolute numbers (Smith, 2003).

Running alongside, and closely linked to, this system of racial bias is a distinct element of economic inequality (Bright, 2003; Street, 2003; Western, 2006). According to Bright (2003), 80% of people accused of crimes cannot afford a defense lawyer and are compelled to accept council from (often) over-burdened, under-incentivized public defenders. Incarcerated men, at the time of their imprisonment, earn significantly less in wages–sometimes as little as half the income–as men who are otherwise demographically similar (Western, 2006). Since racial minorities in America are already statistically likely to earn less money than their white counterparts, this economic disparity also takes on an additional racialized dimension (Currie, 1998; Street, 2003; Western, 2006). The economic situation after reentry into society is also bleak: evidence has shown that incarceration significantly impacts former inmates' prospects for upward mobility after incarceration by reducing both employment opportunities and annual earnings (Western, 2006). Many ex-convicts reenter the workforce with limited job skills and

experience, as well as facing discrimination from mistrustful employers (Street, 2003; Western, 2006).

The poverty that affects incarcerated individuals both prior to and after their sentences is closely correlated with a lack of education (Street, 2003; Western, 2006). For all races, likelihood of incarceration increases in inverse proportion to educational level, with high school dropouts comprising the largest segment of American inmates (Western, 2006). For instance, in 2000, one in three African American high school dropouts was imprisoned, compared to just one in 25 of their college-educated counterparts (Western, 2006). Other factors disproportionately implicated in incarceration are gender: over 90% of prison and jail inmates are men (Western, 2006); age: about two thirds of inmates are between 18 and 35 years old (Western, 2006); and higher-than-average rates of chemical dependency, mental illness, and certain chronic illnesses linked to high-risk lifestyles (Alexander, 2003). A survey conducted by The Sentencing Project found that 47% of juveniles sentenced to life in prison had histories of physical abuse at home, and 77% of girls receiving life sentences as juveniles reported histories of sexual abuse (Nellis, 2012).

Yet another area of social concern is the wellbeing of individuals during the period of their incarceration. For instance, one in 25 women in state prisons, and one in 33 in federal prisons, is pregnant when admitted to prison (Maruschak, 2008); however, most of the children who are born to these women are separated from their mothers immediately, with very little time even for postpartum bonding (Women's Prison Association, 2009). Additionally, women can be shackled during the labor and delivery process in 37 states (Women's Prison Association, 2011). The practice of solitary confinement has long been called into question as inhumane and psychologically damaging to those upon whom it is inflicted (DePoy, 2012), as have lethal

injection and other methods of legal execution (Goodwyn, 2015). Overcrowding is a well-known problem in states such as California, with particularly high rates of incarceration (Sledge, 2014). Perhaps the most troubling dimension of American incarceration, however, is the proliferation of reports suggesting that many inmates are routinely subjected to physical and sexual abuse at the hands of prison staff or other inmates (Davis, 2003; Greenblatt, 2014; Johnson, 2014; Mariner, 2003; Parenti, 2003; Wisely, 2003a).

The tragic social impacts of incarceration reach far beyond the prison walls, impacting not just those imprisoned, but entire families and communities (Browning, Miller, & Spruance, 2003; Street, 2003; Western, 2006). Marriages impacted by one or more partners serving time behind bars are drastically more unstable than others and place women at increased risk of violence at the hands of their partners (Western, 2006). Parental incarceration can profoundly affect children's emotional and behavioral wellbeing, and in 2007, 1.7 million American children–more than 2.3 % of our country's population under the age of 18–had at least one parent in prison (Christian, 2009).

Finally, there is the issue of mass incarceration, a uniquely American phenomenon that has led to a country with only five percent of the world's population being home to nearly 25 percent of the world's prisoners (Holland, 2013). The sheer numbers behind mass incarceration raise the already-high stakes of problematic social issues to arguably tragic proportions. The prison boom leading to the current situation began in 1975, and for the next three decades, the rate of American imprisonment increased steadily every year (Western, 2006), to its current rate of over 2 million individuals altogether (Browning, Miller, & Spruance, 2003; Western, 2006). By the end of the 20th century, this steady increase had resulted in proportions of incarceration unprecedented either at any other time American history, or in any other industrialized nation in

the world (Western, 2006). Even as the rates of American incarceration have steadily increased, crime rates have been decreasing since the 1990s (Simpson, 2014). This discrepancy is difficult to explain, but many theorists attribute the increase in prison populations to the rise in no-tolerance policies on both the federal level (such as the Ronald Reagan-founded war on drugs) and at the state level (e.g. "three strikes" rules requiring mandatory minimum sentences for repeat offenders). Most incarcerated individuals are convicted of violent, property, or drug crimes (Western, 2006), including over 3,000 individuals currently sentenced to life without parole in both state and federal facilities for non-violent crimes (Pilkington, 2013).

The era of mass incarceration has been aided by the shift, beginning in the 1980s, toward private, for-profit prisons and associated industries, which have been accused of privileging a vested economic interest in justice departments that lock up as many of our country's citizens as possible (Davis, 2003; Sellers, 1993; Wood, 2003; Wright, 2003). Additionally, a marked lack of social services for incarcerated populations–e.g. life skills training (Christian, 2009) or adequate health care (Alexander, 2003; Wisely, 2003b)–provide barriers to incarcerated individuals' abilities to address those issues that may have contributed to their incarceration in the first place —a situation which contributes to recidivism, or repeat incarceration (Davis, 2003; Wisely, 2003b).

The literature describes prisoners and former prisoners as among the most marginalized populations in our country (Street, 2003; Western, 2006). While the majority of individuals who serve time behind bars are marginalized in society to begin with due to socioeconomic factors, prison sentences up the ante by creating yet another level of social stigmatization that follows individuals for the rest of their lives (Street, 2003; Western, 2006). Such stigmatization makes it difficult for former inmates to find spouses or secure employment, and creates significant legal

barriers to obtaining welfare benefits or student loans (Street, 2003; Virella, 2003; Western, 2006). Felons, both literally and figuratively disenfranchised, have very little voice in civic society. By and large, incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals are viewed with skepticism and fear by the general populace and particularly, by state officials, employers, and other groups in positions of power (Street, 2003; Virella, 2003; Western, 2006).

Much of American society's attitudes and perceptions around incarceration can be explained in terms of normalization: for many citizens–particularly young, impoverished, poorly educated minority males–incarceration has come to be viewed as an expected part of the life experience (Western, 2006, p. 23). Not only are these segments of the populace more likely to spend time in prison, but large swaths of individuals who have never even served time are often linked with criminality in popular perception, due simply to falling within a certain set of demographics (Davis, 2003). Fortunately, evidence has shown that institutions that actively humanize incarcerated individuals can counter negative societal expectations around these populations (Hirschfield and Piquero, 2010).

While cyclic disproportionalities between crime and disadvantaged populations have been proven to exist, what is troubling, in terms of social wellbeing, is that the burden of breaking these patterns has been pushed onto the populations with the least power to break the cycles. Incarceration often seems more intent on punishing and controlling "troublesome" populations than on rehabilitating them (Chomsky, 2003; Davis, 2003; Foucault, 1979; Western, 2006). Rather than providing social services that help to ease the systemic disadvantages underpinning crime, the push toward mass incarceration exacerbates such disadvantages by creating further scenarios of stigmatization, marginalization, and powerlessness (Street, 2003; Virella, 2003; Western, 2006; Wisely, 2003b).

Interpretation and social meaning

The second major theoretical foundation of this study is that museum interpretation has the power to influence audiences' perception, and even behavior. *Interpretation,* in this sense, refers to the means by which museums familiarize their visitors with the content and materials on display. Much of the early literature on historical interpretation arose within the U.S. National Park Service. In his seminal (1977) guide *Interpreting our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden, writing for the Park Service, outlines the basic principles of interpretation for museums, parks, and historical sites. Owing to the elusiveness of a dictionary definition of interpretation that applies to the natural, cultural, or historical context, Tilden (1977) formulated his own definition: "[Interpretation is a]n educational activity which aims *to reveal meanings and relationships* through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, *rather than simply to communicate factual information*" (p. 8) (emphasis added). Tilden (1977) is careful to differentiate interpretation from information; that is, the significance of interpretation is not that it allows museum professionals to convey cold, hard data to visitors, but that it serves as a mechanism by which museums may help visitors to construct meaning out of their experience with such data. Tilden refers to this process alternately as "bringing [history] to life" (p. 6) and as "the revelation of a larger truth that lies behind any statement of fact" (p. 8). About a decade after Tilden, William J. Lewis (also writing for the National Park Service) describes interpretive staff as an "interface" between a site and its visitors (p. 16). In keeping with the main message of both these definitions, interpretation is defined, for the purposes of this research, as *those materials and activities that museums utilize to help visitors to make sense of their visit.*

In creating meaning through interpretation, the human element is key. Tilden (1977) specifies that effective interpretation brings historical sites to life by portraying these sites not simply as physical premises, but as the staging ground for a human story. Such interpretation prompts

visitors to ask, "'What would *I* have done under similar circumstances? What would have been *my* fate?'" (p. 15). Lewis (1981) adds that interpretation should help visitors to draw connections between the many interconnected elements of that which is being observed. Yun Lee, Lugalia-Hollon, and Silva (2011) assert that "museums can lead the way [to social reform] through exhibits that fundamentally question how our reality is structured, and by highlighting the voices of activists who are working to reclaim the meaning and methods of safety" (p. 48). In summation, interpretation should help visitors to view an historical site not as simplistic and isolated in time and space, but as multi-faceted and connected to some larger human narrative.

The politics of interpretation

The question remains, however: whose voice is used to relay that human narrative? Aside from the "what" and "how-to" questions of interpretation, a more recent mode of discourse focuses on the politics and power structures inherent in interpretive practice. The stakes are high: the literature suggests that even the most well-meaning interpretation inherently involves a power dynamic between interpreter and visitor (Garton-Smith, 2000; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Mesa-Bains, 2012; Wilson, 2008). In fact, Foucault (1984) draws a parallel between museums, prisons, and other "heterotopias" as built environments which both embody and reinforce hegemonic power structures via the practices of classification, observation, and ranking. No museum is value-neutral; put another way, every museum has (either an implicit or an explicit) agenda. Some staff member (or team) must be responsible for selecting which stories the museum will present to visitors, and in which ways (Bright, 2011; Burnham, 1987; Wallace, 1987). This authority, which lies–often unnoticed–behind that which museum visitors knowingly see and experience, is known as the curatorial voice. The curatorial voice can be insidious:

visitors may take interpretive messages for granted, viewing them not as evidence of a subjective and carefully constructed institutional narrative, but as "the way things are," an objective and inviolable reality (Burnham, 1987; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Leon, 1987; Wallace, 1987; Wilson, 2008). Museum visitors, in other words, may mistake their experience with collective memory for personal memory, coming to believe that their recollections are based not on objects and interpretive materials presented within the museum context, but on personal experience.

Again, the stakes are high: the literature shows that collective memory–arguably, the ultimate product of interpretation–can have a serious impact not just on people's perceptions of the world, but on their resulting future behavior (Baumeister & Hastings, 1997; Eber & Neal, 2001; Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997; Sandell, 2012). According to Hooper-Greenhill (2000), the curatorial voice has the power to include or exclude, to champion or discredit, to provide or withhold knowledge that influences the ways that visitors understand the world and relate to others. For example, Hirschfield and Piquero (2010), while not specifically addressing the role of museums, postulate that the success of convicts' societal reentry after incarceration is largely influenced by public opinion, and that further, societal attitudes are largely malleable and depend on levels of familiarity with stigmatized groups. Wilson (2001), addressing prison museums directly, posits that those museums which actively seek to humanize historical inmates may lead to more humane treatment of contemporary inmates in operational prisons. Taking a more anthropological approach, Hooper-Greenhill (2000) and Mesa-Bains (2012) focus on museums' colonialist legacy of presenting non-Western cultures as threatening or primitive "Others," with both parties coming to the conclusion that museums have the ability to humanize and empower–or, conversely, to exoticize and subjugate–vulnerable populations.

Hooper-Greenhill describes the influence that museums hold over the public as "culturally generative" (2000, p. 20): that is, in contrast to relaying a series of facts to a passive audience ("transmission" pedagogy), museums create frameworks by which their visitors produce individualized schemas of social understanding. As Steven Dubin (2011) states it, "Museums are a primary way that a society represents itself: to its own members, and to the larger world" (p. 479). Thus, the method by which a particular institution chooses to interpret public history for its visitors has the potential either to perpetuate the (social, economic, or other) status quo, or to problematize it (Burnham, 1987; Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Leon, 1987).

In terms of contested social terrain–such as social issues surrounding incarceration–many argue that the status quo–including drastically unequal power structures–*needs* to be problematized, in order to spur reform (Davis, 2003; Nightingale & Sandell, 2012). Brochu (2008), for instance, writing in the *Journal of Interpretation Research,* asserts that it is an institution's very willingness to communicate conviction without fear of reprisal that qualifies powerful leaders in the field. Similarly, Anderson (2012) describes museological leaders as those that "have developed the ability to juggle a changing backdrop of challenges with their institution's ability to do strategic and meaningful work" (p. 1). While addressing contentious social content may be aversive to institutions seeking to minimize risk and avoid controversy, Sandell (2012) counters that dealing with such controversy is simply "a cost of doing business" for institutions that are committed to promoting human rights.

Historical interpretation often leads visitors to consider the historical record in terms of interactions between victims and perpetrators (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005; Jansen, 2005). The effect, for contemporary populations who identify with the historical victims, may be a feeling of

personally coming to terms with a legacy of atrocity, while also gaining larger societal legitimation through stories that humanize rather than demean (Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Jansen, 2005; Witz, 2006). American slavery is a particularly salient example. William Gwaltney, former president of the Association for African American Museums, speaking of U.S. slavery museums, stated that "[African American] people want any depiction of slavery to have…power. People are looking for the display of the horror. Black people want 'them' to see how badly they treated 'us'" (Ruffins, 2006, p. 415).

However, the significance of the ways in which visitors relate to sites and to one another is deeper than simple recognition. Many sources, while making note of the need for healing through individual or collective mourning at historical sites, also point to the limited productivity of presenting narratives in terms of simplistic victim-perpetrator relations (Brett, Bickford, Ševčenko, & Rios, 2004; International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, 2014; Jansen, 2005; Ruffins, 2006). These sources cite effective memorialization as a means, instead, of initiating dialogue that can lead to cultural reconciliation between, as well as within, individuals and groups.

A plurality of voices

The literature suggests, basically unanimously, that it is most appropriate for sites that address weighty subject matter not to rely on a single, authoritative curatorial voice, but to create a space for the inclusion of multiple voices, coming from a variety of stakeholders (Anderson, 2012; Bennett, 2011; Black, 2012; Garton-Smith, 2000; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Leon, 1987; Mesa-Bains, 2012; Patraka, 2001; Ševčenko, 2004; Wilson, 2008). Hooper-Greenhill (2000), for example, argues that for complex or ambiguous subject matter, museums can create a more

thorough meaning for their visitors by employing "diverse interpretive frameworks" (p. 51). Wilson (2008) and Garton-Smith (2000) argue that in terms of historical prison museums, incarcerated individuals experience a double "othering:" first, by being physically and emotionally distanced from "respectable" society by dint of their initial incarceration, and secondly, by being marginalized from the historical record by the exclusion of their narratives within museum interpretation. However, power structures can be influenced, and even reversed (Dubin, 2011; Younge, 2012): "What is marginal today could well be core tomorrow, and vice versa" (Younge, 2012, p. 107). According to Roberts (2012), the mere presence, in a museum setting, of a subaltern viewpoint has the power to confer legitimacy onto a marginalized group, as well as demonstrating that "there is more than one way of knowing" (p. 153). Wilson (2008) argues for the pluralization of narrative voices in the name of presenting a more complete historical picture, as well as humanizing marginalized populations, or bridging "the Us–Other divide" (p. 58). The International Sites of Conscience embrace the philosophy that open dialogue, between groups of people with differing stances on contentious issues, not only mimics the functioning of a responsible democracy, but creates a safe space for these groups to learn to compromise and to peacefully coexist (Bix, 2011).

According to Wilson (2011), creating a multiplicity of voices is not something that an institution stumbles upon haphazardly, but rather, is a process that requires a deliberate commitment on the part of interpretive staff. Best (2012) suggests first providing evidence of social harm via examples, statistics, and diagnostic framing, and then providing resources for action to remedy this harm. One of the main methodologies employed by the Sites of Conscience, in terms of humanizing tragedy and helping visitors to draw connections between the past and present, is presenting personal stories of individuals involved in historical tragedy–

such as Anne Frank during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, or the perpetuators of state violence during Augusto Pinochet's regime in Chile–and deliberately offering multiple perspectives regarding both historical and current events (Bix, 2011). However, Brett, Bickford, Ševčenko, & Rios (2004) note that many speakers at an international conference on human rights and historical sites shared the opinion that "the promotion of dialogue should never degenerate into an all-permissive relativism" (p. 9). In other words, those sites that strive to affect progress in human rights *should* look beyond simple victim-perpetrator designations and seek to create rich, varied narratives incorporating multiple points of view from various stakeholders—but they *should not* do so at the expense of endorsing discriminatory or hateful viewpoints for the sake of being "inclusive."

Dark tourism

Socially-minded historical museums strive to help visitors to draw connections between events of the past and contemporary social situations (International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, 2014). Psychologists posit that the immersive nature of historical sites creates a heightened emotional response within visitors—in particular, priming visitors to experience empathy with historical populations (MacIntosh, 1999; McIntyre, Bolter, & Gandy, 2004). As such, leveraging visitors' psychological response to geographic place provides historical sites with a means not just of telling an engaging story, but of possibly facilitating longer-term and larger-scale societal transformation (Black, 2012; Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Shaw & Williams, 2004; Witz, 2006).

The connection between public history and socially troubling subject matter is not a novel idea. In fact, welcoming the public to sites of "difficult" historical events is an entire sub-field of historical interpretation known as dark tourism (Dann, 205; Wilson, 2008). Dark tourism,

as the name implies, is tourism that occurs at sites where death, tragedy, crime, or humanitarian atrocity has occurred at some point in the past (Dann, 2005; Wilson, 2008). As there are many varieties of human tragedy, sites of dark tourism may include anything from former concentration camps (e.g. the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim, Poland) to historical slave quarters (Carter's Grove Plantation at Colonial Willamsburg), to legendary battlefields (Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania). Often such sites are placed along a theoretical spectrum according to how horrific their associated events are perceived to be —with, for instance, sites of genocide being on the "darker" end of the spectrum, while the location of a random Presidential assassination might reside on the opposite end (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005). Dark tourism may be perceived as walking a fine line between exploitation– portraying human suffering for shock value or for the sake of entertainment–versus doing so to promote healing or impact visitors' social consciousness (Dann, 2005; Schwarzer, 2011). However, even Dann (2005), who remains largely dubious of the practical and philosophical impacts of dark tourism, admits that such sites at least hold the potential to "provide lessons for the young, in helping them distinguish good from evil in an otherwise secularized world" (p. 247).

While not all sites of dark tourism explicitly set out to affect social change, some do. Most notable are the members of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. While the Sites of Conscience do not refer to themselves explicitly as sites of dark tourism, they fit the bill by definition: each member institution of the coalition comprises the site of a past humanitarian atrocity which is now open to the public for tourism. The mission of the coalition is "to engage the public in connecting past and present in order to envision and shape a more just and humane future" through, for instance, stimulating dialogue on pressing social issues and providing

opportunities for public involvement regarding such issues (International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, 2014). A pamphlet published by the international nonprofit Center for Victims of Torture describes the Sites of Conscience as locations where individuals "come to terms with the past and chart a course for the future" (Ševčenko, 2004).

Regardless of institutional mission, a major facet of tourism in general, and of dark tourism in particular, is the idea of authenticity (Hill & Cable, 2006). Authenticity itself is an elusive concept that is often broken into sub-categories: *objective authenticity* refers to the perceived "genuineness" inherent to original objects and locations; *constructive authenticity* refers to the expectations, preferences, and beliefs projected onto toured scenarios and objects by visitors; and *existential* or *personal authenticity* alludes to an internal "state of being" perceived by visitors as a response to their tourist experience (Hill & Cable 2006, pp. 58-59; Shaw &Williams, 2004, p. 136). Historical sites neatly embody all three of these categories, leading to the perception, by some visitors, that visits to such locales are more meaningful than visits to traditional museums that simply address the same subject matter (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005). In fact, Hill and Cable (2006) postulate that it is only by addressing all three varieties of authenticity that an historical site may approach socially sensitive issues in ways that are simultaneously true to history, tell a complete story, and hold visitors' attention through sensitive, but not exploitative, means (p. 62). In these terms, historical interpreters walk a delicate line. Modlin, Aldlerman, and Gentry (2011), studying the impact of plantation house museums in the Southern United States, clarify the distinction between historical sites and traditional museums: "While many history museums appear to consider the past in objective ways, a tour through any historical site is a selective, political process which makes certain people, places, and perspectives appear legitimate while rendering others invisible" (p. 4).

For their part, tourists are often grouped into categories based on their motivations for travel; these run the gamut from those individuals in search of pure pleasure or entertainment, to those who seek out experiences which they believe will be socially significant, both personally and at a larger societal level (Hill & Cable, 2006; Shaw & Williams, 2004). Due to obvious issues of subject matter, as well as the intensity of emotion evoked by memories of atrocity, dark tourism sites are often geared toward those groups and individuals who visit either to safely satisfy some sort of morbid curiosity, or to undergo a socially significant experience (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005; Dann, 2005). As Waite (2011) describes the draw of Alcatraz Island to its 1 million-plus annual visitors, "[H]umans possess the obdurate desire to *witness* the unknown, to tip-toe around it, to stare into its dark crevices, and then to leave it all behind" (p. 99) (emphasis in original).

Historical prison museums

Historical prison museums–sites that were once operating correctional facilities, which have since been decommissioned and opened to the public as museums[1]–fit neatly into the category of dark tourism. In fact, some of the best known sites of dark tourism include historical prison museums from both apartheid-era South Africa (most notably Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned) and early colonial Australia (Fremantle Prison, Cascades Female Factory, and Hyde Park Barracks, amongst others). While Australia and South Africa are home to some of the world's most high profile historical prisons (owing, likely, to the former's initial colonization as a British penal outpost, and the latter's decades-long legacy of apartheid),

[1] The term *historical prison museum* is one that I conceived of on my own, to distinguish a type of institution that is referred to inconsistently in the literature. The oft-used term *prison museum* felt inadequate, as this could just as easily refer to a traditional museum that merely covers content on incarceration, such as the National Museum of Crime & Punishment in Washington, D.C. At the same time, calling these sites *museums* rather than simply *historical prisons* specifies that these are active tourist sites, versus simply abandoned, formerly-operational prisons.

the United States leads the world in quantity of such sites. In his large-scale descriptive analysis, Ross (2012) identifies 95 historical prison museums[2] located in seventeen countries around the world; twelve of these museums are located in the U.S., at sites such as Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City, MO; the Louisiana State Penitentiary Museum in Angola, LA; and Old Newgate Prison in East Granby, CT. Ross was unable to determine annual visitorship for 76% of the museums he studied; however, the most frequently identified rates were in the range of 10,001-25,000 visitors annually (5.26% of the overall sample) and 25,001-50,000 visitors annually (also 5.26%).[3] One notable institution that did not appear in Ross' study is the proposed Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum in Ossining, New York. According to a staff member at the Westchester County Department of Planning, this site is slated to open in roughly five years and will be located on the grounds of the historic Sing Sing Correctional Facility, within the same compound as the still-operational maximum-security prison. While the administrative and other details of that site remain to be seen, it is worth noting that the proposed site at Sing Sing will be only the second U.S. prison museum to share a physical location with an operational prison, the other being the Louisiana State Penitentiary Museum in Angola.

Prison tourism, as it is sometimes called (Wilson, 2008), is one of the few means by which members of the general public–outside of direct stakeholders, such as prisoners and prison personnel–are able to experience a prison environment first-hand (Ross, 2012; Waite, 2011; Wilson, 2008). As such, while most "ordinary" citizens tend to think of prisons as drastically

[2] In his study, Ross uses the term *prison museum*, versus *historical prison museum*. However, his criteria for site selection indicate that Ross' terminology and my terminology are describing the same phenomenon: sites that were once operational prisons, but have been decommissioned and opened to the public as tourist sites. I contend that it is necessary to verbalize the "historical" aspect of these sites, to avoid ambiguity between museums *inside* of prisons and museums *about* prisons (e.g. the Texas Prison Museum in Huntsville, Texas, which is a traditional museum that focuses on the subject matter of prisons).

[3] For the purposes of this study, due to differences in scale of visitorship and relation to contemporary criminal justice issues, I draw a distinction, much like Ross, between *prison* museums and much smaller scale local *jail* museums–of which there are perhaps dozens scattered across the country.

disconnected from their own lives (Davis, 2003; Schwarzer, 2011), there is great potential for historical prisons, like other sites of dark tourism, to change such perceptions amongst their visitors. In the 2011 special volume of *Museums & Social Issues* devoted to the topic of incarceration (titled *Rethinking Incarceration*), Marjorie Schwarzer identifies historical prison museums as residing at the intersection of museological ethics and mass incarceration and asks, hypothetically, "What kinds of messages do these museums and exhibitions communicate? Are they copacetic with our field's educational values? Or, do they glorify and titillate in the name of entertainment and voyeurism?" (p. 10). In that same issue, Sean Kelley of Eastern State Penitentiary discusses that site's use of artist installations, in particular, to call visitors' attention to questions of criminal justice and to situate Eastern State within a larger historical context, while Lexie Waite describes Alcatraz Island's then-emerging consciousness regarding social issues. The proposed Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum in Ossining, New York, will seek to draw visitors' attention to ways in which America "was compelled to–and continues to –grapple with ideas of crime and punishment…[to] learn how central this history is to the understanding of our culture" (Friends of the Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum, n.d.).

Generally, however, such socially-minded institutions are a minority within the field of American prison tourism. Bruggeman (2012) asserts that in general, U.S. prison museums are adept at portraying the day to day realities of prison life, but that most of these institutions do little to examine larger issues such as the factors that lead people to become incarcerated in the first place, or the ways that incarceration impacts our society. For every socially-minded historical prison museum, there are multiple others that revel in the gruesome, the sensational, or the exoticized. Tellingly, of the ten articles and exhibit reviews in the *Rethinking Incarceration* volume of *Museums & Social Issues,* only two involve historical prison museums.

A gap in the literature: theory to practice

The abundance of information on historical prison museums, interpretation, and social issues is extensive, but not exhaustive. There are some U.S. historical prison museums that are recognized in the field as actively portraying incarceration in terms of social issues. However, there is a dearth of information in the literature regarding the ways in which such sites wield their institutional strengths (and deal with their shortcomings) to bring theory into practice. How do these sites view the potential for interpretation to affect societal attitudes and behaviors around social justice? What are the realities of addressing social issues at historical prison museums? What do leaders in the field look like? How do institutions balance the rights and needs of stakeholders in incarceration with the rights and needs of stakeholders in the museum? It is this gap in the literature–the ambiguous space that exists between the theory and practice of prison tourism–that this research attempted to address.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which historical prison museums interpret the social aspects of incarceration. This research was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the interpretation of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?
2. How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?
3. What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?

This study was based on the philosophy of the "new museology" (Ross, 2004): the idea that museums have the opportunity to positively impact the social wellbeing of their audiences, as well as that of larger society (Anderson, 2012; Low, 2012; Nightingale & Sandell, 2012; Weil, 2002).

Research Design

This research takes the form of a case study. The researcher opted for a multiple-case design, based on Yin's (2009) rationale that such a design is appropriate for research in which two or more cases are related to an exemplary outcome (in this case, professional practice in historical prison museums which adheres to the principles of "the new museology"), where the outcome is already known by the researcher, but the "how and why" of cases' behavior remain to be answered. Multiple data sources were used, including interviews and document analysis.

Sampling: Case Study Institutions

Historical prison museums provide a unique, immersive visitor experience, and by their very nature provide opportunities for visitors to draw connections between the social implications of past and present events (Kelley, 2011; Schwarzer, 2011; Yun Lee, 2011). As such, each site considered for this study had to include physical premises that were once operating prisons but had been decommissioned and opened to the public as tourist sites by the time of the study. Sites were selected based on having been either mentioned in the professional literature, or cited by other museum professionals, as actively attempting to address social issues. Eastern State Penitentiary (ESP) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was the first site selected, based on its inclusion in the 2011 special issue of the journal *Museums & Social Issues: A Reflective Discourse*. The remaining two sites were then derived using "snowball sampling" methodology—that is, asking professionals at Eastern State, at other museums, and who were affiliated with *Museums & Social Issues* to suggest other historical prison museums that were notable for their work in interpreting social content. Based on this approach, the additional two sites selected for this study were the Ohio State Reformatory (OSR) in Mansfield, Ohio and Alcatraz Island in San Francisco, California. Taken together, these three sites are geographically diverse–one on the East Coast, one on the West Coast, and one in the Midwest–and they vary in terms of operating budget, visitorship, length of time since acting as an operating prison, and level of experience in addressing social content (see Chapter 4 for a description of each case study).

Sampling: Professional Participants

Once the research sites were selected, individual participants for this study were identified and recruited. The criteria for this sampling process were that participants were currently working for the case study institution at the time of the interview, and were directly involved in making decisions about interpretive content and approach (versus serving as front-line interpretive staff, such as tour guides). For two of the target museums (the Ohio State Reformatory and Alcatraz Island), the researcher obtained a general informational email address from each of the sites' websites, and sent an inquiry to that address explaining the nature of this study and asking for the name and contact information of someone on the interpretive staff. For the third site (Eastern State Penitentiary), the researcher was put directly in contact, via email, with an interpretive staff member, by a mutual acquaintance in the museum profession.

Once the initial inquiry process yielded the name and contact information of one interpretive staff member at each site, the researcher contacted each of these individuals via email, explained the nature of the research, and asked for their consent to participate in the study, as well as for recommendations of other interpretive staff members who might participate. Through these recommendations, the researcher was put into contact with the core interpretive staff members at each target site, and obtained personal consent from each of these individuals to participate in the study. Altogether, the group interview process included three staff members at the Ohio State Reformatory, five at Eastern State Penitentiary, and two at Alcatraz Island. These individuals' job descriptions entailed conceptualizing and utilizing interpretive techniques and content at their respective sites. They held such job titles as Program Director and Interpretive Operations Supervisor. Of all the museum professionals who were recruited for this research, none refused to participate in the study.

Data Collection: Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews were conducted in person, in order to establish and maintain rapport between the interviewer and participants. At each site, small group interviews were conducted with participants–consisting of two to five professionals per site–to avoid the impression that individual professionals were being "singled out" in terms of their job performance or professional philosophy. In addition, this methodology provided opportunities for individual staff members to expand upon or contradict one another's statements, potentially providing the interviewer with a more nuanced picture of the interpretive process at each institution than separate interviews would have done. There was a single exception to this methodology, in that the interpretive director at one of the sites requested to be interviewed separately, to allow the remaining interpretive staff members to speak more freely than they might have been inclined to do in the presence of their supervisor. For that institution, two interviews were conducted–one with the interpretive director and one with the remaining interpretive staff–using an identical instrument and method of data analysis.

The instrument used for the group interviews included a series of open-ended questions, which were designed to produce qualitative data regarding both the theory and practice of interpreting social issues at each of the target sites. Prior to beginning each interview, the researcher provided her own definitions of both "social issues"[4] and "interpretation"[5] to ensure a shared understanding amongst all participants (see Appendix A: Interview Guide); however, participants were also invited to make alterations to these definitions if they found it appropriate

[4]For the purposes of this interview, a "social issue" or "social aspect" may be understood as a condition or set of conditions that: influences the well-being –physical, emotional, or otherwise– of a considerable number of individuals within a society, is largely beyond an individual's control, and is disputed or considered problematic by some segment of society.

[5] In this context, "historical prison museums" are sites that were once operating prisons, but have since been decommissioned and opened to the public as tourist sites.

to do so. (None did.) The interview questions were divided into three sets, with each set roughly corresponding to one of the study's three research questions.

Participants were allowed as much time as needed to respond to the interviewer's questions and to one another's responses before moving on. Individual participants were not compelled to answer every interview question, as the aim of the group interviews was to come to an understanding of the theory and practice at play at each site on an institutional level, versus to understand the nuances of individuals' job descriptions. Participants were occasionally asked to elaborate on answers that they had given which were either unclear, or lacking in detail. Each interview lasted 60-75 minutes. The interviews were audio-recorded for later reference during coding and analysis.

Data Collection: Audio Guide

Document analysis of each site's audio tour was a second source of data for this research. While there were multiple interpretive methods that were shared across all three cases, the interview process revealed that the professionals at all three sites considered their audio tours to be a key interpretive method for addressing social issues. The researcher conducted a self-guided site tour, aided by a museum audio guide, at two of the research sites: Eastern State Penitentiary and Alcatraz Island. At the third site, Ohio State Reformatory, the researcher was offered a guided tour, but for logistical reasons, was unable to extend the visit to include a self-guided audio tour as well. All three sites shared either an electronic or hard copy version of their audio tour script with the researcher for analysis.

Data Analysis: Interviews

Interview data were analyzed inductively, with patterns and trends identified by the researcher using content analysis. More specifically, the researcher utilized three analytical methods described by Yin (2009) as pattern matching, explanation building, and cross-case synthesis. She first considered each case individually to identify patterns and themes within sites, and then conducted a comparative analysis of all three cases to identify similarities, differences, and larger trends appearing across institutions.

To begin analysis, the researcher reviewed the interview transcripts and identified key trends and specific ideas ("themes" and "sub-themes") within the data, noting direct quotes that could be attributed to each sub-theme. During the data analysis process, the term "theme" was used to denote general categories of understanding that fell within the domain of each research question. For example, for *Research Question 1: How do historical prison museums perceive their role in interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?* some themes that emerged through respondents' answers were *Theme a: visitor and community impact* and *Theme c: the role of institutional mission.*

In addition, sub-themes were identified within each theme, stemming from key words in participants' interview responses. For example, within Research Question 1, Theme a, the researcher identified and coded for three separate sub-themes: *Sub-theme 1: generating interest in local history* (as evidenced, for instance, by the quote "I guess I would like our visitors to learn the history of the prison"), *Sub-theme 2: highlighting the museum's relevance* ("I think that we really want people to understand that Eastern State is relevant today") and *Sub-theme 3: increasing awareness of contemporary corrections* ("It seems like the site has made a conscious effort to always engage with some aspect of contemporary corrections").

Finally, the researcher considered the three research sites collectively, identifying those themes that appeared across, versus within, individual cases. (See Appendix B for the resulting coding rubric.) Internal validity of the analysis, and in particular the themes described above, was determined through the use of a critical friend (Patton, 2002).

Data Analysis: Audio Guide Script

While the interview portion of data collection was meant to describe both the theory and practice of interpreting social content at the target sites, the content analysis of the audio tours provided information on interpretive practice only. As stated previously, the researcher utilized printed transcripts and audio recordings to perform this content analysis.

Using the definition for "social issues" outlined in the research design phase of this project and verbalized with interview subjects, the researcher listened to the recording or read the transcript for each of the three cases' audio tours, taking note when instances of social issues appeared and recording some quotations as demonstrative examples. The researcher then categorized the instances of social issues using a process of emergent coding similar to that practiced during the interview analysis (See Appendix C). Finally, she used Microsoft Excel to quantify the use of social issues within each site's audio tour, and further to compare this phenomenon across sites (See Appendix D, Figure 1).

Limitations

The sampling strategy for this research focused on sites that had been noted as actively working to interpret the social aspects of incarceration. As such, a limitation of this study may be that the results are more relevant for museums that have already decided to incorporate social

issues into their interpretation, versus those sites that are still debating the merits of interpreting social content.

A second potential limitation stems from the use of group interviews, versus individual interviews with museum professionals. While the group interview method was meant to put individual participants at ease and to create a space for meaningful exchange between research participants, this method may also have resulted in less diversity in responses due to groupthink. It is impossible to know whether individual participants would have provided the same feedback to the interview questions, had they not been in a social situation where they were observing, and being observed by, their peers. The possibility remains that some participants may have felt social pressure to emulate their coworkers' responses, or that they may have unconsciously strengthened their own opinions, as concepts were approached collectively.

Finally, the concept of "social issues" is broad, and not all social issues are perceived equally. The data derived from this research is intended to act as a model, or a set of best practices, for other museums hoping to introduce social content into their interpretive materials and programs. However, museums professionals may find that some of the ideas and methods identified through this research do not prove applicable or relevant for other kinds of sites, or for social issues of a different nature.

Chapter Four: Results and Discussion

The following chapter describes the results of this research study. It begins with a description of each of the three case study institutions, including both historical and contemporary philosophy and function, to provide context for the research results. These three cases vary in several accounts: they represent a variation, for example, in terms of geography, budget, visitorship, and even underlying philosophy when serving as acting prisons. The results of this research are then organized according to the key research questions of the study, as well as by the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data relative to each research question. This research explores some of the differences and idiosyncrasies of each individual site, but focuses largely on the themes and methods that are shared across sites.

Case Descriptions

Ohio State Reformatory

The Ohio State Reformatory (OSR) is located in the rural outskirts of Mansfield, a small city in northeast Ohio, about 65 miles northeast of Columbus. OSR was an operating prison from 1896 to 1990. Prior to construction of the prison, the grounds were the site of a Civil War training camp. Throughout its lifespan, the prison housed inmates in both minimum- and maximum-security conditions; it reached its greatest capacity of 5,235 (exclusively male) prisoners in 1955 (Mansfield Reformatory Preservation Society, 2015). After closing, the prison's picturesque architecture made it an ideal location for several music videos and feature films. In fact, one of OSR' major claims to fame is that it was the filming location for the 1994 film *The Shawshank Redemption*, as well as serving as a Russian prison in 1997's *Air Force*

One. Artifacts and set pieces from both of these films can be found scattered throughout the prison grounds and tour route.

The philosophy behind OSR's years as an operating prison was redemption and reformation. In addition to an emphasis on prayer and piety, prisoners were required to attend educational classes and to learn a trade during the period of their incarceration, with the ultimate goal of returning them to society as productive citizens. According to the museum's website, "the concept of self-betterment through internal reflection is a universal teaching tool, one that survives on in this building long after the inmates have gone" (Mansfield Reformatory Preservation Society, 2015).

The Ohio State Reformatory closed its doors in 1990, due to a federal court order instigated by claims of overcrowding and inhumane conditions. The facility slipped into ruins for nearly half a decade, and was nearly demolished before being scouted for the location of *The Shawshank Redemption* in 1994. The Mansfield Reformatory Preservation Society formed in 1995, with the mission "to preserve the former Ohio State Reformatory as a national tourist attraction" (Mansfield Reformatory Preservation Society, 2015); this organization continues to manage the site today. OSR is now open to the public from April through September. According to the museum's Program Director, the Ohio State Reformatory welcomed 95,000 visitors in 2014, a number that the staff expects to exceed in 2015. The Mansfield Reformatory Preservation Society's revenue for 2013, according to its 990 tax form (the most recent year available) was $1,460,425 (GuideStar, 2015a).

One feature unique to the Ohio State Reformatory is its geographic proximity to two currently operating prisons. The Mansfield Correctional Institution, a maximum-security state prison, was built in 1990 to serve as a replacement for the decommissioned OSR and is located

just under two miles to the northwest of the historic site. The Richland Correctional Institution, built in 1998, is a medium-security state prison located 0.1 miles to the northeast of OSR. It is visible from some locations on the OSR tour route, at which points, photography is prohibited to protect the rights of contemporary inmates.

Eastern State Penitentiary

The second case for this study, Eastern State Penitentiary (ESP), was rooted in the ideals of social reform that were characteristic of the Enlightenment period. Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Rush and other prominent early Pennsylvanians formed the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, with the goal of establishing a more humane system of incarceration (Eastern State Penitentiary, n.d.). The eventual result was Eastern State Penitentiary, which opened in 1828. Located in a now-residential neighborhood in Philadelphia, Eastern State was the world's first penitentiary: a correctional facility designed to inspire reflection, remorse –penitence–for one's crimes, leading to personal reformation. Prisoners at Eastern State were kept in strict isolation and silence, and were compelled to work on productive trades, such as weaving and shoemaking.

By the early 20th century, the isolation-based method of incarceration pioneered by ESP (the Pennsylvania System) had become impractical due to overcrowding and changing social ideals. ESP discontinued the Pennsylvania System in favor of multiple-occupancy cells and large, collective exercise yards, dining halls, and workshops. The prison shifted its focus from redemption to punishment, even installing a block of cells in the 1950s for use as Death Row, where prisoners sentenced to execution would await their fate. It was at this time that ESP reached its greatest capacity, at approximately 1,700 inmates. The prison continued to function

this way, and to gradually fall into disrepair, until the state of Pennsylvania forced it to close its doors in 1971 (Eastern State Penitentiary, n.d.).

The facility of Eastern State was left to languish for nearly a decade, until it was purchased by the City of Philadelphia in 1980. The city planned to demolish the prison and use the land for redevelopment, but a task force of concerned architects, historians, and preservationists petitioned the mayor to save the site in 1988. Eastern State had been designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1965, when it was still an operational prison. Stabilization and preservation efforts began in 1991, and in 1994 the Pennsylvania Prison Society opened the site for daily guided tours. The Pennsylvania Prison Society went on to lease the facility from the City of Philadelphia in 1997, and in 2001, the lease was transferred to the nonprofit organization Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc., which manages the site today (Eastern State Penitentiary, n.d.). ESP is open year-round to the public. The Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site's revenue for 2013, according to its 990 tax form (the most recent year available), was $4,782,773. According to staff, the site welcomed 190,000 visitors to its daytime tours in 2014, and an additional 100,000 visitors just to Terror Behind the Walls.

ESP stands out from the other two research sites in that it is a member organization of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, a consortium of "sites, individuals, and initiatives activating the power of places of memory to engage the public in connecting past and present in order to envision and shape a more just and humane future" (International Sites of Conscience, 2014).

Alcatraz Island

Similar to the Ohio State Reformatory, which was built on the site of a former Civil War training camp, the site of Alcatraz Island encompasses a history that extends beyond its tenure as a maximum-security prison—although it is the latter time period for which the site is now most famous (and infamous). Physical evidence places indigenous human visitors on the island over 10,000 years ago, with European discovery of the land mass not occurring until 1542 (National Park Service, 2015a). The island was first mapped in 1775 by a Spanish explorer, and was ceded to the United States (along with the rest of California) in 1848, following the Mexican-American War. In 1853, the U.S. army built a fort on the island which served as defensive citadel and military prison until 1907, and then as a military prison exclusively until 1933 (National Park Service , 2015a).

In 1934 the U.S. Department of Justice acquired the former military facility for use as a federal penitentiary. At that time, the federal government was concerned with skyrocketing crime rates and needed an intimidating institution to serve as a strong deterrent (Federal Bureau of Prisons, n.d.). The prison at Alcatraz, which would function from 1934 until 1963, was focused almost exclusively on punishment, versus prisoner rehabilitation . It became known as a destination for the "worst of the worst:" those prisoners who had committed especially heinous crimes, who were deemed high escape risks, or who caused behavioral problems while incarcerated at other facilities. In this way, the prison at Alcatraz became home to some of the era's most notorious criminals, including "Machine Gun Kelly" and Al Capone (who, interestingly, had also served time at Eastern State Penitentiary five years earlier) (Federal Bureau of Prisons, n.d.). Unlike Eastern State Penitentiary and Ohio State Reformatory, prisoners at Alcatraz were not guaranteed a productive trade. Upon arrival to the island, prisoners

were told that they had only four rights—food, clothing, shelter, and medical care—and that any other allowances were privileges to be earned for good behavior. At any given time, Alcatraz held only about 260 to 275 prisoners (Federal Bureau of Prisons, n.d.). In 1963, due to extremely high operating costs, Alcatraz the prison was closed at the behest of Attorney General Robert Kennedy.

In November of 1969, a group of approximately 100 American Indian activists, many of them students, led a 19-month occupation of Alcatraz Island. The activists, at first under the leadership of Richard Oakes, called themselves the Indians of All Tribes. They quickly self-organized and communicated a set of demands to the U.S. government, including the deed to the island so that they might establish an American Indian university, cultural center, and museum there. However, in 1970 the organization of the occupation began to falter. Sensing internal discontent and disorganization amongst the occupiers, the federal government shut off electricity to the island, removed the barge that was providing occupiers with fresh water, and waited. By early 1971 popular opinion for the occupation began to wane as the press reported incidents of violence and vandalism on the island, and on June 10, 1971, a group of armed federal marshals, FBI agents, and special forces police officers forcibly removed the remaining 15 Native occupiers from the island (National Park Service, 2015a).

In 1972, the U.S. Congress established the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which is comprised of more than 80,000 acres of land deemed historically and ecologically significant to the Bay Area and is managed by the National Park Service. Alcatraz Island is the Recreation Area's most popular attraction, consistently welcoming more than 1 million visitors each year (National Park Service, 2015a). The 2012 budget for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area

was $26,776,000 (National Park Service, 2015b), but it is unclear how much of this was allocated to Alcatraz Island specifically.

Results and discussion

Research Question 1: How does the interpretation of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?

One of the research questions that this study sought to address was *How does the interpretation of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?* To speak to this question, the researcher asked interview participants to discuss their institutions' desired impacts on visitors and the local community, their desired impacts on larger society, and their institutional missions. The idea behind this line of questioning was to understand the degree to which social issues factor into each of the research institutions' overarching ideals—versus, for instance, some of the more day-to-day procedural details addressed in other research questions.

a) Visitor and community impact

To speak to the idea of visitor and community impact, the researcher asked interview participants, "What is the impact that your institution would like to have on your visitors? On the community in which you are located?" This question was phrased so as to avoid leading participants: the door was left open for staff members to discuss *any* impacts that they thought were relevant to their institutions' goals and objectives, whether these related to social issues or not. Looking across sites, participants' answers pointed to two distinct sub-themes in the realm of visitor and community impact. One of these sub-themes–increasing awareness of

contemporary corrections–was clearly related to social issues, while the second –highlighting the museums' relevance–was ambiguous in this regard.

Increase awareness of contemporary corrections. When asked about their museums' desired impacts on visitors and the local community, participants at all three research sites indicated a desire increase awareness of contemporary criminal justice issues. While interviewees did not verbalize "social issues" when describing this impact, all three sites provided examples that fit this study's definition (in that they impact the wellbeing of more than one person, are beyond individual control, and may be considered problematic). For instance, a staff member at the Ohio State Reformatory stated, "A lot of times, we think like, 'Oh they're in jail'—but what does that really mean? What are they doing there? How are they spending their time? What is it that their emotions are going through when they're in there?" Similarly, a respondent at Eastern State Penitentiary stated, "Well, the impact we would like to have is to introduce the complexity of the problems around crime and punishment." Staff members at Alcatraz voiced a desire to raise visitors' awareness of such social issues as societal reentry and prisoners of conscience.

Highlight museum's relevance. Both the Ohio State Reformatory and Eastern State Penitentiary expressed a desire to highlight their sites' relevance in the local community. For these sites, the hope is that visitors and locals will perceive the museum not as a peripheral element of the community, but as having a major impact on (either past or present) local citizens. However, interviewees' language was ambiguous; their wording does not indicate whether the sites understand "relevance" in terms of social consequences, or solely in terms of historical facts. For instance, a participant at Eastern State indicated that "Philadelphia's impacted by incarceration in major ways. We have to have the local community involved here, and kind of

get the word out that Eastern State is not just for tourists, that Eastern State is for the local community." Did this person mean that the social wellbeing of Philadelphians is at stake, or simply that a number of Philadelphia's citizens have worked for or spent time in prisons? A response at Ohio State Reformatory was similarly ambiguous: "I mean, we have neighbors now that are working federal prisons... Thousands upon thousands of inmates worked here and dedicated their time to, ultimately, giving back to Mansfield a little bit as well." Does the museum hope to raise awareness of the prison's impact on locals' wellbeing, or simply to call attention to the fact that many citizens of Mansfield spent time as either employees or inmates there? The data are inconclusive.

b) Larger (societal) impact

In order to understand the research sites' desired impacts beyond visitors and the local community, the researcher asked interview participants, "Do you hope to have a larger societal impact as well? How would you like that to look?" Again, this question was worded to leave room for responses to all desired impacts, whether related to social issues or not. Two sub-themes emerged from the data regarding sites' goals and objectives regarding larger impact, both of which largely focus on social issues.

Increase awareness of contemporary corrections. Similar to the responses regarding local impacts, staff at all three sites indicated a desire to increase awareness of contemporary criminal justice issues at the societal scale. When asked how OSR hoped to impact larger society, respondents replied that they would like to raise general awareness of mass incarceration "[because] this is not only an issue that affects the community of Mansfield, or the state of Ohio…The U.S. is number one in incarceration in the entire world." Again, this answer does not

articulate "social issues" verbatim, but does frame an answer in terms that correspond to the agreed-upon definition of social issues. Similarly, a staff member at Eastern State Penitentiary answered this interview question as such:

> I think we already are having a larger societal impact…There's no national prison museum. We [in the U.S.] have the highest rate of incarceration in the world, by far; no one else is even close. So I would stake our claim as being the national prison museum. I mean, the place where—if you're going to discuss these issues anywhere, it's here….Americans are unaware of how strange their criminal justice system is.

Respondents at Alcatraz indicated that their impact, by default, extends beyond the local community, due to the majority of their visitors being non-local tourists; however, their answer to this question even less defined than responses at the other two sites. Staff members at Alcatraz indicated that their goal for larger societal impact is simply "to provide a discussion of what incarceration means today."

Stimulate dialogue/critical thinking. The second sub-theme to emerge from the interview question about larger societal impacts is that all three research sites are intent on stimulating dialogue and/or critical thinking. Again, while the respondents did not use the terminology "social issues" in their responses, it was clear that these responses referred to social aspects of incarceration, versus simply historical facts. For example, staff at the Ohio State Reformatory stated that:

> The part that we've put on our website about the dialogue [that 'Each visit allows for the opportunity to create a dialogue and in doing so, we open the door for a larger conversation on the cultural significance of…confinement in the United States'] is really important for us here.

The other two research sites also approach the topics of dialogue and critical thinking in terms of social issues. For example, interview participants from ESP voiced their desire "that visitors can reevaluate the criminal justice system…and have a conversation about what prisons are for" and

that "we'd like our visitors to examine their own, often long-held opinions…to acknowledge that these things are complicated, and are not given to easy solutions." Respondents at Alcatraz stated that "The impact we want to have...it's to provide a place for discussing these issues of freedom and social justice, and to acknowledge that this is part of our American history" and that "We want [the museum] to affect people in ways that they will go back home and raise those questions, and be provoked by those questions."

c) Mission

Finally, the researcher asked interview participants, "Does the idea of addressing social issues fit into your institution's mission? In what way(s)?" The intent of this research question was initially to gather background information, to provide context for the results that would follow from the rest of the interviews. However, the resulting data also speak to the research question *How does the interpretation of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?*, since museums' missions are, in essence, written statements delineating the goals and objectives that the institutions hope to achieve. Following is a discussion of the interview data regarding institutional mission.

Ohio State Reformatory. The stated mission of the Mansfield Reformatory Preservation Society is "to preserve the former Ohio State Reformatory as a national tourist attraction" (Mansfield Reformatory Preservation Society, 2015). Interestingly, while social issues are not directly addressed within OSR's mission statement, interview data indicate that the interpretation of social content is an unwritten, internal mission of the site's staff, and that the staff has been able to "work up" to interpreting social content over a period of years by first restoring the site's structural integrity. "The major restoration projects are almost done," said one interviewee, "and

so I think that …now we have a little bit more time and room and resources to address" social content.

Eastern State Penitentiary. In contrast, the interpretation of social content is a major component of ESP's multi-faceted mission, which reads:

> Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc. works to preserve and restore the architecture of Eastern State Penitentiary; to make the Penitentiary accessible to the public; to explain and interpret its complex history; to place current issues of corrections and justice in an historical framework; and to provide a public forum where these issues are discussed. While the interpretive program advocates no specific position on the state of the American justice system, the program is built on the belief that the problems facing Eastern State Penitentiary's architects have not yet been solved, and that the issues these early prison reformers addressed remain of central importance to our nation (Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, n.d.)

ESP is somewhat unique, procedurally, in terms of museum missions: the site did not have a mission statement for several years until, in 1999, the museum's Senior Vice President wrote such a statement and it was ratified by the Board of Directors. As such, the mission process was retroactive: rather than hiring staff members and structuring programming to fit the existing mission, the museum's staff structured the mission to fit their ideals. This does not mean, however, that the mission statement is in any way an "afterthought:" nearly all of the staff members interviewed for this research mentioned that they regularly check their activities and ideas against the content of the mission statement.

Alcatraz Island. Social issues do not appear directly in the Alcatraz's written mission, which is enveloped within the larger mission of the Golden Gate Recreation Area. According to a Park Service website, "The mission of Golden Gate National Recreation Area is to preserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic resources of the lands north and south of the Golden Gate for the education, recreation and inspiration of people today and in the future" (2015b). However, interview data indicates that, in a situation similar to that of the Ohio State

Reformatory, the staff at Alcatraz operate under an "unwritten mission" in which the interpretation of social content represents a means of fulfilling the site's broader (written) mission statement. "The mission is to interpret that entire period [from pre-European contact to the 1960s Native American occupation], and look for common themes in all of that," said one respondent. "And they all deal with social justice, freedom, incarceration as well as you know, a place that provides safety for the rest of society…"

Research Question 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?

Whereas the previous research question dealt mainly with perception and ideals regarding social issues at historical prison museums–providing the answers to "why" questions–the second research question attempted to uncover more procedural details–providing the answers to "how" questions. The data in this section deal with three main themes: the means by which sites select which social issues to address in their interpretive materials; significant factors in bringing interpretation from concept to implementation; and the interpretive methods actually utilized at each of the research sites. This section will then conclude with a discussion of the content analysis of each of the case study institutions' audio tour.

a) Ways that case study institutions decide which social issues to address.

To collect this data, the researcher asked interview participants, "How does your institution decide which particular social issues to address?" On this topic, there was little consensus, even within sites: the case study institutions described their process as both top-down and collaborative, in addition to discussing factors unique to each case.

Top-down. At a broad level, all three sites described, to some extent, a top-down decision making process that is filtered through the museum's leadership or administration. For instance, one interviewee at Ohio State Reformatory answered the interview question about deciding on social issues by replying, "I would say that the Executive Director and the Board, for the most part, decide which issues to address." Participants at Eastern State responded similarly: "I tend to think of it as kind of coming from [the Director of Interpretation and Public Programming]–like [he] has a vision and…is kind of overseeing everything and being the final like, curatorial voice…" At Alcatraz, the "higher authority" is the U.S. Park Service, and the regulations that it has set out both for its historic sites in general, and Alcatraz in particular. "Our mission with the Park Service is to interpret the entire history of Alcatraz," says one respondent. "We're not likely to address issues that don't have some sort of natural connection with Alcatraz, with the history of Alcatraz. Even though people are constantly approaching us with different ideas, we really just pick and choose the ones that have an historic basis."

Team input. Interestingly, all three cases then added nuance to these responses by citing some level of creative license on behalf of the interpretive teams. For instance, at Ohio State Reformatory, "Each tour guide brings something different: they have their own areas of interest, they have their own stories they've collected, their own research they've done." Similarly, at Eastern State, "We have a staff retreat every year…so [the staff leadership] really leads that process, but [the rest of the staff] just have ideas all the time, and we put them forward…we eventually come up with a compromise that I think is pretty good." Alcatraz echoed the sentiment of the other two sites: "If an employee had an idea for a program…They'd write an outline, that would get approved by their supervisor, and then they would do the research, and then they would go out and test it out."

Factors unique to institution. Finally, the interviewees of each case all cited factors that are unique to the circumstances of their respective institutions. For instance, it was previously mentioned that Ohio State Reformatory is in the unusual position of residing on the physical margins of two operating prisons. As such, the staff select content with the knowledge that many members of their local audience either have relatives who are either incarcerated at those institutions, or who work there—and this may have an impact on the ways in which staff feel that they can breach certain topics. In addition, because OSR is a small institution with strong local ties, staff find themselves receiving many donations of archival and other content, from local residents who hope to play a part in shaping the museum.

A factor unique to Alcatraz is that it is part of the National Park System, and as such, its activities are perhaps prescribed to a more significant degree than a more traditional museum that does not answer to a federal authority. At the same time, the National Park Service presents a wealth of experience and funding that are beyond the grasp of most small institutions, and many interpretive methods have been extensively tested across Park Service sites for efficacy. (Recall from Chapter 2 that Freeman Tilden literally wrote the book on interpretation for the Park Service in the 1970s.)

For its part, Eastern State cites challenges with introducing visitors to its "Big Graph" (of statistics on American incarceration) in a way that is confrontational enough to be impactful, but not so confrontational as to frighten visitors away: "The challenge is always to take [the visitor] and pull them in with something like the Big Graph. Because the Big Graph doesn't look like you're about to be lectured about privilege in America…You end up in a conversation, maybe, about privilege in America, but it's meant to be a much less aggressive sort of way to lure people into the conversation."

b) Bringing interpretation from concept to implementation

The researcher then posed the following scenario to interview participants: "Please think about the most recent instance in which your museum integrated social content into its interpretive materials. Describe how that process occurred—for instance, who suggested the action, how did the idea move forward, and how did staff work to bring the idea to fruition? Would you say that this is the typical procedure for introducing social content into your museum's interpretation?" Some of the responses to this question speak to the last theme discussed: how sites decide which social issues to address. A second theme, discussed below, concerns bringing museum interpretation from an initial concept to implementation, and the factors that the case study institutions find most significant to this process.

Managing visitor expectations. One sub-theme, which appeared across all three case study institutions, involves managing visitor expectations. Ohio State Reformatory was the first institution to articulate this idea. In describing their redesigned website, one interviewee mentioned that because of the site's diverse audience (including some history buffs, some Hollywood fans, and some people simply interested in incarceration), "We kind of came up with three themes for the website, which mirror the themes that we have to address here…I wanted people to really feel that…after visiting our website, that they've had a chance to know what to expect. I think managing our visitors' expectations is really important."

Similarly, Eastern State speaks of the delicate balance between providing content that is meaningful to the staff and mission, versus meeting visitors' expectations: "If someone comes in wanting to hear about the escape attempts and Al Capone…you can really ambush that person and force them to have a conversation that they're not excited to have." Alcatraz echoed the sentiment that "You need to have knowledge of your audience; you need to know who they are.

That's very key, because you want to meet the visitors where they're at, have some understanding of what they already know, a bit about their background."

Constraints/Pragmatic concerns. A second sub-theme that arose during the discussion of bringing interpretative ideas from concept to implementation was that of pragmatism. Like any institution, these three case institutions face both internal constraints and external pressures within which they must act. For Ohio State Reformatory, the limited size and resources of the institution, and its rural location, place very real constraints on the types of programs and materials that staff can initiate. For one staff member at Eastern State Penitentiary, visitors' limited time and attention spans provide some practical constraints: "I'm working on this new exhibit right now, and I'm realizing that people will probably spend about five minutes in the exhibit. Maybe they'll spend ten. But they're not going to spend half an hour." Additionally, ESP was the only case that described a prototype-and-evaluation process for new interpretive activities; sometimes the prototype fails, or audience feedback causes staff to reconsider some or all of a new idea. Finally, Alcatraz faces challenges almost opposite to those of OSR: the notoriety of the site creates immense visitorship that can be logistically challenging:

> How to make [an art exhibit] happen on an island that is already sold-out, that is already packed by 5,000 visitors a day during the summertime, 3,000 visitors a day during the wintertime….We needed to address safety issues…and so the number of people, that ratio with the number of staff…a challenge is to have the staffing available to do say, programs for smaller audiences.

C) Techniques and strategies used to interpret social issues at the case study museums

To collect data regarding which particular strategies each case study institution is using to address social issues, the researcher prompted participants, "Please describe the methods that your museum is using presently, or has used in the past, to speak to the social aspects of

incarceration" and "Based on the nature of your institution, do certain interpretive methods lend themselves to addressing social content more than others? What are those methods, and what makes them a good choice for your museum?" The data reveal nine interpretive techniques or strategies that utilized across the research sites, including: guided tours, self-guided audio tours, visitor interactions with former inmates, literature and archives, public programs, art installations, exhibits, technology, and visual aids. Following is a discussion of this data.

Guided tours. All three cases utilize guided tours, in which a front-line staff member leads a group of visitors through the site and speaks directly with the visitors to help them to make sense of interpretive content. At OSR these tour guides are volunteers, while at ESP and Alcatraz they are paid staff. (They are National Park Service rangers at Alcatraz.) "We do guided tours," said one staff member at the Ohio State Reformatory. "Those…could never be replaced...nothing will ever replace that dialogue with the tour guide." The other two sites elaborate even further on the idea of dialogue, discussing the specific ways in which guided tours present an opportunity for informational exchange between guides and museum visitors. For instance, an interviewee at Eastern State described their guided tours as:

> A lot of open-ended questions…the tour guide doesn't have any sort of stance on it; it's just creating dialogue in the tour group. So lots of like, 'How does this reflect on us as a society, all of this statistical information?'

A respondent at Alcatraz expressed a similar tour structure, stating, "There's no wrong answer…The ranger response is more along the lines of simply encouraging more discussion, rather than giving a personal response to what the visitors say."

Self-guided audio tours. In addition to guided tours, each of the cases studied provides visitors with the option of participating in a self-guided audio tour. The audio guides from all three cases incorporate the actual voices of individuals who were both formerly incarcerated and

formerly employed at their respective institutions. Eastern State Penitentiary stands out from the other two cases in that it also includes the voices of "outside" professionals whose expertise speaks to the social aspects of incarceration, including a psychologist, a political scientist, a sociologist, and a former prison counselor—as well as the voices of artists whose installations are on display at ESP. Alcatraz, for its part, supplements the voices of its various narrators with sound effects, such as cell doors clanging shut, emergency sirens blaring, or gunshots being fired. (The content of these audio tours will be discussed in greater depth later in this section.) Staff at Alcatraz, in particular, expressed particular pride in their site's audio tour, saying, for example, "One thing I would point out…is the quality of the audio tour that's been developed here for the island. Because I get so many comments from visitors saying, 'This is the best audio tour I've ever heard.'"

Visitor Interactions with Former Inmates. Another interpretive method utilized across cases is to provide opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals to interact directly with museum visitors—although, interestingly, the three cases represent three very different variations on enacting this theme. Alcatraz invites former prisoners into the museum for book signings. Several men who spent time behind bars at Alcatraz have written memoirs of the experience—noting, ironically, that the opportunity to sell these stories sometimes provides them with a means of earning a legitimate income for the first time in years. "That gives visitors a chance to speak, or to have a one-on-one short conversation with that person…and they can ask them anything they want," said one interviewee. At OSR, the rationale between the prisoner-visitor interface is similar, but the methodology is different. At this site, former prisoners work as volunteer tour guides (although not all tour guides are former prisoners). "It just kicks it off to a

higher level of authenticity," said one interview participant. "We have three [former prisoners] right now that we work with regularly that are just wonderful."

In even greater contrast, Eastern State Penitentiary represents a departure from the other cases in both rationale and methodology. ESP recently hired a formerly incarcerated individual onto its front-line Visitor Services team, in a non-touring capacity, but this case is unique in that interviewees described ESP's hiring decision as a means of "walking the walk" regarding social justice for former prisoners. "These guys and women have a really, really hard time getting work once they get out, so let's do our part at least a little bit to create one position," said one interviewee. "You know, we're not going to change the world, but it's one step." The same individual then went on to recount the ways in which ESP struggled greatly with the ethical and practical implications of that staffing decision:

> We started to think about, well, what does that *mean,* if he gives tours? Does he have to deny that he's been in prison? That's not fair to him; he can't deny that he's been in prison...Do visitors even *know* that they're going to be talking to someone who did time? Does that take kids' tours out? Do we put him in front of a bunch of schoolkids? I mean, there were so many aspects of it that were so troublesome...just getting our lawyers and our insurance company to agree that we're going to hire someone with this background: it was a long process, and it took a *lot* of work to make sure that everyone was on board… I mean, it's scary, it's terrifying: I don't know what the hell we're doing. I resisted this for *years* when people said, 'You should hire former inmates to do the tours.' I'm not scared that they're going to like, hurt anybody—but scared of losing control of the narrative, of having someone who has so much more authority on the subject than we do…

It is notable that even in the face of this reticence, Eastern State, at the time of the interview for this study, was in the process of planning a small-scale, temporary pilot program to test the hiring of former prisoners as tour guides. The project was in the proposal phase, and included plans for a community advisory board and for extensive consultation with other (unnamed) sites that have experienced similar situations.

Literature and Archives. All three cases help visitors to make sense of history by providing–or preparing to provide–opportunities for visitors to conduct independent research. Ohio State Reformatory is beginning to develop a site-specific archives department that they hope to make available to the public in the next five years. Both Eastern State Penitentiary and Alcatraz Island stock various literature –both site-specific and more generally incarceration-themed–for purchase in their gift shops, and the staff at OSR expressed a desire to start building their gift shop inventory in a similar way.

Public Programs. Yet another theme that appears across case study institutions is that of public programs. Each of the three cases reportedly engages visitors with social content via events and activities that occur both during and outside of regular business hours. Ohio State Reformatory partners with outside organizations to host events on-site at OSR that revolve thematically around prison life—such as the *Ink in the Clink* tattoo convention coming in summer 2015 that draws attention to the importance of tattoos as a medium of cultural expression amongst prisoners. Similarly, Alcatraz Island hosts a number of programs both independently and in conjunction with partners, such as a series of after-hours tours meant to lure locals and young professionals to the site. Eastern State Penitentiary appears to host the greatest number and variety of public programs, including a series of guest lectures called the Searchlight Series, and special events such as Prison Food Weekend or the Pets in Prison Family Weekend.

Art Installations. All three cases indicated that they utilize art installations to communicate messages on social issues. Ohio State Reformatory partners with one of the neighboring operational prisons to host an annual show of prisoner art. "No one really realizes that these inmates work on these really wonderful pieces of art, and they never really get

displayed," one interviewee stated. "That kind of…helps them rehabilitate themselves a little, too."

In contrast, Eastern State and Alcatraz incorporate the installations of professional artists into their tour routes. ESP deliberately seeks out proposals from individuals whose art deals with contemporary criminal justice issues, such as transgender rights, victims' rights, anonymity and loss of identity, or media portrayal of prisons. These installations are temporary, but sometimes last as long as ten years. Alcatraz is just beginning to explore the possibilities of artist installations, but has had tremendous attendance and positive feedback regarding the multi-part installation *@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz* that was on display at the time of the researcher's visit.

Exhibits. This section has thus far focused on interpretive methods that are common to all of the case institutions, but there are also several methods that were not shared unanimously across cases. For example, only ESP and Alcatraz cite the use of exhibits that directly focus on social issues—for example, Eastern State's upcoming exhibit on prison gangs (*Beyond Capone: Prison Gangs Then and Now)* or Alcatraz's past exhibit on returning to society after serving time (*Life After Murder*). The researcher did not probe interview participants on the interpretive methods that they choose *not* to use, so OSR's ideas on exhibits are unclear.

Technology. Interestingly, an interviewee from OSR spoke extensively on the possibilities of technology in helping the site to communicate social content: "I really wanted to figure out a way to connect guests more–even guests that can't make it out for the full tour–using sites like Youtube or Twitter, social media and stuff like that…" While all three case sites do have web pages and Facebook pages, OSR is the only one that considered this as a means of interpreting social content.

Visual Aids. Both Eastern State Penitentiary and Alcatraz mentioned the use of visual aids in helping visitors to interpret history, but they do so in different ways. Some tour guides at Alcatraz opt to utilize photographic images to prompt visitor thinking and discussion. For instance:

> One of our rangers gives a facilitated dialogue program where she shows a bunch of photographic images from prisons, and it's everything from a Christmas tree at a Christmas party, to inmates playing instruments in a band, to some more bleak images. And she asks the question, 'What should prison look like? What's appropriate?'

Eastern State also uses its visual aids to spark discussion and critical thinking, but the implementation is quite different. At ESP, a large-scale stainless steel sculpture called the Big Graph stands in the middle of the guided and self-guided tour route, literally casting a shadow on visitors. This red and black graph immediately captures attention and provides a talking point. On one face, it displays a graph, to scale, of the rates of incarceration in the U.S. for the past several decades; the sharp increase since the 1970s draws attention to the severity of mass incarceration. On another face, the Big Graph situates several dozen countries according to their per capita rates of incarceration. The U.S. towers far above any other country–including Rwanda, Cuba, and Russia–which audience evaluation has shown to be one of the most startling aspects of the entire graph in terms of raw numbers. This part of the graph also separates the countries that practice capital punishment from those that do not, and both graphically and verbally demonstrates the lack of correlation between capital punishment and reduced rates of incarceration. Finally, another face of the Big Graph represents the racial disparity amongst America's prisoners; when controlled for race/ethnicity of respondents, audience research has shown that non-white visitors find this to be the most compelling aspect of the graph.

Results from Audio Tour Content Analysis

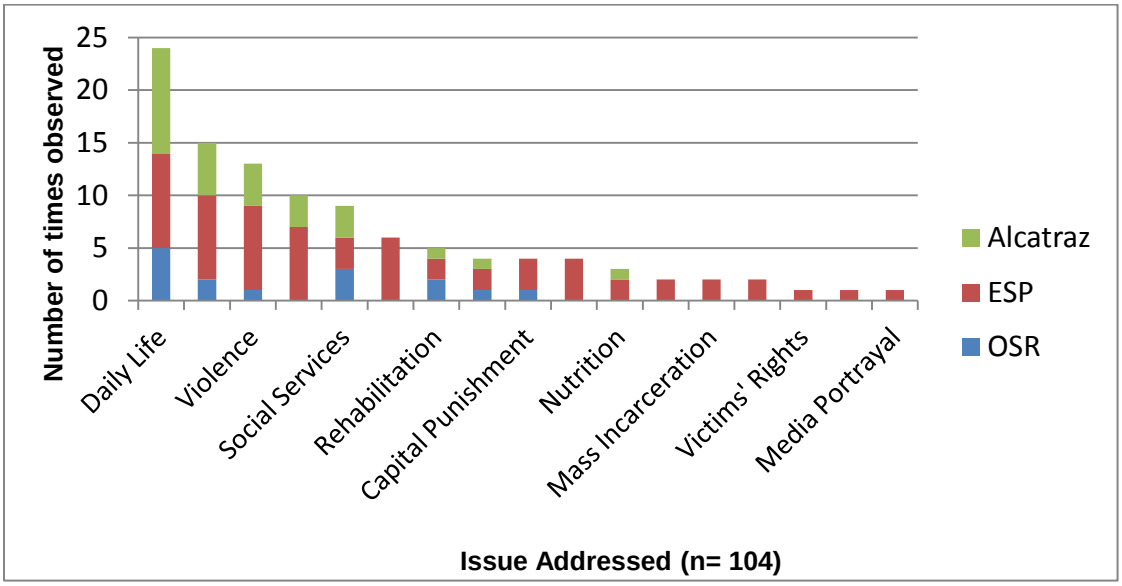

Figure 1

The content of the three research sites' audio tours falls within the realm of Research Question 2, *How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?* and corresponds with Theme b, self-guided audio tours. As such, this is the only section of Chapter 4 that incorporates two different methods of data collection: the staff interviews and the audio tour content analysis.

A total of 17 types of social issues were identified across the audio tours, many of them appearing several times both across and within sites. Figure 1 above shows the distribution of these instances of social issues across the three case study sites. Overall, Eastern State Penitentiary had the largest number of instances of the 104 social issues within the cases' audio tours (n=61); Alcatraz Island had 28 instances, and Ohio State Reformatory had 15 instances. What follows is a description of each of the types of social issues addressed within the audio tours at all three sites.

a) Significant interpretation

These are the topics that occurred most frequently across the three cases' audio tours.

Daily life/conditions in prison. The stories of daily life and prison conditions were conveyed by neutral narrators, former guards, and former prisoners, but this theme was particularly heavy on inmate voices. One former inmate from the Ohio State Reformatory described "the sound you could hear when people were in pain, when they're screaming, when they're scared, when they're mad…" In an equally striking show of emotion, "I was scared to death. You didn't know what was going to happen," confides a former prisoner from Eastern State.

Solitary confinement and violence. The next most common themes to appear in the audio tour content were solitary confinement and violence in prison. In following the general trend of the content analysis, Eastern State exhibited the most mentions of these two topics, followed by Alcatraz and then the Ohio State Reformatory. While none of the interviewees specifically mentioned the interpretation of violence during the interview process, respondents at OSR cited solitary confinement as one means of helping to raise awareness of contemporary criminal justice issues.

Again, the interpretation of violence and solitary confinement incorporate the voices of former inmates, former prison staff, and neutral narrators. In some cases, former inmates describe their own experiences in solitary confinement, as with one voice at Eastern State which recounts, "They had a couple of cells down there, which was very bad. There was no mattress in there. No blanket. Just a steel bed. Very small cell. You did anywhere from 10 to 30 days in there, sometimes just bread and water, or sometimes with diminishing meals. Like, maybe one

meal a day." In other cases, neutral narrators invite museum visitors to imagine themselves in that other world, e.g. "You may enter one of the cells if you wish" (Alcatraz).

Two of the sites are notable in their interpretations of violence: ESP is the only case of the three to address the topic of rape or sexual violence in its audio tour, while Alcatraz supplements its verbal descriptions of violent incidents with difficult-to-listen-to sound effects, such as the sound of a knife entering flesh or gun shots echoing in a hall of screaming voices. "I heard that old familiar pop-slap," recounts on former inmate at Alcatraz. "Just like an ice-pick, he stuck [a knife] in his back…"

b) Moderate interpretation

These are the issues which appear somewhat less frequently within and across the cases' audio tours.

Social services. One topic that appears less frequently, but across all of the cases, is that of social or medical services provided at each of the institutions. An interesting discrepancy in this data is that although the three sites mention this topic an equal number of times, they are at odds in the voices used to approach it. At OSR, this topic is addressed mostly through a neutral narrator, e.g. "In 1965, a [prison] high school was chartered, and officially called Fields High School, which ensured that there was no stigma attached to the inmates who earned their high school diploma there." Eastern State divides its interpretation of this theme between a former inmate and a contemporary psychologist, while Alcatraz interprets social services mainly through the voice of former prison staff. It is also notable that all three cases portray the provision of social and medical services through an historical light (reflecting the theme that

arose in the interviews of raising awareness of local history), while none of the sites mentions the use of, or lack of, social services in regards to contemporary incarceration.

Rehabilitation and social reentry/recidivism. The themes of rehabilitation and social reentry/recidivism were also addressed with moderate frequency across the three cases. Logically, these themes *should* enjoy a close relationship, with increased rehabilitative efforts theoretically resulting in more successful societal reentry and fewer cases of return to prison.

Rehabilitation was addressed only slightly more frequently than recidivism and societal reentry. The interpretation of these issues was relatively evenly dispersed across cases, with Eastern State showing a slight preference for the topic of recidivism over the other two sites. Various voices are used to convey these themes, even within a given case. For example, a neutral narrator at ESP states that "Without the aid of photography or fingerprinting, prison staff had no clear way of tracking inmates after their release, and the success of Eastern State Penitentiary remained the subject of debate," while former prisoner at that same site recounts, somewhat more emotionally, "I said, 'Once I get my foot outside this door, this prison door, they ain't never going to see me.' Because the guards used to say, 'Well, we'll see you in six months.'"

Capital punishment. A final topic that appeared with moderate frequency in cases' audio tours was capital punishment. OSR makes one mention of capital punishment, by a neutral narrator, which spans both historical and contemporary contexts: "Starting in 1885…the first inmates being executed were hanged for their crimes, until in 1897, the electric chair was introduced as a more 'humane' method of execution…The U.S. Supreme Court declared the death penalty unconstitutional in 1972, and the 65 inmates remaining on Ohio's death row had their sentences commuted to life in prison." The audio tour at Eastern State mentions capital punishment three times, all through the voice of a museum staff member, and portrayed as

historical facts mingled with pointed emphasis on contemporary justice, e.g. "On April 2nd, 1962 Elmo Smith was the 350th person to be executed in the electric chair in Pennsylvania. It was the last time the electric chair was used in this state. Today there are more than two hundred inmates on Pennsylvania's death row, and the state executes inmates using lethal injection." Alcatraz Island stands out in its avoidance of capital punishment in its audio tour.

c) Outliers

Of the ten remaining topics to appear in the audio tour content analysis–race, mass incarceration, mental illness, sexuality, nutrition, poverty, the media's relation to incarceration, gender, victims' rights, and political prisoners–eight appear only within Eastern State's audio tour. Part of this statistical difference is attributable to ESP's forward thinking in terms of art installations: audio blurbs about the media and incarceration, victims' rights, and political prisoners all appear in the audio guide because they are the subjects of installations that appear on the tour route. In other words, these three topics were unique to ESP, but not to ESP's audio tour.

Out of the ten topics listed above, which appear least frequently within the three cases' audio tours, one startling discrepancy is that *none* of those issues appears at the Ohio State Reformatory, while all ten appear at Eastern State Penitentiary. Again, though, three of these issues appear on the Eastern State audio tour because they were already addressed within artists' installations, while it was noted in the interview process that OSR does not utilize artist installations as an interpretive method.

One final discrepancy between the three cases' audio guides regards the topic of race. While race was the fourth most frequently breached topic, in terms of raw numbers, it has been

classified as an outlier here because it is interpreted so unevenly across sites. Of the ten mentions of race that the researcher noted during her content analysis, seven of these came from Eastern State, and none came from the Ohio State Reformatory. In addition, Alcatraz's interpretation places racial discrimination solely in the prison's past (e.g. "In the housing of inmates at Alcatraz, it was deemed necessary to keep the blacks separate from the whites"), while Eastern State approaches race in a way that is pointedly contemporary and meant to spur critical thinking (e.g. "The crisis of race and incarceration has only grown worse since Eastern State closed" and "Why do you think the connections between race, poverty and incarceration remain so strong, nearly 200 years after these patterns were seen among Eastern State's first inmates?").

Interestingly, while race is a relatively prominent topic on Eastern State's audio tour, staff at that institution revealed, during the interview process, that this topic has been an especially difficult one for them to address. One respondent, in particular, elaborated on the difficulty of addressing this subject matter in a way that feels genuine, sensitive, and appropriate:

> I'm really insecure about making sensitive decisions around race with just the staff that we have. The real problem is that our staff isn't diverse enough…So I established an advisory committee [on race] that meets quarterly, and I promised them they'll meet forever: four times a year, in perpetuity. And the nice thing about that is that you can't lie to them… That was one of the best things I ever did, actually, was having that race advisory board. It was one of those things that came out that was like, I will never enjoy talking about race. I freaking hate it; I'll never like it. But I definitely get less scared after time…My biggest fear about talking about race in the prison system was that it was going to reinforce negative stereotypes. And I've grown to think that knuckleheads are knuckleheads, and there's a certain percentage of our population that's just going to say something really ignorant. You can't really program around them, because you can't really say *anything* that they're not going to say something ignorant [in response]… It's just really challenging.

Research Question 3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?

The third research question of this study regards the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting social content: how does the interpretation of difficult content work either for or against institutions? What is the impact of this kind of work on the institutions' stakeholders? What are the perceived risks and benefits for institutions that incorporate contested social content in their interpretive materials and programs? The data for this research question were consistent across sites regarding affordances (theme a), and there was only slightly less consensus regarding the constraints (theme b). Haunted houses (theme c) seem to reside somewhere between an affordance and a constraint and are thus reported separately. Finally, theme d (institutional structures and values) regards the practical lessons that the research sites have learned from their successful work in interpreting social content.

a) Affordances

Increased visitation/revenue. All three cases reported that they have experienced an increase in visitation and increased revenue since the introduction of more socially meaningful content into their interpretive programs and materials. This seems to suggest that audiences crave this type of content, that they are drawn to topics rich in meaning that offer opportunities to engage deeply in the museum experience. A respondent from Eastern State Penitentiary articulated his initial concerns around this trend: "We would have had a real issue in the last three years if our attendance had dropped. Like, what would happen if suddenly visitors stopped coming here right as we started talking about these really depressing and troubling subjects? We

would have had to do some real soul searching like, 'Well, is it worth it, or do we try to scale this back? But the numbers have been increasing…'

Enhanced reputation. The second, and closely related, affordance that arose across cases regards interview participants' perceptions that addressing social issues enhances their museum's reputation in the public eye. "One little aspect that's starting to build up here is that people are starting to realize like, this is actually becoming a more legitimized museum," said one interviewee from OSR. "We build our reputation; that's the institutional advantage," said a participant from Alcatraz Island. "I think everybody stands to gain from public engagement in the issues out here, the issues represented by Alcatraz."

Increased staff satisfaction/sense of meaning. One of the most promising affordances for the researcher, who is an emerging museum professional, is that addressing social issues affords museum staff with a greater job satisfaction and sense of meaning. "It can feel really good to be a part of that, to be a part of an institution that's doing that," said someone from Eastern State Penitentiary. "[Addressing social issues means] making good on the promise of what this building could be," replied a second staff member from ESP. Alcatraz raised the stakes even further:

> There's an institutional advantage, but really it's a societal advantage…If the park can serve as a forum, a place where people feel like it's safe…to be talking about their opinion…I think we do a service to society by providing an opportunity for people to discuss these issues….Through the facilitated dialogue process, we're teaching civic skills: listening skills, understanding another person's point of view, that sort of thing. And these are important transferable skills that will potentially help folks to participate, to help them in other situations as well. So I think we're serving society.

b) Constraints

Recall that for the purposes of this research, social issues are understood to be disputed, or in some way problematic. While the data derived from staff interviews was largely hopeful, the difficulty of addressing contentious material should not be ignored. The interview participants all expressed great amounts of pride, satisfaction, and confidence relating to their work in interpreting social issues, but they were also frank in speaking to the doubts, fears, and dangers associated with this work.

Potential for controversy/damage to reputation. Interestingly, for instance, while all three cases stated that their institutional reputations had been enhanced in practice, they were all very aware of the potential for the opposite to occur: addressing difficult content introduces the possibility of controversy or damage to the institutional reputation. Choosing to address politically loaded topics is flirting with danger, so to speak. "I mean, there are just people that feel so passionately one way or another, about something, that you have to prepare yourself for the way that this particular information is going to land. Because it doesn't always land well," said an interviewee from OSR. "All of our Board members are members of the community…it does reflect on them personally…so when we do make decisions, we have to think about that," she continued. Respondents at ESP voiced two fears around controversy. "It's scary. We could really mess up. We could offend someone really bad[ly], a visitor. We could ruin our reputation," said one interviewee. "I was really afraid of being accused of driving some sort of a political agenda," continued another. "Like, do I sound like just some liberal bleeding heart who had a gripe with conservatives?" Surprisingly, Alcatraz Island expressed the least amount of doubts and fears regarding the interpretation of problematic content, stating, simply, "Every once in awhile there's a resistance among a visitor, or a certain stakeholder."

Concerns of power dynamics/exploitation. Hearkening back to issues discussed in Chapter 2 of this paper (particularly the sections regarding dark tourism theory and the politics of interpretation), both Ohio State Reformatory and Eastern State Penitentiary expressed concerns regarding the power dynamics of addressing incarceration, or about the potential for (even unwitting) exploitation of the subjects or subject matter. "It's just like the 9/11 museum," said an interviewee from OSR. "You know, putting a museum on a gravesite and stuff. It's…not that we're trying to exploit those peoples' lives; it's that we're just trying to share the history of what it meant." Another OSR interviewee continued with a particularly salient example:

> We just received word that we will be receiving the actual electric chair that executed over 300 people in the state of Ohio, with all of the uh…accoutrements…[The Board is] excited; we all are…but we've got to be prepared for that, and how can we train our volunteers, our tour guides, our guests, and even ourselves, to answer those questions appropriately? You know, what's our responsibility to that history of execution, without exploiting it?

The staff at Eastern State expressed concerns about the majority of their staff being Caucasian and having had no formal criminal justice training or first-hand experience living within the prison system: "I think just having a sense of the dynamics about what's at play with what we're talking about is something that I think about, that it feels a little bit like a risk or something. Or like, 'What do we know? How dare we say this?'" A second interviewee from ESP responded in a manner more in line with the staff from the Ohio State Reformatory, regarding the exploitation of the subject matter in general. "I feel like a war profiteer sometimes," he said. "Like [mockingly] 'My job satisfaction had been fantastic ever since I discovered how deep the civil rights abuses are in our nation's prisons…'"

Potential to be internally divisive. Another constraint cited by both OSR and ESP was the potential for controversial content to prove internally divisive. According to a staff member from OSR, "In an organization like this, where it's a labor of love, and you're fueled by your

passion for it, it can sometimes be hard to implement change. People feel very protective over that." Interviewees at ESP were even more frank about the (actual and potential) institutional fallout from interpreting troubling subject matter: "We've lost staff because of it," one respondent said. "I think that five years ago, it would have divided our Board," said another. "And I think that if it had divided the Board, the non-social issues side of the Board would have won…and then it would have cost us years…until we would have gone back to it…"

Factors unique to nature of institution. Finally, as was demonstrated previously, individual institutions must always consider and work within factors unique to their particular context. In this case, Ohio State Reformatory acknowledged a level of discomfort or difficulty in that the interpretation of content is still largely uncharted territory within their museum: "Since [the current interpretive staff] started [just a few years ago], we came on and had to kind of find our own way a little bit." For Eastern State Penitentiary, because of the way the organization is structured, "There's always a tension within our organization between the impulsiveness and the bureaucracy. The impulsiveness is also the leanness, like 'Let's just go do this thing'…[but] what happens is you get staff burnout, and people get tired of their jobs taking over their lives, and they miss their spouses and children." Alcatraz described a constraint that sounds, at first, like it should be advantageous: the site is immensely popular. "Everybody's seen the movies," says one interviewee. "Everybody's seen *The Rock*; everybody's seen the Clint Eastwood movie *Escape from Alcatraz* and has heard stories of Al Capone. And that's great. But the challenge for us is redirecting that Hollywood mythology into what Alcatraz was *really* about. And that's no easy task…" Again, the data from the group interviews revealed a good deal of consensus across cases regarding both the positive and negative aspects of tackling socially meaningful content,

but ultimately, every museum will face unique opportunities and constraints based on the context within which it operates.

c) Regarding hauntings

One additional topic bears consideration here, in that it *could* have proved to be a significant constraint, had the case institutions not learned to handle it appropriately. Two of the three cases studied–with Alcatraz Island being the outlier–host after-hours ghost tours and Halloween haunted houses as major sources of funding for their daytime operations. The researcher was particularly interested in this theme, as the interpretation of both social issues and haunted history within the same site seems almost paradoxical: one speaks to the humanizing and consciousness-raising potential of dark tourism, while the other tends toward the sensational and ghoulish. However, the staff at both the Ohio State Reformatory and Eastern State Penitentiary were very frank in discussing their concerns about this topic, as well as pointing to the ways that such activities, while not mission-fulfilling, hold a very important place in the museums' functioning as mission-enabling audience favorites.

Concerns. For the Ohio State Reformatory, the concerns with opening up the museum to the haunted aspect reside mainly internally. "It's such a touchy subject for us," said one interviewee. "It is not something that's mission-based for us. And it's not something that we necessarily want to overshadow the real history and the real issues here." Eastern State Penitentiary, in addition to facing discomfort from certain staff members, has fielded objections from outside the museum regarding their haunted house. "[Another interpretive staff member] and I had lunch with one of the organizations that were invited to the listening summit, and [a community partner] called us out immediately about Terror Behind the Walls…[They said,]

'This is your reputation. People don't understand what you are, because they know you from Terror Behind the Walls.'"

Value. However, while the case study institutions were candid in discussing their own misgivings, and the potential for damage to the institutional reputation from "haunted" programming, they were equally direct in asserting such programs' value in terms of earned revenue for the institution. "We rely on that to do restoration, and it's an absolutely amazing fundraiser," said an interviewee from OSR. A staff member at ESP echoed that sentiment: "Hey, we know this is funky. But this supports our mission, and that's why we do it. And our mission is to talk about [social] issues."According to staff members, just one month of Terror Behind the Walls raised enough funds to cover 65% of ESP's entire operating budget in 2013. "It pays for things like staffing, our tour guides' salaries. It pays for projects that aren't sexy enough to get grants, like a dry standpipe running through the building for fires. It pays for a good chunk of the artist installation programs. It pays for a lot of the roofs that are put in, to stay open during the daytime…" In fact, the "haunted" ESP precedes the historic ESP: the first haunted event at Eastern State took place in 1991, and raised the restoration revenue that allowed the historic site to open to the public three years later.

One additional, and unexpected, finding was that both of these cases find value in their haunted houses outside the realm of finances. For ESP, the reputation of the haunted house draws in many visitors who are unfamiliar with the museum's daytime programming. The staff are diligent in their efforts to convert haunted house visitors into daytime visitors by advertising their daytime tours at Terror Behind the Walls, handing out passes to visit during the day, and tracking the number of visitors who return with those passes. As it turns out, many visitors do end up returning to ESP to experience their daytime programming after attending Terror Behind

the Walls, and while many of ESP's daytime visitors are non-local tourists, "Terror Behind the Walls brings in the local community, and brings in a much more ethnically diverse visitorship." Additionally, the staff at ESP spoke at length about their attempts to remain respectful to their position as a prison and an historical site, while providing audiences with thrills during the nighttime tours:

> We won't have any execution scenes. We never, obviously, make comments around race or sexual orientation or sexuality…Now, a visitor might come through and make that joke naively; people do that on daytime tours. 'Oh, don't drop the soap'—these are things that people have in their brains, these phrases. But we would never go anywhere near that.

For Ohio State Reformatory, addressing the site's paranormal reputation represents an unexpected means of honoring their visitors' needs and expectations:

> It took me awhile to really grasp why people are interested in that. And it wasn't until we had a group come here that deals with, um—it's kind of like a Make-a-Wish Foundation for adults. And this gentleman was dying, and I think that…just like this idea that people don't get to look inside of prisons, you know…We all know about death, but we know so little about it. And I think trying to investigate for something more, something greater, is a human condition, and it's not really that far off from what, I think, people think about all the time.

d) Institutional structure and values

The fourth theme to emerge regarding Research Question 3, *What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?* regards institutional structure and values. The following themes are related, but not identical, to affordances; these are believes and practices that, through the everyday work of interpreting social issues, the three case study institutions have found particularly useful or meaningful. To gather these data, the researcher asked interview participants, "What can other museums learn from your institution, in terms of the theoretical or practical aspects of interpreting social issues?"

Internal collaboration. All three cases stressed the importance of internal collaboration. Because contentious subject matter opens the museum to potential controversy from outside sources, participants felt that it was extremely important that all of the internal stakeholders be "on board" with the interpretive process—and they felt that the best way to ensure this buy-in was to give all of the staff a voice. "If you don't have that three-part trust system between the Board, the staff and the volunteers, it can be very hard to move change forward, or to address new things in a way that people feel safe and comfortable with," said one interviewee from Ohio State Reformatory.

Change/experimentation. The Ohio State Reformatory and Eastern State Penitentiary cited the importance of change and experimentation for helping their institutions to incorporate new interpretive content or methods. "We're also really open to experimenting and evolving, and things change," said one respondent at ESP. Unsurprisingly, Alcatraz did not express this penchant for change, as federal structures and regulatory processes are almost surely prohibitive in this regard.

Front-line staff. All three sites expressed the need to hire and train high-quality front-line staff (such as docents or tour guides). This makes sense, as front-line staff are the individuals that interact with guests most directly and are responsible, in large part, for imparting the museum's values on a day-to-day basis. The focus on these staff members is also related to the various sites' interest in dialogue and exchange: the ability to lead a successful dialogue with visitors is a delicate skill, one that must be deliberately cultivated. Eastern State Penitentiary was unique in that it admitted to having lost some staff members when the institution began to shift to new interpretive methods that some of the front-line team found uncomfortable. Fortunately, new staff members are hired with the new interpretive standards in mind: "The people coming in

were told specifically that this is happening. So they had that expectation coming in, and they weren't surprised by it."

Strong leadership. Similarly, both ESP and OSR addressed the theme of strong staff leadership and Board leadership. "We have a very active Board here," said a staff member from the Ohio State Penitentiary. "They're very involved in, you know, the overarching mission and direction of the Reformatory, but also, the programming and the day-to-day operations…but in terms of who really decides [what happens]: it would really come down to the Executive Director." It makes sense that Alcatraz Island is an outlier in terms of this theme, as Alcatraz is not bound by the traditional organizational structure of a standard museum; there is no Board of Directors to manage that site. Notably, both Eastern State and the Ohio State Reformatory discussed having had to wait for the appropriate internal political climate, particularly in terms of the Board, to begin addressing social content. "There's been a lot of change in our Board recently. I think that five years ago, [addressing social issues] would have divided our Board," said a respondent from ESP—whereas now, the interpretive methods already in place "tell our Board of Directors, 'If you join this Board, this is something we're going to be talking about.'" Similarly, for over 20 years, the staff at OSR focused on fulfilling the museum's mission of physical restoration, so that "now we have a little bit more time and room and resources to address…a lot of the social issues."

Partnerships. All three of the case institutions placed a great value on initiating and maintaining partnerships with external organizations. As a respondent from Eastern State Penitentiary stated, "I think that there's also fresh ideas coming in a lot from our partners in the field. I think being able to identify who you can partner with and who you can learn from is a really strong skill to have…" This individual then indicated that there is value in admitting where

the institution's own skills and knowledge fall short, and seeking outside groups or individuals who can aid in "filling in the gaps." The particular form of partnerships varies according to the needs of the institution; what all three cases share is that they value the *concept* of alliances. OSR, for instance, tends to open its premises to outside organizations to host events that tie back to the museum's values and mission, such as the vintage baseball games or tattoo convention that were mentioned previously in this chapter. ESP collaborates with social service organizations to provide speakers for its lecture series, to host public events, and to comprise advisory committees on specific topics (such as race) that are outside of the museum staffs' expertise. Alcatraz, for its part, partners largely with community groups that work with economically underserved audiences, to increase the diversity of visitors who are able to visit the island.

Information exchange between museums. Finally, in a similarly collaborative spirit, all of the case sites mentioned the value in exchanging information and ideas with other museums. Interviewees not only cited other museums that they look to for guidance and inspiration, but other museums that have sought out their own input as well. For instance, both OSR and Alcatraz have looked to Eastern State Penitentiary as a model for interpreting incarceration, while the staff at ESP, for their part, particularly admire the work being done at the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle, the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum in Chicago, and the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City, amongst others. The interpretive staff from Alcatraz and ESP have both visited each others' institutions for advice and suggestions, and staff members from ESP have traveled to Ossining, New York to discuss their work with both county planners and interested members of the public regarding the proposed Sing Sing Historic Prison Museum.

Tenacity. Respondents at the Ohio State Reformatory and Eastern State Penitentiary mentioned the importance of maintaining one's personal values when attempting to bring social

content into the museum. Staff members at each of these institutions had to wait for several years, in the face of opposition from museum leadership, for the internal political climate to turn in their favor. "I think that five years ago, it would have divided our Board," said a senior staff member at ESP. "And I think that if it had divided the Board, the non-social issues side of the Board would have won…and then it would have cost us years–like, probably until the next person was in my job–until we would have gone back to it..." Similarly, a respondent at OSR stated that "When we started, our institution's mission was, first and foremost, to save and restore the building. We've had the building for 21 years now...The major restoration projects are almost done, and so I think that…now we [staff members] have a little bit more time and room and resources to address, through exhibits and interpretive materials." It was by tenaciously holding onto their values, and waiting for the institutional tide to turn in their favor, that these staff members were eventually able to make headway into the interpretation of social content where before it had been an impossibility.

Serving audience. Finally, interview participants across all three cases emphasized that museums must serve their audiences, and the interviewees demonstrated multiple ways of doing so through the examples that they provided. One means of serving the audience, which was articulated by respondents across all the cases, was the importance of balancing social content with fun. In a way, this hearkens back to the idea of meeting audience expectations, but it is even more specific. This quote from a staff member at Eastern State Penitentiary articulates this concept well:

> I also think we know how to strike a balance, and not overload visitors with social justice issues. So there is still Al Capone's cell. That's never *not* going to be there. So we kind of get people in the door. Maybe they're interested in Al Capone, maybe they're interested in ghosts. And then [we] can take them to beyond those things, into something deeper that maybe they didn't think they were going to discover that day…I have to just keep reminding myself to keep trying to tell

> those stories and to keep giving our staff the tools to tell those stories well. Because if someone comes in wanting to hear about the escape attempts and Al Capone…you can't really ambush that person and force them to have a conversation that they're not excited to have.

In fact, the interview participants at Alcatraz, another prison where Al Capone was incarcerated, also mentioned their programming occasionally being "derailed" by Capone's popularity. For sites which deal with larger-than-life historical events and persons, then, the data suggests that, to some extent, it is beneficial for institutions to embrace those celebrity cases and to provide the information that draws so many visitors in—so long as staff work to strike a mindful balance between those high-profile events and people, and the larger story that the site aims to convey.

A second, and related, means of serving the museum's audience, which was expressed across all three research sites, was taking actions to increase audience diversity. For OSR, that diversity refers to the variety of interests: as indicated previously, that site strives to provide multi-faceted content that will be engaging to history buffs, Halloween thrill seekers, and the *Shawshank* crowd alike. For ESP and Alcatraz, a more salient issue is the demographic makeup of audiences: these sites strive for greater inclusion across racial, ethnic, or economic boundaries. In any case, a respondent from ESP articulated this theme well, when he said, "I think different interpretations work for different people and connect with people in different ways."

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which historical prison museums interpret the social aspects of incarceration. Data were derived from group interviews with interpretive staff, and content analysis of audio tours, at three historical prison museums. It is hoped that the results of this study will prove applicable to other types of institutions seeking to address social issues within their own interpretation.

The literature suggests that museums have both a responsibility (Cameron, 2012; Low, 2012; Weil, 2002) and a unique opportunity (Macdonald, 2011; Ross, 2004) to impact the social wellbeing of visitors, of communities, and of society at large, based on the subject matter that they choose to address and the ways in which they do so. Interpretation is powerful: the literature suggests that even the most well-meaning interpretation inherently involves a power dynamic between interpreter and visitor (Garton-Smith, 2000; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Mesa-Bains, 2012; Wilson, 2008), and that the ways in which museums interpret current and past events can either legitimize, or further marginalize, vulnerable populations such as those most affected by incarceration (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). Furthermore, the impacts of museum interpretation spread beyond the four walls of museums themselves, with the potential to come to fruition in larger societal impressions or even policy changes (Hirschfield and Piquero, 2010; The Museums Association, 2013).

While much is said in the museological literature about the potential for museums to impact the greater social good through the interpretation of social issues, this same literature provides few concrete examples of how to do so. Even amongst the many theorists who express the need for museums to make space for multiple voices and viewpoints (Anderson, 2012; Bennett, 2011; Black, 2012; Garton-Smith, 2000, Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Leon, 1987; Mesa-

Bains, 2012; Patraka, 2001; Ševčenko, 2004; Wilson, 2008) or to foster healthy dialogue (International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, 2014), the literature is focused almost exclusively on theory, with few forays into on-the-ground practice.

Through group interviews with the interpretive staff at three historical prison museums, the researcher sought to understand how these sites perceive their role in interpreting social issues, how they have worked to interpret social content, what they perceive to be the affordances and constraints of doing this work, and specific lessons learned from their experiences.

Results suggest that these socially-minded institutions seek to create an impact on their visitors, their local community, and on society at large, and that they do so by calling attention to contemporary criminal justice issues and stimulating dialogue and critical thinking. While social issues are not always explicitly written into these sites' mission statements, the staff at these case study institutions keep social aspects in mind while performing their jobs, creating a sort of "unwritten rule" that their institution will seek to impact the greater social good through the topics they choose to address and the means by which they do so.

The three cases studied utilize a variety of interpretive materials and programs to convey a social message, including: guided/dialogue-focused tours, self-guided audio tours, technology, opportunities for independent research, public events and programs, art installations, exhibits and visual aids, and making space in the museum for formerly incarcerated individuals to communicate with visitors. In the words of one interviewee, "different interpretations work for different people and connect with people in different ways."

Through audio guides alone, the cases were shown to be working to interpret 17 separate social issues, including (but not limited to): daily life and conditions in prison, recidivism,

violence, solitary confinement, capital punishment, racism, poverty, and rehabilitation. While much of the work done at these institutions is based on a strong institutional philosophy, the data also demonstrates that the cases make room for visitor expectations in the decision making process, and that they sometimes make concessions due to pragmatic factors beyond staffs' control.

The cases in this study benefit from both strong leadership and widespread staff collaboration. It is very important that all staff, Board members, and volunteers be "on board" with the institution's social mission, to present a unified institutional face regarding the theory and practice of addressing divisive or contested content. While these findings may seem like common sense, until now there has been little empirically supported data in the field to back up this somewhat intuitive idea.

At the same time that organizations are working to create a solid and unified institutional voice, change and experimentation, as well as partnerships with external organizations and informational exchange between museums, are institutional values shared across cases. The cases also stressed the importance of serving diverse audiences, of balancing fun with social content, and of making way for (perhaps unorthodox) mission-enabling activities as a means of underwriting mission-fulfilling ones.

The three case study institutions seem to have done their homework: while, as previously noted, museological literature stresses the importance of providing multiple voices when communicating an historical narrative, the museum professionals interviewed also championed the theory of dialogue and making room for multiple perspectives. In fact, a content analysis of the cases' audio tours indicates that these three sites utilize the voices (both literally and

figuratively) of many stakeholders related to incarceration, from former guards and inmates to social science professionals.

The museum professionals interviewed for this study were frank in recounting the perceived risks and dangers of interpreting contentious subject matter such as the issues that surround incarceration in America. Tackling difficult subject matter can prove internally divisive, and can make the museum vulnerable to criticism or a damaged reputation. There are also power dynamics at play, particularly with issues on which staff members might have no first-hand experience (such as the experience of racism both within and outside of prisons). At the same time, all three cases cited the institutional and individual affordances that balance these constraints, such as better visitation, increased revenues, and an enhanced sense of meaning amongst staff.

In many ways, the three cases studied for this research reside along a continuum, with Eastern State Penitentiary arguably emerging as an expert in the field of social interpretation, Ohio State just beginning to approach such work, and Alcatraz falling somewhere in the middle. While many of the findings of this research were expressed across multiple sites, the uniqueness and idiosyncrasies of individual museums also hold important lessons for the field. Ultimately, while this case study can provide some rough guidelines, the data from these interviews suggests that successfully interpreting social content is always somewhat context-dependent and requires flexibility, creativity, and the courage to admit when something is not working.

Finally, one of the most important lessons of all is that the interpretation of social issues is difficult. It is scary. This work requires time, effort, tenacity, and a willingness to face the potential pitfalls. However, as an emerging museum professional, the researcher takes heart that even leaders in the field have difficulties addressing certain topics; even very courageous

institutions face fears and discomforts. The data shows that the interpretation of social content may not be easy, but it is a labor of love—and that for those who perform this work every day, the benefits are often perceived to outweigh its dangers and disadvantages.

While it is the goal of this study to provide a set of best practices that may be useful for other types of institutions, another important lesson learned from this research is that, ultimately, individual museums must plan their interpretive processes based on what is right for their institution. Much of the content from this study's staff interviews and audio tour content analysis may be applicable to other institutions, but not all of it will be. Each of the cases studied is working within its own set of boundaries, whether that be the community in which the museum is located, the administration to which it is beholden, or even budget constraints. While the cases studied here go some distance in addressing the practicalities that much museological literature leaves unaddressed, it is also worth noting that there are times in which a strong philosophy–a desire to do good, and a belief that this is possible–may be shared across institutions or social issues, while certain interpretive methods may not.

Without prompting, professionals at all three of the museums studied for this research indicated the great value that they find in exchanging ideas and information with other museums and community partners. It is my hope that this study will provide a basis for further exploration into the topic of museum interpretation and the potential for museums to impact the greater social good, and that my own audience will interpret these findings not as hard-and-fast rules, but as guidelines to be adapted and expanded upon as other museums see fit.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

Interpreting Incarceration: Addressing Social Issues at Historical Prison Museums Interview Guide

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Consent Script

I am asking you to participate in a small group interview that is part of my Master's Thesis work at the University of Washington in Seattle. The purpose of this research is to explore the ways in which historical prison museums interpret the social aspects of incarceration. I am audio recording this interview, but only I will listen to the recording. Your institution may be identified in my published report. Your participation in this interview is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits, and you may discontinue participation at any time. If you have any questions now or in the future, you may contact me via email; I've provided you with my email address. Or you may contact my Thesis Committee Chair; I've also provided you with her contact information. Do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in this interview?

Interview Guide

Thank you all for taking the time to speak with me today. Before we begin, I'd like to be sure that we are all on the same page with our terminology. For the purposes of this interview, a "social issue" or "social aspect" may be understood as a condition or set of conditions that: influences the wellbeing –physical, emotional, or otherwise– of a considerable number of individuals within a society, is largely beyond an individual's control, and is disputed or considered problematic by some segment of society. In this context, "historical prison museums" are sites that were once operating prisons, but have since been decommissioned and opened to the public as tourist sites. "Interpretation" refers, broadly, to those materials and activities that museums utilize to help visitors to make sense of their visit. Does anybody have any questions with the vocabulary that I'm using today? Does anyone want to suggest any changes to this vocabulary?

Great. Now I'd like to begin the interview by discussing some ideas around [insert name of museum]'s mission and desired impacts. This museum has been identified either in the professional literature, or by other professionals in the field, as an institution that is working to address, or thinking about how to address, the social issues around incarceration. With that in mind:

1) What is the impact that your institution would like to have on your visitors? On the community in which you are located?

2) Do you hope to have a larger societal impact as well? How would you like that to look?

3) Does the idea of addressing social issues fit into your institution's mission? In what way(s)?

Now I'd like to gather some information on what the interpretation of social issues actually looks like at this museum.

4) Please describe the methods that your museum is using presently, or has used in the past, to speak to the social aspects of incarceration.

5) How does your institution decide which particular social issues to address?

6) Based on the nature of your institution, do certain interpretive methods lend themselves to addressing social content more than others? What are those methods, and what makes them a good choice for your museum?

7) Please think about the most recent instance in which your museum integrated social content into its interpretive materials. Describe how that process occurred –for instance, who suggested the action, how did the idea move forward, and how did staff work to bring the idea to fruition? Would you say that this is the typical procedure for introducing social content into your museum's interpretation?

8) What can other museums learn from your institution, in terms of the theoretical or practical aspects of interpreting social issues?

Now this is my last set of questions. Before we began the interview, I mentioned that social issues, by their very nature, can be perceived as problematic or controversial. As we wrap up, I'd like to explore some of the successes and difficulties that arise from addressing social issues through museum interpretation.

9) What do you see as the institutional advantages of addressing social issues in your interpretation?

10) What do you see as the institutional disadvantages of addressing social issues in your interpretation?

11) In what way(s) does addressing the social aspects of incarceration affect your institutions' stakeholders?

12) Have you encountered difficulties in bringing social issues into your interpretive materials? In what way(s)?

13) Have you found that some actions toward addressing social issues have been particularly successful? In what way(s)?

Appendix B: Interview Coding Rubric

Research Question	Theme	Sub-Theme	Institution	Quote/Example
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	A. Visitor & community Impact	1. Increase awareness of contemporary corrections	OSR	I hope visitors feel when they come here, that they've opened themselves up to this whole other world that exists right inside of our own world, and we're not really aware of it. // One of the things I found really interesting was just the day-to-day life of the prisoner. I think a lot of times, we think like, 'Oh they're in jail' –but what does that really mean? What are they doing there? How are they spending their time? What is it that their emotions are going through when they're in there? How are things that we're doing on the outside perceived on the inside?
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	A. Visitor & community Impact	1. Increase awareness of contemporary corrections	ESP	Well, the impact we would like to have is to introduce the complexity of the problems around crime and punishment.
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	A. Visitor & community Impact	1. Increase awareness of contemporary corrections	Alcatraz	I would say that over the last five years or so, we've really used art as a mechanism to bring present-day social issues into the context of Alcatraz. // [With the Life After Murder exhibit] people were able to ask [formerly incarcerated persons] questions about what life was like, how do you re-adapt to society after being incarcerated for 30 years? // What ended up happening is that the questions evolved into having an exhibit about prisoners of conscience. Alcatraz hosted a number of prisoners of conscience...And that inspired Ai Weiwei, then, to do an exhibit on that topic: prisoners of conscience throughout the world...

RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	A. Visitor & community Impact	2. Highlight museum's relevance	OSR	There's lots of relationships between [us and] the two prisons behind us here [Mansfield Correctional Institution and Richland Correctional Institution]. I mean, we have neighbors now that are working federal prisons...Thousands upon thousands of inmates worked here and dedicated their time to, ultimately, giving back to Mansfield a little bit as well.
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	A. Visitor & community Impact	2. Highlight museum's relevance	ESP	I think that we really want people to understand that Eastern State is relevant today. // I guess I would like our visitors to...kind of reevaluate Philadelphia within the landscape of the early nation, and Eastern State being a product of this pretty revolutionary era of thinking... // Philadelphia's impacted by incarceration in major ways; we have to have the local community involved here, and kind of get the word out that Eastern State is not just for tourists, that Eastern State is for the local community.
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	B. Larger societal impact	1. Increase awareness of contemporary corrections	OSR	I think being a prison museum, we can hit on several social issues. [For example], the U.S. is number one in incarceration in the entire world…So this is not only an issue that affects the community of Mansfield, or the state of Ohio.

RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	B. Larger societal impact	1. Increase awareness of contemporary corrections	ESP	I think we already are having a larger societal impact. I mean, it's modest, but we're doing it. There's no national prison museum. We [in the U.S.] have the highest rate of incarceration in the world, by far; no one else is even close. So I would stake our claim as being the national prison museum. I mean, the place where...if you're going to discuss these issues anywhere, it's here. // Americans are unaware of how strange their criminal justice system is. I mean, there's just nothing else really like it–and there never has been. So, I think just opening people's eyes to that.
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	B. Larger societal impact	1. Increase awareness of contemporary corrections	Alcatraz	I would say that our impact is probably much more than beyond the local community. In the past, we've kept challenging ourselves to try to figure out how to get the locals here. Right? If you ask most native Bay Area residents, they have not been to Alcatraz. So most of the people who come here are probably international visitors and visitors across the country.//By bringing art to the island, we've been able to provide a discussion of what incarceration means today.
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	B. Larger societal impact	2. Stimulate dialogue/ critical thinking	OSR	The part that we've put on our website about the dialogue is really important for us here.

RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	B. Larger societal impact	2. Stimulate dialogue/ critical thinking	ESP	I would love [for] there to be something that we could prove, that people even just...talk to their friends about it. // My hope is that visitors can reevaluate the criminal justice system...have a conversation about what prisons are for and how that is not a fixed idea or a construct, and how it's changed over time. // The system of criminal justice that we've evolved now is problematic, and we'd like our visitors to examine their own, often long-held, opinions and try not to push them any given direction, but just to acknowledge that these things are complicated, and are not given to easy solutions. // ...It's a way more complex tour than it used to be, and it invites a lot of critical thinking. // I'd love to make the behavior change, or make them do a double-take at a news headline that maybe they'd never considered before // I think that museums can change the world. I would love [for] there to be something that we could prove, that people even just read the news differently...
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	B. Larger societal impact	2. Stimulate dialogue/ critical thinking	Alcatraz	What we call facilitated dialogue, is a very specific strategy for engaging the public in discussion, and...hearing what they have to say about some of these social issues and controversial topics. For example, through facilitated dialogue, we ask questions to the visitors like, 'Is solitary confinement cruel and unusual punishment?' or 'Are prisons for punishment or rehabilitation?' and really get people thinking about these things. // The impact we want to have...it's to provide a place for discussing these issues of freedom and social justice, and to acknowledge that this is part of our American history. // We want it to affect people in ways that they will go back home and raise those questions, and be provoked by those questions.

RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	C. Mission	1. Social issues secondary to mission	OSR	When we started, our institution's mission was, first and foremost, to save and restore the building. We've had the building for 21 years now...The major restoration projects are almost done, and so I think that…now we have a little bit more time and room and resources to address, through exhibits and interpretive materials, a lot of the social issues that have kind of been, I think, just slowly been making their way into our tours.
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	C. Mission	1. Social issues secondary to written mission	Alcatraz	Our [unwritten] mission with the Park Service is to interpret the entire history of Alcatraz, which spans from the time that the first lighthouse was built here, in 1854, through the time that it was a military fortress, a military prison, and it wasn't until the 1930s that it became the notorious Alcatraz that everybody knows it for...So the mission is to interpret that entire period, and look for common themes in all of that. And they all deal with social justice, freedom, incarceration, as well as you know, a place that provides safety for the rest of society...
RQ 1: How does the interpretaion of social issues factor into historical prison museums' goals and objectives?	C. Mission	2. Social Issues central to written mission	ESP	I wrote our original mission–which is weird, for a staff person to write the mission statement, but we didn't have one–in 1999. And it's amazing to me, because back then, I still wrote it in. So the sentence is...one of the lines in our mission statement says, 'We'll make Eastern State a forum where issues of criminal justice are discussed', or something like that. So it's explicitly in there. // Well, I think [other museums] should start with their mission statement...If [addressing social content is] not in their mission statement, they need to get together with their Board, and figure out what they're lacking, or if they are lacking.

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	1. Top-down	OSR	I would say that the Executive Director, and the Board, for the most part, decide which issues to address.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	1. Top-down	ESP	So it is very much curated information. And I tend to think of it as kind of coming from [the Director of Interpretation & Public Programming]: like, [he] has a vision and...[he] is kind of overseeing everything and being the final like, curatorial voice that says 'This is going in' or 'We don't have time to do this particular initiative.'
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	1. Choosing issues	1. Top-down	Alcatraz	Our mission with the Park Service is to interpret the entire history of Alcatraz...because of the historic themes of Alcatraz, those are really the issues that we focus on: social justice, links to the Native American occupation...we're not likely to address issues that don't have some sort of natural connection with Alcatraz, with the history of Alcatraz. Even though people are constantly approaching us with different ideas, we really just pick and choose the ones that have the historic basis.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	2. Team input	OSR	And each tour guide brings something different: they have their own areas of interest, they have their own stories they've collected, their own research they've done. It's just, it's amazing.

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	2. Team input	ESP	We have a staff retreat every year, which is where we plan out in advance what we're going to take on. So [the staff leadership] really leads that process, but we just have ideas all the time, and we put them forward… // ...we eventually come up with a compromise that I think is pretty good. But I think it's a lot of informal back-and-forth.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	2. Team input	Alcatraz	[If] an employee has an idea for a program...they would sort out what is the major theme of the program? What are their goals and objectives? They'd write an outline, that would get approved by their supervisor, and then they would do the research, and then they would go out and test it out.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	3. Factors unique to nature of institution	OSR	Just this last year, we became the State of Ohio correctional museum. So we will be housing here, from 77 counties in the state of Ohio, articles from the last 150 years // We also get a lot of people that are going through their garages or their attics and they find something that's related to the building...They want to donate this stuff to us, to help us expand our artifact library, and stuff // I know one issue that I don't think everybody's really intrigued about, too, is the two prisons behind us [Mansfield Correctional Institution and Richland Correctional Institution], once again. I mean, they're our next-door neighbors, and we do kind of already have a relationship with them now.

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	3. Factors unique to nature of institution	ESP	A lot of the people who attend Halloween will come back for the daytime tour… // The challenge is always to take [the visitor] and pull them in with something like the Big Graph. Because the Big Graph doesn't look like you're about to be lectured about privilege in America..You end up in a conversation, maybe, about privilege in America, but it's meant to be a much less aggressive sort of way to lure people into the conversation…
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	A. Choosing issues	3. Factors unique to nature of institution	Alcatraz	Alcatraz –which is part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which is a number of sites–has a very sophisticated interpretation and education program, in general. And I think this park, in general, has a very firm grasp of how interpretation is done, in general, a grasp of the history of interpretation and how it's changing and evolving.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	B. Concept to implementation	1. Managing visitor expectations	OSR	We, in 2012, built a completely new website for the Reformatory...I mentioned, you know, that diverse audience, and so we kind of came up with three themes for the website, which mirror the themes that we have to address here...I wanted people to really feel that...after visiting our website, that they've had a chance to know what to expect. I think managing our visitors' expectations is really important.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	B. Concept to implementation	1. Managing visitor expectations	ESP	if someone comes in wanting to hear about the escape attempts and Al Capone...you can't really ambush that person and force them to have a conversation that they're not excited to have. // How do you take something that's that complicated, and make it meaningful to someone who's in the middle of a leisure-time experience, that they've paid for?

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	B. Concept to implementation	1. Managing visitor expectations	Alcatraz	You need to have knowledge of your audience; you need to know who they are; that's very key, because you want to meet the visitors where they're at, have some understanding of what they already know, a bit about their background.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	B. Concept to implementation	2. Pragmatism/constraints	OSR	You know, we're a smaller preservation society; our resources are obviously prioritized where they're needed.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	B. Concept to implementation	2. Pragmatism/constraints	ESP	I kept trying to figure out how to get race onto the graph. And finally, I just sucked it up and put it on the north side of the graph, even though it's not a particularly great way to illustrate it… // We introduced the audio stop about race in Cell Block 7. And that's much more intuitive, because there we can really illustrate just the per capita incarceration rates for different races in the U.S. And that is really the graph I'd like to have on the baseball diamond, but it didn't make sense to have two graphs. So, that's where we are. // I'm working on this new exhibit right now, and I'm realizing that people will probably spend about five minutes in the exhibit. Maybe they'll spend ten. But they're not going to spend half an hour.

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	B. Concept to implementation	2. Pragmatism/constraints	Alcatraz	The biggest challenge, for us, wasn't coming up with the idea and the themes [of the Ai Weiwei exhibit], but how to make it logistically happen on an island that is already sold-out, that is already packed by 5000 visitors a day during the summertime, 3000 visitors a day during the wintertime. And how do we open up places that have been closed before? Because we needed to address safety issues, we needed to address historic preservation questions: how do you maintain those areas once we let visitors in there, how do we staff them... // Each boat that comes in has at least 300 people on it. And so the number of people, that ratio with the number of staff...a challenge is to have the staffing available to do say, programs for smaller audiences.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	1. Guided tours	OSR	We do guided tours. Those are very popular, and they could never be replaced...nothing will ever replace that dialogue with the tour guide
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	1. Guided tours	ESP	The guided tour addresses it…Sarah Pharaon from Sites of Conscience is on the team to work on the exhibit, so she will help us design a dialogue tour….So now, I would say that it's dialogue-influenced style: so we ask open-ended questions...

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	1. Guided tours	Alcatraz	Over the last couple of years, probably the last year, the staff has been going through a number of facilitated dialogue trainings, so that we can do more and more live programs that is much more responsive to the interests of the visitor. So we are able to hear what they're thinking. // So the ranger really does not give their opinion; the ranger response is more along the lines of simply encouraging more discussion, rather than giving a personal response to what the visitors say...The traditional ranger talks try to also provoke and inspire.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	2. Self-guided audio tours	OSR	The audio wand now has three categories: general history of the reformatory, paranormal history, and our Hollywood connections...We also put our audio tour on the website. We can generate codes on the back end of our site, and essentially provide them to people remotely.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	2. Self-guided audio tours	ESP	I mean, the audio tour addresses it…

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	2. Self-guided audio tours	Alcatraz	The other thing I would point out, in terms of learning...is the quality of the audio tour that's been developed here for the island. Because I get so many comments from visitors saying, 'This is the best audio tour I've ever heard.'
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	3. Formerly incarcerated individuals	OSR	We actually have tour guides that are former inmates… it just kicks it off to a higher level of authenticity…We have three right now that we work with regularly that are just wonderful.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	3. Formerly incarcerated individuals	ESP	We just hired a guy who's formerly incarcerated onto our front-line team. We explicitly set out: we want somebody who works here: these guys and women have a really, really hard time getting work once they get out, so let's do our part at least a little bit to create one position. You know, we're not going to change the world, but it's one step. But we started to kick around the idea that maybe he could give tours...
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	3. Formerly incarcerated individuals	Alcatraz	We have either former residents or inmates that come, return to the island, to this day. And that program has been going on for 15 years now. So today if you go up to the cell house, you'll find one of the inmates; his name is Bill Baker. He's now in his 80s; he spent about 4 years on Alcatraz. So that gives visitors to speak, or have one-on-one (short) conversation, anyway with that person (because the line is very long), and they can ask them anything that they want.

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	4. Literature & archives	OSR	One thing that's kind of been expanding since I've been here is the archives department. We get countless, countless, countless visitors who are former inmates, former guards, former family members who have been somehow related to this building...The goal of the archives over the next five years is that eventually, they'll have kind of library hours, that the general public can come in and have a reference library and they can research articles, they can look at artifacts. // I've really been wanting to extend the amount of literature we have in our gift shop that not only explores prisons, or hauntings, or one particular aspect of one thing, but a broader sense of things, of…the architecture of prisons, the history of prisons, the history of the Ohio State Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	4. Literature & archives	ESP	not mentioned by interviewees, but observed by researcher during site visit (books and films in gift shop covering criminal justice issues)
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	4. Literature & archives	Alcatraz	Another part is done by the retail program, and we have either former residents or inmates that come, return to the island, to this day [to sell autobiographies & memoirs] // researcher also noticed other educational books & videos on display in this site's gift shop during visit

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	5. Public events/programs	OSR	We have a new event this summer that is a tattoo convention...Tattooing and prison culture are almost synonymous; there is a rich history of that.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	5. Public events/programs	ESP	We do a lot of public programming: prison food weekend, pets in prison… //The Searchlight Series, which is a lecture series that invites experts to come speak about issues in prisons today. // New Leash on Life, which is a prison-based dog training program: we partner with them on a family program where we talk about the history of animals in the prison, and then they bring their dogs and they bring their staff.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	5. Public events/programs	Alcatraz	We have an evening program on the island that starts essentially after-hours, after people's jobs end, and the idea for that was, initially, to provide an opportunity for locals to come to the island.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	6. Art installations	OSR	We have this inmate art show that we host every year. No one really realizes that these inmates work on these really wonderful pieces of art, and they never really get displayed….that kind of…helps them rehabilitate themselves a little, too.

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	6. Art installations	ESP	We partner with artists, and so we have a series of artist installations, like Michelle Handelman's piece, which is up right now.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	6. Art installations	Alcatraz	People have found very creative ways to connect that to the island's history. In fact, when you look at the Ai Weiwei exhibit, you'll see bird themes throughout the exhibit on the island.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	7. Exhibits focused on social issues	ESP	So, we're developing a new exhibit about mass incarceration. // ...because there's such a huge problem of prison gangs today, we kind of almost worked backwards. We realized that we could talk about prison gangs today, and that we could kind of craft the information to talk about prison gangs when Eastern State was open, and how prison gangs have evolved, and that we could also keep some organized crime elements to the exhibit.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	7.. Exhibits focused on social issues	Alcatraz	A few years ago, we had an exhibit called Life After Murder. And it was a photo exhibit about five former inmates at San Quentin, who were put into prison for about 20 to 30 years, because of murder they'd committed at a very early age. And those five individuals had been released; they were now in their 50s and 60s, and the exhibit was about *What are they doing now?*

RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	8. Other technology	OSR	One of the things that [the Executive Director] did that was interesting was he kind of understood that self-guided tours are wonderful, because some people are really self-motivated when it comes to their learning experience...we then started putting in touch-screen kiosks…and those include videos, history, interviews with former inmates, former guards. // I really wanted to figure out a way to connect guests more—even guests that can't make it out for the full tour—using sites like Youtube or Twitter, social media and stuff like that, to kind of get the word out. Youtube...We were talking with a company that's going to try to do like, augmented reality work. Like, you could scan images and these images would relay information in several different ways. It could be 'I'm tweeting from the OSR dining room, or I'm tweeting from the warden's dining room'…
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	9. Visual aids	ESP	We did the first two sets of stats [to the Big Graph] first: we added the growth of the prison population, and the comparison to other nations. That we added in 2012. But it wasn't until 2014 that we added race.
RQ 2: How have historical prison museums attempted to address social issues within their sites' interpretive materials?	C. Techniques Used	9. Visual aids	Alcatraz	One of our rangers gives a facilitated dialogue program where she shows a bunch of photographic images from prisons...and she asks the question 'What should prison look like? What's appropriate?'

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	1. Increased attendance/revenue	OSR	[The Board has] been very open with us, and very generous, allowing us to do this. And they've seen the fruits of that too: increased tours, increased income
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	1. Increased attendance/revenue	ESP	We would have had a real issue in the last three years if our attendance had dropped. Like, what would happen if suddenly visitors stopped coming here right as we started talking about these really depressing and troubling subjects? We would have had to do some real soul searching like, well, is it worth it, or do we try to scale this back? But the attendance has grown every single year since we've opened--except for the year 2002 when tourism all over America dropped, because of 9/11. // I think it broadens our stakeholders, that people who are interested in history as well as contemporary issues are going to be interested. So I think that we definitely have expanded our base.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	1. Increased attendance/revenue	Alcatraz	This Ai Weiwei exhibit...in itself, has probably brought more locals out here than would have come otherwise. Because every day I get emails from people that say, 'We've lived here all our entire lives, and this is the first time we've wanted to come to Alcatraz.' // The majority of what we get from management, and from visitors, is very supportive. They want to have this dialogue about the social issues.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	2. Enhanced reputation	OSR	...one little aspect that's starting to build up here is that people are starting to realize like, this is actually becoming…a more legitimized museum
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	2. Enhanced reputation	ESP	I also think that it makes us leaders in the field. // Yeah, we just got an award for the Big Graph from Pennsylvania Museums, which is a federation of state museums. // I think that a lot of visitors have been waiting for this for a long time.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	2. Enhanced reputation	Alcatraz	We build our reputation; that's the institutional advantage. // As far as stakeholders, in addition to stakeholder like park partners, who we work with out here, the FOR-SITE foundation, and the conservancy that helped put on the Ai Weiwei exhibit, I think everybody stands to gain from public engagement in the issues out here, the issues represented by Alcatraz.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	3. Staff satisfaction/sense of meaning	OSR	We do get a lot of creative freedom, too: the research that we're allowed to do, or new programs or products we'd like to try and implement. I'm really grateful for that. I think it's definitely—We work in an environment that definitely supports education and research, history, so that's been…really nice.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	3. Staff satisfaction/sense of meaning	ESP	It can feel really good to be a part of that, to be a part of an institution that's doing that. // Everything from funding opportunities to visitor interest to having a reason to come to work in the morning... // It's... breathed new life into the whole organization. // I think that engaging with social issues can really push the institution, and push the individuals in the institution, to kind of reevaluate their own work and the meaningfulness of that work. // We get weekly emails from one of our staff members talking about a way that prisons are in the news that week, so every week we're getting a specific little snippet about what is going on. I feel like I'm so much more aware and conscious of these issues than I was before. // [Addressing social issues means] making good on the promise of what this building could be...

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	A. Affordances	3. Staff satisfaction/sense of meaning	Alcatraz	Well, there's an institutional advantage, but really it's a societal advantage. If we can be a forum, if the park can serve as a forum, that's a place where people feel like it's safe...to be talking about their opinion. I think we do a service to society by providing an opportunity for people to discuss these issues. We also–again, through the facilitated dialogue process–we're teaching civic skills: listening skills, understanding another person's point of view, that sort of thing. And these are important transferable skills that will potentially help folks to participate, help them in other situations as well. So I think we're serving society.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	1. Potential for controversy/damage to reputation	OSR	I mean, there are just people that feel so passionately one way or another, about something, that you have to prepare yourself for the way that this particular bit of information is going to land. Because it doesn't always land well. // We just received word that we will be receiving the actual electric chair that executed over 300 people in the state of Ohio.... I think that opens a lot of doors for conversation, and I definitely think there's going to be some negative emotion associated with it // All of our Board members are members of the community.... It does reflect on them personally... So when we do make decisions, we do have to think about that, as well.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	1. Potential for controversy/damage to reputation	ESP	It's scary. We could really mess up. We could offend someone really bad[ly], a visitor. We could ruin our reputation. // I think my biggest fear is being insensitive. // I was really afraid of being accused of driving some sort of a political agenda. Like, do I sound like just some liberal bleeding heart who had a gripe with conservatives?
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	1. Potential for controversy/damage to reputation	Alcatraz	Every once in awhile there's a resistance among a visitor, or a certain stakeholder, there's a little bit of resistance.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	2. Concerns of power dynamics/exploitation	OSR	It's just like the 9/11 museum: there's lot of mixed feelings about that. You know, putting a museum on a gravesite and stuff. It's…not that we're trying to exploit those peoples' lives; it's that we're just trying to share history of what it meant. // [The Board is] excited about us getting the electric chair; we all are...[but] we've got to be prepared for that, and how can we train our volunteers, our tour guides, our guests, and even ourselves, to answer those questions appropriately? You know, what's our responsibility to that history of execution, without exploiting it?

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	2. Concerns ofpower dynamics/exploitation	ESP	I worry about the lack of diversity on staff, and how mass incarceration disproportionally affects black and brown people, and that we are a very, very white staff. So I think just having a sense of the dynamics about what's at play with what we're talking about is something that I think about that it feels like a little bit of a risk or something. Or like, 'What do we know? How dare we say this?' // I feel like a war profiteer sometimes. Like, (mockingly) 'This has been great for my–my job satisfaction has been fantastic ever since I discovered just how deep the civil rights abuses are in our nation's prisons.' // There were so many aspects of it that were so troublesome [about hiring a formerly incarcerated individual]...just getting our lawyers and our insurance company to agree that we're going to hire someone with this background: it was a long process, and it took a lot of work to make sure that everyone was on board, and then there are issues like, 'Do we tell his coworkers that he's formerly incarcerated?'...I think we did the right thing there, but it's been complicated.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	3. Potential to be internally divisive	OSR	We all work for the Board, so... I can understand that if we had a large portion of them that were against something coming here, or things like that…so, I guess it's going to come down to their personal viewpoints, and we have to follow that. I mean, we can suggest what we believe is the direction that we think we should take, but I think…it is going to come down to personal viewpoints. // In an organization like this, where it's a labor of love, and you're fueled by your passion for it, it can sometimes be hard to implement change. People feel very protective over that .

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	3. Potential to be internally divisive	ESP	We've lost staff because of it. // We changed the audio tour and put up a sign about the growth of the prison population...and there was just a ton of resistance to it. // I think that five years ago, it would have divided our Board. And I think that if it had divided the Board, the non-social issues side of the Board would have won...and then it would have cost us years–like, probably until the next person was in my job–until we would have gone back to it...So I think sometimes it just comes down to people's personalities.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	4. Factors unique to nature of institution	OSR	Since [the current interpretive staff] started [just a few years ago], we came on and had to kind of find our own way a little bit.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	4. Factors unique to nature of institution	ESP	There's always a tension within our organization between the impulsiveness and the bureaucracy. The impulsiveness is also the leanness, like 'Let's just go do this thing.' And our Halloween event gives us a ton of freedom, because we have resources to do things with money we've raised ourselves. But it can lead to an impulsiveness that drives everyone insane. And that's what happens is you get staff burnout, and people get tired of their jobs taking over their lives, and they miss their spouses and their children.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	B. Constraints	4. Factors unique to nature of institution	Alcatraz	One of the challenges we have, is that people come here with preconceived notions of what Alcatraz is about. And we do our best to try and address that. Everybody's seen the movies, everybody's seen *The Rock*; everybody's seen the Clint Eastwood movie *Escape from Alcatraz* and has heard stories of Al Capone. And that's great, but the challenge for us is redirecting that Hollywood mythology into what Alcatraz was *really* about. And that's no easy task....I think that having that mythology is a disadvantage for us, because it makes our job just a little bit harder.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	C. Regarding hauntings	1. Concerns	OSR	It's such a touchy subject for us [the ghost tours]…It is not something that's mission-based for us. And it's not something that we necessarily want to overshadow the real history and the real issues here
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	C. Regarding hauntings	1. Concerns	ESP	[Another interpretive staff member] and I had lunch with one of the organizations that were invited to the listening summit, and [a community partner] called us out immediately about Terror Behind the Walls…[They said,] 'This is your reputation. People don't understand what you are, because they know you from Terror Behind the Walls.' // We won't have any execution scenes. We never, obviously, make comments around race or sexual orientation or sexuality…Now, a visitor might come through and make that joke naively; people do that on daytime tours. 'Oh, don't drop the soap'—these are things that people have in their brains, these phrases. But we would never go anywhere near that.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	C. Regarding hauntings	2. Value	OSR	... because we rely on that to do restoration, and it's an absolutely amazing fundraiser… //// Our Halloween event gives us a ton of freedom, because we have resources to do things with money we've raised ourselves. // It took me awhile to really grasp why people are interested in that. And it wasn't until we had a group come here that deals with, um—it's kind of like a Make-a-Wish Foundation for adults. And this gentleman was dying, and I think that…just like this idea that people don't get to look inside of prisons, you know…We all know about death, but we know so little about it. And I think trying to investigate for something more, something greater, is a human condition, and it's not really that far off from what, I think, people think about all the time.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	C. Regarding hauntings	2. Value	ESP	Hey, we know this is funky. But this supports our mission, and that's why we do it. And our mission is to talk about [social] issues. // Terror Behind the Walls raised enough funds to cover 65% of ESP's entire operating budget in 2013. // It pays for things like staffing, our tour guides' salaries. It pays for projects that aren't sexy enough to get grants, like a dry standpipe running through the building for fires. It pays for a good chunk of the artist installation programs. It pays for a lot of the roofs that are put in, to stay open during the daytime… // Terror Behind the Walls brings in the local community, and brings in a much more ethnically diverse visitorship

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	1. Internal collaboration	OSR	Basically, the mission to address certain issues is kind of a collaborative effort between the Board and the administrative staff. We even have volunteers that are kind of…We call them lead volunteers. They take on the responsibility for some of the other volunteers…they kind of monitor the other tour guides, they help train them. And we really do look to them for suggestions and advice, because they're the ones that are out there, giving tours, listening to the responses. // If you don't have that three-part trust system between the Board, the staff, and the volunteers, it can be very hard to move change forward, or to address new things in a way that people feel safe and comfortable with. So we have definitely been working to build that bridge over the last few years.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	1. Internal collaboration	ESP	I think our collaborative spirit also helps, that we have ideas coming from everywhere in the organization: tour guides to the President, nobody is afraid to throw out something crazy...

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	1. Internal collaboration	Alcatraz	So some [rangers] might be inspired by the Native American occupation story, some people might be inspired by a certain escape attempt, some people might be inspired by maybe the military history. And they, then, have a lot of leeway to develop a program around that, pending their supervisor's approval, and assistance in developing that program and making it interactive and addressing the themes of the island…
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	2. Change and experimentation	OSR	We do get a lot of creative freedom, too: the research that we're allowed to do, or new programs or products we'd like to try and implement. I'm really grateful for that. I think it's definitely—We work in an environment that definitely supports education and research, history, so that's been…really nice.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	2. Change and experimentation	ESP	We're also really open to experimenting and evolving, and things change. Things change at Eastern State, which has not been my experience in other museums.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	3. Front-line staff	OSR	So we have started a mentoring program here, where we only take about three new volunteers a year. They have to apply in January. It's a one-year training program. They're required to do at least 25 hours with their mentor. And these mentors are all seasoned tour guides. They've been here a long time. Because we really want quality, dedicated, passionate people to communicate the information—and to do it in a way that's consistent with where the Reformatory's trying to go, and how we're trying to present the message. So that's something that we've been doing...is building our volunteer base with quality volunteers.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	3. Front-line staff	ESP	I think that we're really good at hiring and training the right people to be on the front line, and talking to visitors about complex issues. // Some of our staff was not enthusiastic about talking about contemporary issues, so they have left. And the people coming in were told specifically that this is happening. So they had that expectation coming in, and they weren't surprised by it. I think that change is always difficult for people, and going forward I think it will be a little bit easier for everybody to be on board with that aspect of the mission, because they come into this knowing what to expect.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	3. Front-line staff	Alcatraz	When rangers start on the island, we have them with start one program, which we call 200 Years, which every ranger learns early on. It goes over the 200 year history of the island...but after that they have a lot of leeway, as to which issues they want to address.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	3. Board	OSR	We have a very active Board here. They're very involved in, you know, the overarching mission and direction of the Reformatory, but also, the programming and the day-to-day operations.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	3. Board	ESP	I think that five years ago, it would have divided our Board. And I think that if it had divided the Board, the non-social issues side of the Board would have won, because it's in our mission that we don't take a position...I think the last Board that we had was a little more resistant to talking about contemporary corrections, and the current Board is much more excited about it.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	3. Staff leadership	OSR	But in terms of who really decides that: it would really come down to the Executive Director

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	3. Staff leadership	ESP	So it is very much curated information. And I tend to think of it as kind of coming from [the Director of Interpretation and Public Programming]... kind of overseeing everything and being the final curatorial voice…
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	4. External partnerships	OSR	The two prisons behind us [Mansfield Correctional Institution and Richland Correctional Institution]they're our next-door neighbors, and we do kind of already have a relationship with them now. We have this inmate art show that we host every year…

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	4. External partnerships	ESP	I think that Eastern State is also pretty good at developing partnerships. I think that there's also fresh ideas coming in a lot from our partners in the field. I think being able to identify who you can partner with and who you can learn from is a really strong skill to have, and admitting that we don't know exactly how to talk about mass incarceration, so who can we look to for help? Who can we partner with for reentry programs in the city, other social justice organizations? So I think Eastern State has been good at developing a broad network of support. // There's also a community-based organization in north Philadelphia, in one of the worst neighborhoods in the city, that's called Congreso, that's a Latino-based organization. So they support the community up there. And we've done educational partnerships with them // I established an advisory committee [around issues of race] that meets quarterly, and I promised them they'll meet forever: four times a year, in perpetuity.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	4. External partnerships	Alcatraz	We've created this Ai Weiwei exhibit, in cooperation with the FOR-SITE foundation… // We provide community tickets free of charge, or at a very low fee, to communities or community groups that meet certain economic criteria. And we've expanded that recently to include schools, and through the Ai Weiwei exhibit we've kind of targeted a lot of organizations that have to do with youth incarceration groups, social justice groups, arts groups...

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	5. Exchange info & ideas with other museums	OSR	One of the things I've been doing over the past few months has been researching other museums and other historic sites… // You mentioned Eastern State Penn: I think what they're doing, their programming, is just really smart...I think there is a lot to learn from other institutions.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	5. Exchange info & ideas with other museums	ESP	I spent a lot of time at Wing Luke at AAM, when it was in Seattle last year. It's like, the Wing Luke, the Hull-House in Chicago, it's the Tenement Museum in New York, it's the Levine Museum of the New South… // Birmingham's Civil Rights Institute does really great work.. // I was at Sing Sing, the prison in New York...Sing Sing, they want to open a museum there…I talked about the Big Graph and talked about what this building means today...
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	5. Exchange info & ideas with other museums	Alcatraz	I've talked to the folks [at Eastern State Penitentiary], and they showed me how they worked with their artist community to really seek out art that had a good fit…And now they're coming to visit us in a few weeks to see what they can glean from us again.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	1. Tenacity	OSR	When we started, our institution's mission was, first and foremost, to save and restore the building. We've had the building for 21 years now...The major restoration projects are almost done, and so I think that…now we have a little bit more time and room and resources to address, through exhibits and interpretive materials
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	D. Institutional structure & values	1. Tenacity	ESP	I think that five years ago, it would have divided our Board. And I think that if it had divided the Board, the non-social issues side of the Board would have won…and then it would have cost us years--like, probably until the next person was in my job--until we would have gone back to it... // Well, I guess I would say the thing that I wish I had known was...I think that museums often censor themselves more than they're censored from the outside...To paraphrase Oscar Wilde: the only thing worse than making programming that gets under people's skin is making programming that doesn't get under people's skin.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	E. Serving audience	1.. Balance social content with fun	OSR	You know, we get a lot of guests interested in the history. We get a lot of guests interested in ghosts and the paranormal. We also get a lot of guests that are just interested in the Shawshank aspect of it, the Hollywood filming aspect of everything here.

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	E. Serving audience	1.. Balance social content with fun	ESP	I also think we know how to strike a balance, and not overload visitors with social justice issues. So there is still Al Capone's cell. That's never *not* going to be there. So we kind of get people in the door. Maybe they're interested in Al Capone, maybe they're interested in ghosts. And then [we] can take them to beyond those things, into something deeper that maybe they didn't think they were going to discover that day. So I think that is important, to not get too serious all the time. // I think that people who want to learn about the escapes, who want to learn about the famous inmates... I have to just keep reminding myself to keep trying to tell those stories and to keep giving our staff the tools to tell those stories well. Because if someone comes in wanting to hear about the escape attempts and Al Capone...you can't really ambush that person and force them to have a conversation that they're not excited to have.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	E. Serving audience	1.. Balance social content with fun	Alcatraz	[Some visitors] want to see Al Capone's cell, that kind of thing...One of our more popular programs is any program that deals with an escape attempt. Everybody loves to hear the story of an underdog, or somebody who tries to be the underdog. We need to provide them [with] what they want. But the challenge is, how do we address those social issues *within* what they want?

RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	E. Serving audience	2. Audience diversity	OSR	We partnered with a company and discussed at length what we needed our website to do, the fact that it needs to address a diverse range of visitors that are interested in different kinds of things, and it needs to speak to all of them equally, and communicate different things.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	E. Serving audience	2. Audience diversity	ESP	Terror Behind the Walls brings in the local community, and brings in a much more ethnically diverse visitorship… // I think different interpretations work for different people and connect with different people in different ways.
RQ3: What do these sites identify as the affordances and constraints associated with interpreting the social aspects of incarceration?	E. Serving audience	2. Audience diversity	Alcatraz	We're trying to reach new and more diverse audiences, going beyond the traditional National Park visitors. // A few years ago, we started a community outreach program, that provides free tickets to what we refer to as 'underserved communities'--people who might be blocked by the steep ferry price to come out here... // What we're doing right now, which has worked very well, is we've created this Ai Weiwei exhibit, in cooperation with the FOR-SITE foundation. And that, in itself, has probably brought more locals out here than would have come otherwise.

Appendix C: Audio Guide Coding Rubric

Institution	Speaker	Issue Mentioned	Quote
OSR	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	The sound you could hear when people were in pain, when they're screaming, when they're scared, when they're mad…You got accustomed to everybody screaming. And when it got hot, you had no air circulation in here, and people would just be miserable…The smell was unbearable…There were times when I didn't have a shower for a month.
OSR	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	The guard would mail a letter with you for a pack of cigarettes. Because you weren't allowed then to communicate with anybody and everybody; you had to just communicate with the people on our mailing list. And then they came up with a new law that they couldn't interfere with that. The right to communicate became a federal law, and they couldn't stop that. So that helped out greatly.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	Try to imaging the sights, sounds, and smells of over 1900 other inmates from in the east and west cellblocks that must have greeted a new inmate waiting in this room.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	As you walk around the east cell block, try to imagine yourself and one other person living in such a cell.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	The men confined in these cells used the showers at the far end of the cell block. The east shower room was often referred to as the 'car wash.' Inmates were marced, one range at a time, to the showers, they hung their towels on the hooks on the wall, lined up, and walked the length of the water pipe. That was all the time they were 133eet133ted in which to complete their shower. Inmates were only allowed one shower per week.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	The Reformatory hospital had an excellent reputation as a 'state of the art' hospital, and was known as even being better than many public city hospitals. The prison system brought in inmates…from other facilities, in order to assist in diagnosing and curing their illnesses.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	I was scared to death. You didn't know what was going to happen.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	I think I was there about three weeks and then I went to Four Block, I remember, which was an old block; it was damp and stinky. The whole place seemed cold to me.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	Everybody pretty much was assigned to a job and this place needed a lot of upkeep. There were guys who worked in the electric shop, worked in the plumbing, did the painting, did the plastering. And the place was old then. I mean, tremendously old, so there was a lot of upkeep. There was always something…
ESP	neutral narrator	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	We encourage you to step into one of the open cells ahead. They've been modified over the years with concrete floors and modern toilets, but you'll get the idea. The rule at Eastern State was not only isolation, but silence.

ESP	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	This is what I had in my cell. You had a bed, a table, a bench, a wooden-locker box, and you had a set of earphones that you plugged in four channels. This is where you got your radio from, and you had your commode and a spigot.
ESP	former guard	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	It was cold in the winter and hot in the summer. I mean, sometime you'd put water on yourself. There were times that you'd be in a cell it was almost like you gonna suffocate.
ESP	former guard and inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	There are conditions and rules and restrictions in life that you can't possibly know about without living them. And no matter how sensitive you think you are to someone else's conditions or someone else's needs, until you actually live it yourself, you can't know it.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	There were hard times. There were times I laid myself and cried, you know. I could hear people celebrating New Year's outside my wall, New Year's Eve, you know.
ESP	neutral narrator	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	Even by the 1930s, Eastern State was in trouble. The prison was outmoded; it's heating and plumbing systems outdated. The corridors, and these outdoor spaces, were never intended to handle the huge crowds of prisoners that now filled them. The aging prison became increasingly hard to manage, expensive to maintain, and dangerous.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	[As new arrivals,] we went right down [the cell block called] 'Broadway,' in our birthday suits, and the guys would get all howlin'… [ambient sounds of shouting and taunting]
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	Five 134eet wide, nine feet long, seven feet high: that's what I call a little box.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	They didn't allow us anything; you couldn't paste anything on the wall.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	Pretty soon that cell became like a part of me…or I became a part of the cell.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	Alcatraz was always classed as the end of the line, the point of no return. It was like going into the ground, you know, when you're buried: you're gone forever.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	It ws cold, it was damp. The wind used to just blow through there…
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	Most accepted that this cell block, however grim, was home for now.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	You cannot take away from a man the thought that he wants his freedom.
Alcatraz	former inmate's sister	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	I was nervous; I didn't know what to expect. But once I saw Jimmy, he didn't look any different. He was overwhelmed…He couldn't believe it: that we were there, and that I'd grown up, and that I'd come to see him.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 1: daily life/conditions inside prison	You'd lie awake for a long time…

OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 2: medical/social services	Many of the men serving sentences had little or no education, and part of the Reformatory's mission was to reform and educate the inmates in their custody….By 1933 the Superintendant of Inmate Schools, A. T. Sneeringer, combined character-building into the curriculum, along with the general primary classes, to create an enriched, well-rounded program…In 1965, a [prison] high school was chartered, and officially called Fields High School, which ensured that there was no stigma attached to the inmates who earned their high school diploma there.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 2: medical/social services	The Reformatory library played a vital role in the rehabilitation of inmates.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 2: medical/social services	You go on sick call, and the doctors say, 'Well, here's a bag of aspirin; get out of here, don't come back.' Which was good! If you needed an operation, or, like, my nose was broke, they gave immediate medical attention for that. But like colds, and flu, they didn't worry about that too much. You got aspirins for that. 'Give him chicken soup.'
ESP	psychologist	Theme 2: medical/social services	Eventually, there was a great deal of emphasis on group therapy. By the time the institution closed, there were more than 25 therapy groups going, and the guard force had volunteered to be co-therapists.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 2: medical/social services	Time to exercise outside, getting books and mail, all had to be earned.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 2: medical/social services	Prisoners with reading privileges could subscribe to approved magazines…Prisoners who behaved could also take correspondence courses.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 2: medical/social services	I took a course from the University of Pennsylvania on animal husbandry.
OSR	former guard	Theme 2: medical/social services; Theme 3: recidivism; Theme 7: rehabilitation	When inmates first came here, security came first; that was to make sure they stayed locked up. Then came treatment: we'd make sure that they got any hospitalization that they needed. Then came rehabilitation…They could go to school for half a day or work half a day. If they didn't have any education, they'd stay in school all day…Every inmate that left here, at one time, had a trade to fall back on…Nowadays, they don't work 'em, and they get out, back on the street, and next thing you know, they end up back here again….Also, no inmate was let out on parole until he had a job, and somebody that he could to. Very seldom we'd have more than ten percent come back.
ESP	neutral narrator	Theme 3: societal reentry/recividism	Without the aid of photography or fingerprinting, prison staff had no clear way of tracking inmates after their release, and the success of Eastern State Penitentiary remained the subject of debate.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 3: societal reentry/recividism	And I said, 'Once I get my foot outside this door, this prison door, they ain't never going to see me.' Because the guards used to say, 'Well, we'll see you in six months.'

Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 3: societal reentry/recividism	I remember when they released me, I'd been locked up 15 years. And all this time I'd never had no visits, no letters, no nothing. And all this time, I'm watching the car whizzing by and the people walking…Everything was moving too fast, and I didn't know how to move with it. And I remember how envious I was of these people, because they all had a destination, they were all going someplace. And I didn't know where I was going. I was scared to death.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 4: solitary confinement	Inmates placed in solitary confinement were placed in one-person cells, either in total darkness, or in constant light 24 hours per day….Originally the solitary confinement cells contained small barred semi-circular areas used for a procedure known as 'eight and eight.' The prisoners would be locked standing up for eight hours between the bars, and then allowed to sleep for eight hours on the cell floor in the empty cell, devoid of bed or sink…Eventually it was determined that this was cruel and unusual punishment.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 4: solitary confinement	Upon being sent to 'the hole,' the prisoners were issued only cover-alls and cotton booties and were not allowed to bring anything else with them. Originally, there were no cots provided in these cells, so the temperature in solitary confinement was kept around 90 degrees, to keep the inmates from getting sick, since they slept on the floor…
ESP	neutral narrator	Theme 4: solitary confinement	The early prison reformers saw solitary confinement, not as a punishment, but an as opportunity for reflection. A chance to become penitent.
ESP	neutral narrator	Theme 4: solitary confinement	[Charles] Dickens believed that isolation at Eastern State could drive men insane, and, increasingly, he wasn't alone.
ESP	correctional counselor	Theme 4: solitary confinement	Take a look down the steps to the right of the doorway. These were punishment cells. Down the stairs were four small cells with low ceilings and no plumbing. Isolation was always used at Eastern State Penitentiary, but its use changed drastically over time. In the 20th century, isolation at Eastern State was used as punishment. Prior to that time, it was the basic correctional philosophy…Let me tell you, the effect of prolonged time in isolation can be traumatic.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 4: solitary confinement	They had a couple of cells down there, which was very bad. There was no mattress in there. No blanket. Just a steel bed. Very small cell. You did anywhere from 10 to 30 days in there, sometimes just bread and water, or sometimes with diminishing meals. Like, maybe one meal a day.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 4: solitary confinement	I had a friend of mine, in fact this kid here Jimmy Devlin. This kid here, he was in the hole for 30 days, and when he came out he was almost blind.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 4: solitary confinement	Prison administrators in the 1800s learned, both here and at other prisons, that solitary confinement is a very effective punishment. But they had grave concerns too. A growing body of research was concluding that prolonged solitary confinement is destructive: it often leads to emotional and psychological breakdown. As a result, by the 20th century most prison systems put strict limitations on their use of solitary confinement.

ESP	museum staff member	Theme 4: solitary confinement	In the decades since Eastern State Penitentiary closed in 1970, the use of solitary confinement in American prisons has grown substantially. Today, no other nation uses solitary confinement to the extent that we do here in the United States. Today about 80,000 American inmates live in solitary confinement, locked alone in a cell for 22 to 24 hours a day…Supporters say that prolonged solitary confinement is necessary for punishing those who break prison rules, and for isolating truly violent inmates within the prison population. They say it helps keep prisons safe for staff and inmates alike…Prolonged solitary confinement, they say, is a violation of the 8th Amendment, protecting against cruel and unusual punishment.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 4: solitary confinement	Prisoners who chose not to behave ended up in a harsher place: isolation.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 4: solitary confinement	We kept the lights off when they were in there. They were in the dark.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 4: solitary confinement	You may enter one of the cells if you wish.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 4: solitary confinement	Well, when I had to go in 'the hole,' what I'd do is I'd tear a button off of my cover-alls, flip it up in the air, then I'd turn around in circles, then I'd get down on my hands and knees and I'd hunt for that button. And when I found that button, then I'd stand up and I'd do it again.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 4: solitary confinement	But if you would close your eyes—like, right now, close your eyes, and seal your eyes up with your hand. With a little concentration, you can see a light. And pretty soon that light'll get brighter. And you've gotta concentrate on this. And after awile—it takes time and practice—but pretty soon, you can almost get your own t.v. there. And you can see things, and you can go on trips. That's what I did.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 5: capital punishment	Starting in 1885…the first inmates being executed were hanged for their crimes, until in 1897, the electric chair was introduced as a more 'humane' method of execution…The U.S. Supreme Court declared the death penalty unconstitutional in 1972, and the 65 inmates remaining on Ohio's death row had their sentences commuted to life in prison.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 5: capital punishment	Our visitors often ask if some countries keep their prison populations low by executing a lot of their prisoners. To answer that question, we have divided this list into nations that practice capital punishment (they're on the left) and those that don't (they're on the right). You can see there really is no pattern. The nation with the world's highest rate of incarceration (the U.S.) practices capital punishment. The nation with the second highest rate of incarceration (Rwanda) does not…
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 5: capital punishment	On April 2nd, 1962 Elmo Smith was the 350th person to be executed in the electric chair in Pennsylvania. It was the last time the electric chair was used in this state. Today there are more than two hundred inmates on Pennsylvania's death row, and the state executes inmates using lethal injection.

ESP	museum staff member	Theme 5: capital punishment	Fifteen is often called death row because inmates awaiting execution were housed either here or on One Block. There were never any executions at Eastern State, however, and as the date of their executions approached, the inmates were transferred to the State Correctional Institution at Rockview. There the sentences were carried out.
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 6: violence in prison	The Reformatory was often the site of altercations between inmates. Inmates would get very creative with their choice of weapons…One of the more innovative examples is a toothbrush into which inmates would melt a piece of shaving razorblade…
ESP	former guard	Theme 6: violence in prison	Well, I used to tell 'em outright, you try to hurt me, I'm gonna try to kill you. Tit for tat, pal.
ESP	former guard	Theme 6: violence in prison	Some guys were bullies and they thought they could do this and do that. But a few of them got shanked themselves
ESP	former inmate	Theme 6: violence in prison	If you hit a guard at that time, the rules was that you got beat all the way to isolation. It wasn't a smack. It wasn't a kick. I never saw an inmate go to isolation just with a spank or a light bruise.
ESP	former inmate	Theme 6: violence in prison	There were a few stabbings, you know, because of homosexual affairs with people falling in quote, 'love,' unquote.
ESP	correctional counselor	Theme 6: violence in prison	Rape also became an increasing problem, and the young were especially vulnerable.
ESP	sociologist	Theme 6: violence in prison	In 1922 an inmate Ethel Johnson swore on a statement that she was raped by an officer. Her baby was stillborn inside the prison.
ESP	psychologist	Theme 6: violence in prison	They would march through the center of the prison in file, and sometimes an inmate would be shivved that quickly, and they'd rush them off to the hospital. You'd see the blood and…mostly fights. Mostly fights.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 6: violence in prison	Inmate violence is a problem in most prisons, and Eastern State was no exception. In the early days, prisoners here lived in strict solitary confinement, so violence was limited to individual attacks against officers. But that system loosened up over time, and the cellblocks around you filled with inmates.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 6: violence in prison	This panel tells the story of the bloodiest escape attempt in Alcatraz history…Eight officers were trapped in these cells…[sounds of gunfire]
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 6: violence in prison	[sound of an alarm siren]…and then right after that, the siren went off, and they were dead…
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 6: violence in prison	I think about three, four men got killed with kitchen ware [sound effect like a knife stabbing flesh].
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 6: violence in prison	I heard that old familiar pop-slap….Just like an ice-pick, he stuck [a knife] in his back…
OSR	former guard	Theme 7: rehabilitation	All of the men who would leave here on parole would have to have a trade, and someone to go home to…
OSR	neutral narrator	Theme 7: rehabilitation	The Reformatory library played a vital role in the rehabilitation of inmates.

ESP	neutral narrator	Theme 7: rehabilitation	The architects here believed that all human beings, regardless of their behavior, have good in their hearts. They believed Eastern State Penitentiary would inspire a new generation of prisons, worldwide, built on this optimism and faith in the human character.
ESP	artist	Theme 7: rehabilitation	I've worked with the Mural Arts program here in Philadelphia for about 17 years and for the past 10 years I've worked inside of a state correctional institution at Graterford prison. I have a group of inmates in that prison that work with me on creating murals. We work on cloth indoors. It's a way to work with classes and people who otherwise wouldn't be able to get to the top of a wall and we take the cloth out and we install it on a given mural site.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 7: rehabilitation	And now, in the 1960s, prison reformers preached rehabilitation instead of punishment. Early in 1963, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy ordered Alcatraz closed.
ESP	former guard	Theme 8: race	They believed convicts needed time alone—in silence, to rediscover their good nature.
ESP	former warden	Theme 8: race	We had this Puerto Rican guy come in to Eastern State Penitentiary, and I don't think they really knew what to do with him because they had the blacks in certain blocks and the whites in certain blocks. I don't ever remember any blacks being on the same block as whites. Or the whites being on the same blocks as blacks.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 8: race	Some of the work places in the institution, for instance the kitchen, were predominately black. The print shop and the choice jobs were predominately white.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 8: race	2.2 million Americans are now held in jail or prison, but that population is almost 60% Black or Latino. The U. S. population is just 30% Black or Latino.
ESP	political scientist	Theme 8: race	This troubling pattern—in which racial minorities are imprisoned at rates higher than the rest of the nation—dates back to the earliest years of American history…An Englishman named Edward Abdee, who visited Eastern State in the 1830s, wrote that a lack of work and a biased legal system drove many Black Americans into this prison and the other American prisons of his day.
ESP	political scientist	Theme 8: race	The crisis of race and incarceration has only grown worse since Eastern State closed. The massive growth of the U.S. prison population since 1970 has created more prisoners of all racial groups, but Black and Latino communities have been the most heavily impacted
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 8: race	In fact, there are more Black prisoners today than any other racial or ethnic group, although the general U.S. population is only 13% Black…Why do you think the connections between race, poverty and incarceration remain so strong, nearly 200 years after these patterns were seen among Eastern State's first inmates?
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 8: race	In the housing of inmates at Alcatraz, it was deemed necessary to keep the blacks separate from the whites.
Alcatraz	former inmate	Theme 8: race	Mexicans, Indians, whites…they could all cell next to each other. The only ones that couldn't was blacks.

Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 8: race	They tried it, they opened it up. And they had such a high population of hostile rednecks, and such a comparatively low population of blacks, that they soon found out they couldn't do it. They finally integrated all the other prisons in the country, but not Alcatraz.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 9: mass incarceration	Finally, walk around to the far side of the graph. You'll see the U.S. prison population now broken down by race in 1970 and in 2010. You'll see that the percentage of white inmates has been shrinking over time, increasingly replaced by Latino and Other racial groups.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 9: mass incarceration	Start by facing the graph on the side that says "U.S. Rate of Incarceration." From this side, the graph illustrates that, for most of American history, the United States imprisoned between 100 and 200 people for every 100,000 citizens. That began to change around the time that Eastern State Penitentiary closed in 1970. That year is represented by the low red bar. New laws and longer prison sentences throughout the 70s, 80s and 90s began to dramatically increase the number of men and women living behind bars. The tall red bar illustrates the year 2010. By that year, the U.S. imprisoned more than 700 people for every 100,000 citizens. Nationwide, the number of Americans in prison or jail has grown by nearly 600% since 1970. There are now more than 2 million people in U.S prisons, costing Americans 80 billion dollars every year. Crime rates have gone up and down throughout these decades. They are largely independent of the rate of incarceration.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 10: mental illness	Now walk around to the right, and look at the tall edge of the graph. The top of the red bar still represents the U.S rate of incarceration in 2010: 730 people in prison for every 100,000 citizens. You'll see that it's the highest rate of incarceration in the world, by far. You can find the closest U.S. allies—countries like Canada, Australia and the nations of Western Europe—on the right side of the graph. They all have between 75 and 200 prisoners per 100,000 citizens, or a rate less than one quarter of that in the U.S.
ESP	correctional counselor	Theme 10: mental illness	The other major issue in the medical section was the psychiatry. The people from across the state came here because the psychiatrists were here. The psychiatrists didn't come in because there were so many crazy people; the crazy people came because the psychiatric services were here.
ESP	former guard	Theme 10: mental illness	Quite a few guys was trying to commit suicide. One guy, named Dorsey, he banged his head against – you seen the beds in there, right? Yeah. I really thought he was crazy, banging his head the way he did. We had to go in and stop him.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 10: mental illness; Theme 4: solitary confinement	So, why does the U.S. need to imprison so many people? What are the consequences? Has this historic expansion made our communities safer? And can we continue to afford this expense? Of course these questions are complex and opinions differ—just like they did when Eastern State Penitentiary was a model for the world.
ESP	correctional counselor	Theme 11: sexuality	Opponents [of solitary confinement] often say it's the mentally ill who are isolated, and they are the least equipped to handle this punishment.

ESP	former inmate	Theme 11: sexuality	In some ways the optimism of the early years was gone. The warden's name was Herbert E. Smith. They called him Hard Boiled. He testified that he believed one-third of his men were, quote, 'insane, defective or degenerates.' Efforts at rehabilitation of inmates were, in his words, 'a joke.'
ESP	correctional counselor	Theme 11: sexuality	As solitary confinement began to break down at Eastern State Penitentiary and inmates began sharing cells, sex among inmates began to become an increasingly common problem.
ESP	sociologist	Theme 11: sexuality	Not that there wasn't a lot of homosexual activity. But, either that was a silent coercion or a financial thing, you know, people paid cigarettes, what have you.
ESP	sociologist	Theme 11: sexuality	For me, working there, I would be confronted with this issue in several different ways. The most common was if they weren't willing to talk about how they were going to handle this, it was my job to bring it up to them. You have ten years to serve in this institution or some correctional institution. How do you plan to handle your sex drives? How do you plan to handle people who are going to proposition, people who are going to threaten?
ESP	sociologist	Theme 11: sexuality	Sex in prison has always existed. At Eastern, as each inmate was, for the most part, confined to a cell by themselves the only sex available was masturbation. Masturbation was a serious concern among prison officials and most prison physicians in the 19th century.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 12: nutrition	In every prison today, as in the past, where there were females, whether they were inmates or they were staff, there has been a problem of surreptitious contacts of a heterosexual nature.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 12: nutrition	Although the cost of American prisons has skyrocketed in recent decades—up to $80 billion in 2010— the expense is not going to gourmet meals. Today the average cost of feeding an inmate in the U.S. is about $4 a day, or $1.25 per meal. The result is highly-processed, mass produced foods that generally arrive at the facilities frozen or canned. There are very few fresh fruits or vegetables in today's prisons. Kitchen staff—usually inmates—simply heat the food and measure portions out onto plastic trays…And some prison food is intentionally bad. "Nutraloaf" is today's version of the old "bread and water" punishment diets, served to inmates who violate prison rules. Nutraloaf recipes vary from state to state, but all of them are meant to be unpleasant. Courts have generally upheld the rights of prisons to punish inmates with Nutraloaf, but the process remains controversial.
Alcatraz	former guard	Theme 12: nutrition	It was a strict requirement of the Bureau of Prisons that the food not only be palatable and healthy, but attractively served.
ESP	political scientist	Theme 13: poverty	In my nearly 11 years studying this topic and working with incarcerated men, I've come to believe that race and the arrest of poor people residing in poor neighborhoods is part of the story.

ESP	artist	Theme 14: the media & incarceration	We can all envision the life that has happened here and most of those memories come from what we have seen on television and films. With this piece I want to challenge the popular clichés that come along with visiting a site like this and then decided to sort of juxtapose sort of a collage of these prison films with the actual site, to give people a kind of understanding of where their memories came from.
ESP	museum staff member	Theme 15: gender	I think that visitors often find it surprising that there were both male and female inmates in this one facility because today most prisons are segregated by gender. In fact, a small number of female inmates were housed at Eastern State from nearly the beginning. They were typically convicted of the same types of crimes as men, and received similar prison sentences…In these early years, most male inmates worked silently in their cells at trades such as shoemaking and chair-caning. But female inmates were generally assigned domestic work, such as doing laundry and cooking meals.
ESP	artist	Theme 15: gender	I wanted to recreate an experience that was like being inside a cell with a transgendered prisoner, and having them tell their story to you.
ESP	artist	Theme 16: victims' rights	The name of my installation is *Other Absences*. These 50 portraits are of men, women, and children who were murdered. Their murderers were later incarcerated at Eastern State Penitentiary. Being in the space, I have tended to imagine myself as someone who would be incarcerated here but when I would leave and be going on the rest of my day, I started to also think about the reasons some people were in here and I wanted to introduce a different point of view. A lot of the stories were haunting in different ways.
ESP	artist	Theme 17: political prisoners	The piece that I have here is titled GTMO, which is military shorthand for Guantanamo Bay. The name of the camp that was built at Guantanamo Bay is Camp X-Ray. The cell that you see inside this Eastern State Penitentiary cell is as exact a replica as I have been able to make. It's exactly the size. It's exactly the materials that you see in the defunct cells at Camp X-Ray.The two cells could not be more different. One is very solid. One is made of massive opaque stone. One is made of almost nothing, chain link fence. I suppose they both have the same end in mind. They both incarcerate. They both hold people in…
ESP	attorney	Theme 17: political prisoners	Looking at the installation of Camp X-Ray, it's easy to believe at that point that Guantanamo was supposed to be a short-lived experiment. And looking at it ten years on, the installation, even to me, it looks like a piece of history because there is so much infrastructure and there are so many resources and people at the camps and the area around Guantanamo – that really speaks to just how entrenched this detention model has become in our political landscape.

Appendix D: Content Analysis Quantitative Data

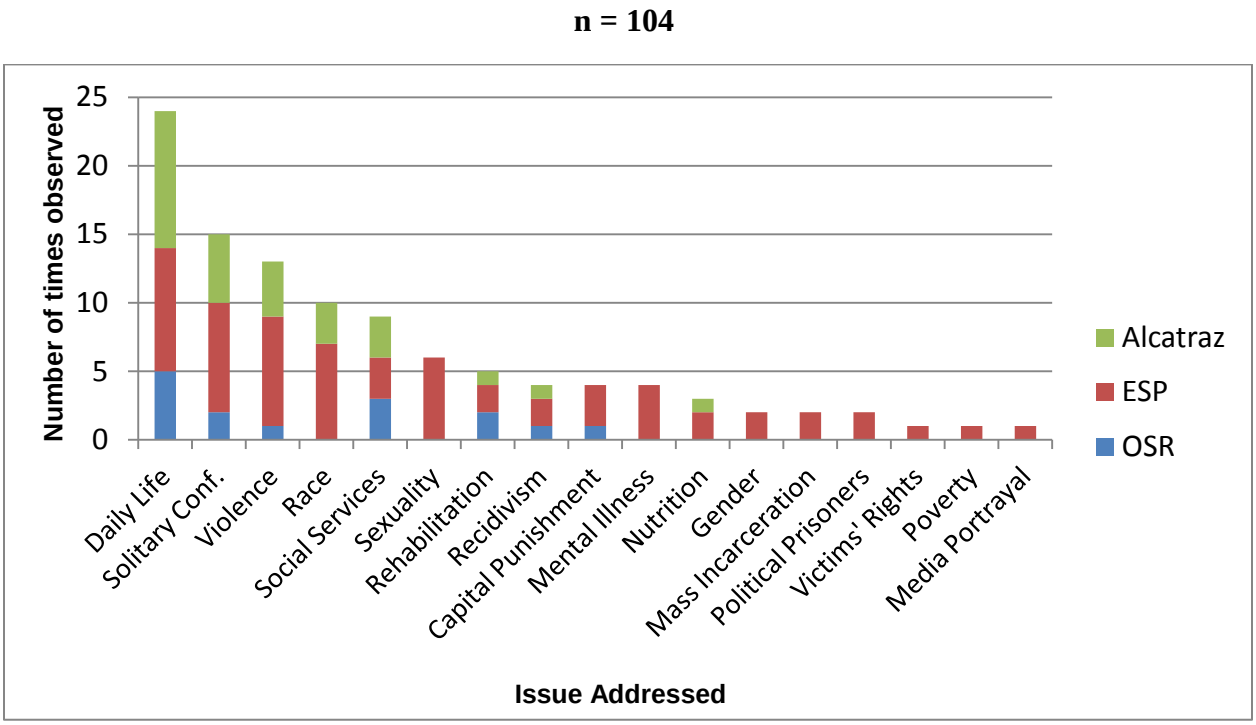

Fig. 1: Audio Tour Content