Reimagining Prison

Design strategies to increase public safety and improve societal well-being

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A Letter to the Reader

When the Vera Institute of Justice invited us to join with them in reimagining the prison, we were at once excited and conflicted. For over 50 years, Vera has led the charge to bring justice and human dignity to our broken incarceral system. While the invitation to reimagine the design of the prison could signal further change, we knew it would not be enough. We cannot only create new spaces to signal a new future—we must dismantle the past. Any reimagination of prison spaces must first acknowledge that our country has an unethical and unacceptable number of prisons. We must first commit to removing environments that are physically and psychologically punitive and torturous, rendering the majority of prisons and jails unnecessary. Only by abandoning our current practices can we truly reimagine new spaces that are therapeutic and restorative.

Today's crisis of mass incarceration is a moral and a spatial question—one cannot be solved independently of the other. As architects of the built environment and influencers in the social and political systems that define our civic infrastructure, we have been a given unique agency. And we have a moral obligation to act. Our society needs a new kind of institution, one that is aspirational and rehabilitative, restoring human dignity to those who have been so dehumanized by our system of incarceration.

When Vera began the process of reimagining the prison, they identified a number of goals: safety, equity, human dignity, unity, accountability, and education. For us, one goal formed the foundation of all of our work together: hope. We know that design affects behavior, perception, and dignity. We know that design can heal. We are excited to partner with Vera to reimagine the Prison because we believe that a Reimagined Facility can help move America along a path of restoration, of reconciliation, of healing. We believe that the Reimagined Facility itself can be a catalyst in radical *decarceration*. We believe that design has a role to play in creating a reimagined prison: a place that heals, invests in human dignity, and restores communities.

Confessing a Failing System
The first step to systemic recovery

The United States is the world's leading jailer, spending an estimated $80 billion each year to incarcerate almost 2.3 million people. This accounts for 22% of the world's prison population, even though the country represents just 4% of the global population. Mass incarceration in America is systemically unjust: one in every three black males and one out of six Latino males are incarcerated in their lifetimes, compared to one out of 17 white males.[1] Data show that about half of incarcerated populations struggle with mental illness and three quarters with substance abuse, suggesting that the American incarceral system can be used as a means of healthcare control, rather than justice.[2] As of 2016, 6.1 million voters—2.5% of America's voting population—are disenfranchised by the criminal justice system; in some states, disenfranchisement amounts to as much as 10% of the voting age population.[3]

In addition, America has yet to see returns on its investment. Our criminal justice system—of which the prison is symbolic—does not make our society safer. Although at least 95% of those who are incarcerated will be returned to their communities, our prisons fail to prepare individuals for a successful integration: among those released from state and federal prisons, statistics show a five-year re-arrest rate of 77% and 45%, respectively.[4,5,6] Instead of preparing people for a meaningful, fulfilling, and successful integration into civic society, prison tends to leave those who pass through worse off than before. Many of those incarcerated are exposed to violence, isolation, and trauma in the prison and leave without preparation for their lives on the outside. Some are suicidal. Many overdose on substances soon after release. With numerous hurdles upon release—such as a lack of employment opportunities and rehabilitative programs, inequitable policing, profiling, and sentencing practices, and the inability to find or keep housing—people are caught in a systemic cycle.

Prison staff are not much better off. Long travel distances, inadequate emotional support, paramilitary environments, and sensory deprivation create chaotic and dangerous work conditions, stressing the staff relationship with and supervision of those who are incarcerated.

Is there a better way?

Prison in its current form is not inevitable. Americans across the political spectrum—including justice reformers, politicians, law enforcement offi-

cials, faith leaders, victim rights advocates, and society at large—have begun to question our incarceration system. Public opinion polls show a shift in values away from a harsh retributive model toward a treatment-based rehabilitative model.

While the United States imprisons nearly 700 out of 10,000 people, Canada and Germany, two countries similar to America in their national gross domestic products, democratic principles, and population distribution, are detaining far fewer people. Out of the same sample size, Canada detains just over 100 people; in Germany, this number is even lower, at seventy-eight per 100,000. If American prisons were to be conservatively in line with our industrial counterparts including Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Japan, there should only be 250,000 people in prisons and jails. In effect, this would require us decarcerating over two million people, closing jails and prisons, and building community-based facilities.

Today, at least 1,821 state and federal correctional facilities operate in our country, and as that number continues to grow, we must ask ourselves, why? Why is it that the prison system seems to grow when its expressed goal is to reduce crime? Why is it that past efforts to reform our prison system have fallen well short? Some have looked to Europe for models of criminal sanction that leave everyone better off. Others have looked to data and studies. Still others look to history for lessons. Few have tried to design actual facilities that challenge us to truly reimagine the system.

From mass incarceration to mass decarceration

As a society, we think of the prison as a cold, hardened space, which also colors our perception of the people who reside there as cold, hardened criminals. But can design alter this perception?

In the reimagined system, the sole punishment would be the time served. Instead of designing spaces that punish, isolate, and dehumanize, what if we invest in the opportunity to humanely treat and rehabilitate, designing facilities that are exemplary and righteous? Their scale, materiality, and spatiality would be therapeutic and affirming, with programs that invest in human dignity and reintegration into society. What if the facility itself aimed to improve the relationship between residents, officers, victims, and communities, reshaping how our society perceives criminal justice and

incarceration? Could the Reimagined Facility itself be a catalyst in radical *de*-carceration? Could it lead to a healthier society for all of us?

This is a reimagined prison: a place that heals individuals, protects the dignity of these individuals, and restores healthy communities.

ENDNOTES

1 The Sentencing Project, *Report of The Sentencing Project to the United Nations Human Rights Committee Regarding Racial Disparities in the United States Criminal Justice System*, August 2013.

2 In the last reports from the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics indicate that 56% of those who are incarcerated in state prisons and 45% of those who are incarcerated in federal prisons suffer from serious mental illness. Among those in state prisons, 74% also suffer from substance abuse (Doris James, and Lauren Glaze, *Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates*, Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, September 2006, NCJ 213600). In addition, nearly a third (32%) of those who are incarcerated in state and federal prisons have disabilities (Jennifer Bronson, Laura Maruschak, and Marcus Berzofsky, *Disabilities Among Prison and Jail Inmates, 2011-12*, Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, December 2015, NCJ 249151).

3 Christopher Uggen, Ryan Larson, and Sarah Shannon, *6 Million Lost Voters: State-Level Estimates of Felony Disenfranchisement, 2016*, The Sentencing Project, report, October 2016.

4 Timothy Hughes and Doris James Wilson, *Reentry Trends in the United States,* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2002, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf>, accessed 25 November 2017.

5 Matthew R. Durose, Alexia D. Cooper, and Howard N. Snyder, *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 30 States in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010*, Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, April 2014, NCJ 244205.

6 Kim S. Hunt, Robert Dumville, *Recidivism Among Federal Offenders: A Comprehensive Overview*, United States Sentencing Commission Special Report, March 2016.

Many prisons today are generic, prefabricated, and sanitized sprawls of concrete, steel, and barb. Thomson Correctional Center, Thompson, Illinois (Flickr: EarlRShumaker)

Executive Summary

The United States incarcerates an estimated 2.3 million people: this represents 22% of the world's total prison population, despite the country accounting for only 4% of the total population. An estimated $80 billion is spent each year to fund a failing system.[1] Although at least 95% of those who are incarcerated will return to their communities, 45% to 77% of those released will be rearrested within five years.[2] Because of addiction, mental or physical illness, or the exposure to intense violence, isolation, and trauma, incarcerated populations are ill-equipped to reintegrate into society. And, when they return, a lack of employment opportunities, rehabilitative programs, and housing options, combined with inequitable policing, profiling, and sentencing practices exacerbate the challenge.

Staff also struggle with inadequate physical and social supports: studies reveal that the average life expectancy of prison staff is 62 years, or 12 years lower than average.[3] Incarceration exacts a great cost on the health of our society: studies show that the increased rate of incarceration over the past three decades has resulted in a decline in population health, measured through a reduced life expectancy.[4] Despite this, there are currently over 1,821 state and federal prison facilities in America, and that number only continues to grow.[5]

As society, we must ask ourselves whether we have fully grasped the magnitude of prison's impact on our society, and whether we are content to leave this system largely unchecked. Our present situation is neither inevitable nor sustainable.

In recent years, other countries have experimented with systems and facilities that operate according to a different frame that endeavor to a transformative mission. Instead of a system that seeks to punish or exact retribution, places like Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and Finland strive to rehabilitate and reintegrate. The facility is designed to mimic daily life outside: bedrooms have doors that lock, living areas have soft finishes, residents get to choose their own clothes and prepare their own means, and residents have opportunities to work, train, and learn. Incarceration rates are significantly lower (about 10% of the US rate), sentences are shorter, and recidivism is about half of the US's (about 27% in Denmark).[6]

Can we build this here?

Today's crisis of mass incarceration is a moral question, and it is also a spatial question: we must address both aspects. In order to envision a path forward, we need to understand how the prison as an institution was created, how its architecture shifted and adapted to changing social and moral philosophies, and how our current facilities are designed and operated, in order to wrestle with broader issues in the history, management, operation, and design of prisons. **I. A Brief History of the Prison** begins with the social reformers of the Enlightenment and continues through three subsequent "generations of prison design. **II. The Incarcerated States of America** develops a framework to understand the current landscape of prison and prison design of along thematic inquires on mission, aesthetics and design, siting, physical and daily programming, and outcomes. **III. The Reimagined System** envisions a different, more healthy and sustainable future. The Reimagined Prison is a place that heals individuals, protects the dignity of each human, and restores health communities. While starting one prison will never be enough, our hope is that the Reimagined Prison can be a catalyst in a radical and transformative decarceration.

I. A Brief History of the Prison

The prison as a civic institution is a relatively recent phenomenon, having emerged toward the end of the Enlightenment during a period of social and political upheaval. Before the late 18th century, the prison was typically used as a response to affronts to the crown and church. From the lens of the church, crimes resulted in excommunication, banishment, or monastic penance; this would form the basis for a shift in the mission of the prison to one of moral rehabilitation. Towards the end of the French Revolution, emerging ideals about the republic and an anthropocentric worldview had begun to undermine the authority of the church and crown. As such, the idea of prison as punishment from a tyrannical monarchy was also upended in pursuit of moral rehabilitation.

A number of reformers—like John Howard, George Dance the Younger, and Claude Nicolas Ledoux—sought to develop the prison as a new civic institution through architecture that enacted novel methods for moral and spiritual rehabilitation. As it became apparent to such reformers that that architecture radically shaped and affected behavior and psyche, they focused energy on the design of prisons themselves. Rather than makeshift prisons or subterranean dungeons in castles, estates, fortified towers, city gates, or floating hulks that symbolize a social death, designers offered a path to redemption through pairing incarceration and virtue.

First-Generation Prisons

In 1791, Jeremy Bentham and architect Willey Reveley conceived an "ideal" mechanism of power and control—the Panopticon (facing page, right). It operated based on an idea of constant surveillance: in a seven-story circular tower enclosed by cells on the periphery, guards could observe residents from a central tower without ever being seen, and residents had no way of knowing if they were being actively watched. The belief was that, because of the omnipresence of the guard, the Panopticon would reform its occupants into docile and obedient citizens and help them to attain spiritual and moral salvation in the process.

Meanwhile, Ledoux's schemes for a prison at Aix-en-Provence (facing page, left) addresses a fundamental problem of the prison: it must house a large and diverse population in a way that does not undermine effective supervision. By organizing the auxiliary functions of the prison, including its kitchen and guard chambers in a cruciform plan, Ledoux's
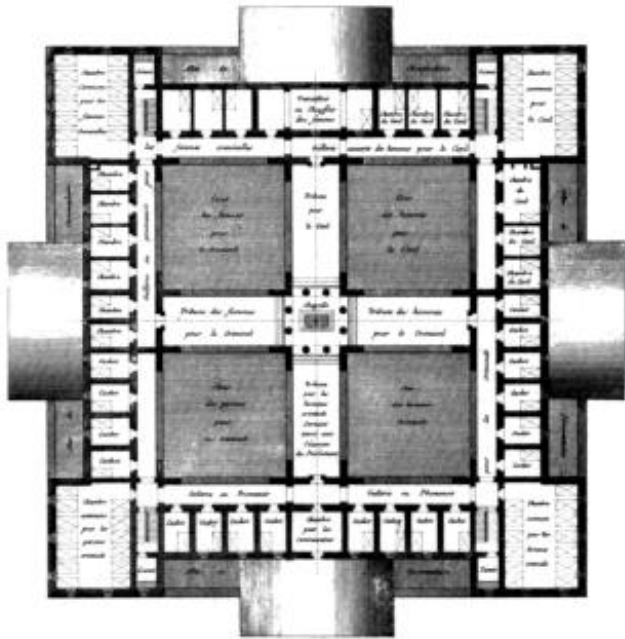
Project for a Prison in Aix-en-Provence,
Claude Nicolas Ledoux, 1786.
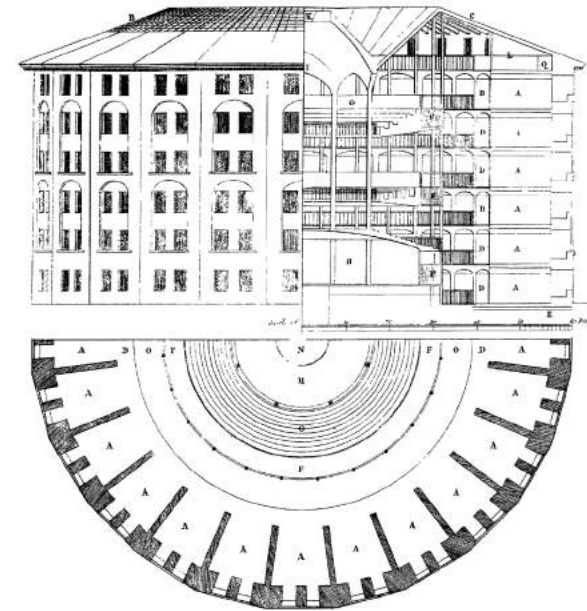
Panopticon, Jeremy Bentham, with
Willey Reveley, 1791

design divided a large square perimeter into four smaller squares, each housing a different subset of the population, achieving a balance between the need to supervise and the need to be efficient in staffing and management.

Evident in both plans, the guiding principle of safety through separation is also expressed in the replication and evolution of the solitary cell. Originating in the asylum, solitary cells were initially used to separate and confine incarcerated people who were sick, mentally insane, dangerous, or who required protection. The belief that "[s]olitude and silence are favourable to reflection; and may possibly lead them to repentance" drove the adoption of solitary confinement as a means of reformation.

Emerging out of Quaker principles that sought to create a more humane criminal justice system, the solitary system was implemented in the United States with similar spatial and formal qualities aimed at affecting behavior change and moral redemption. Exemplifying this design philosophy, the Walnut Street Jail, constructed in 1773, was expanded in 1790 to include blocks of solitary cells that offered incarcerated populations the chance to seek forgiveness and redemption. In 1829, the Eastern State Penitentiary would herald the creation of a new building typology: a penitentiary, designed to create penitence through solitude.

Merging architectural elements of both the panopticon and the cruciform prison, first-generation penitentiaries often feature a radial organization of wards (facing page, Eastern State Penitentiary) featuring double-loaded corridors with cells arranged along the exterior walls or a cruciform arrangement of stacked cell blocks detached from the exterior walls. Strict programmatic regimes pervaded the penitentiary: people were totally isolated and separated from other residents, worked alone, and served meals through a slot in the door. This resulted in outcomes counter to intention, and solitary confinement was condemned as torturous and oppressive. Coming from the religious goal of moral reformation, prisons during the 18th and 19th century emulated safety by separation, solitude as penance, and guard as omnipresent control. These prisons are considered "First Generation."

Second Generation Prisons
Yet, as prison populations continued to balloon in the first half of the twentieth century, the tendency to elongate wings or add new bisecting wings had corrupted the original design ideas intended to accommodate efficient ventilation, daylighting, and surveillance. Increasingly inhumane conditions, poor sanitation, management challenges, insufficient surveillance, and riots brought to the fore the need for a new model of prison. Beginning in the 1960s, facilities began to experiment with what would become to be known as the "Second Generation" prison. Designed around pods, residents were organized into management units of 40 to 64 residents, groups by classification. Using technology like CCTVs, guards were stationed in enclosed booths, where they could observe all aspects of the living units remotely, but rarely interacted directly with the residents. Because of the lack of interpersonal interaction and continued isolation, residents frequently acted out in their cells or were violent to other residents, generating desensitizing and dehumanizing conditions between guards and incarcerated populations.

Third Generation Prisons
Realizing that it was safer to prevent, rather than respond to problems, the Federal Bureau of Prisons proposed a shift in 1973 from remote surveillance to direct supervision. By placing guards in units, the guards would interact
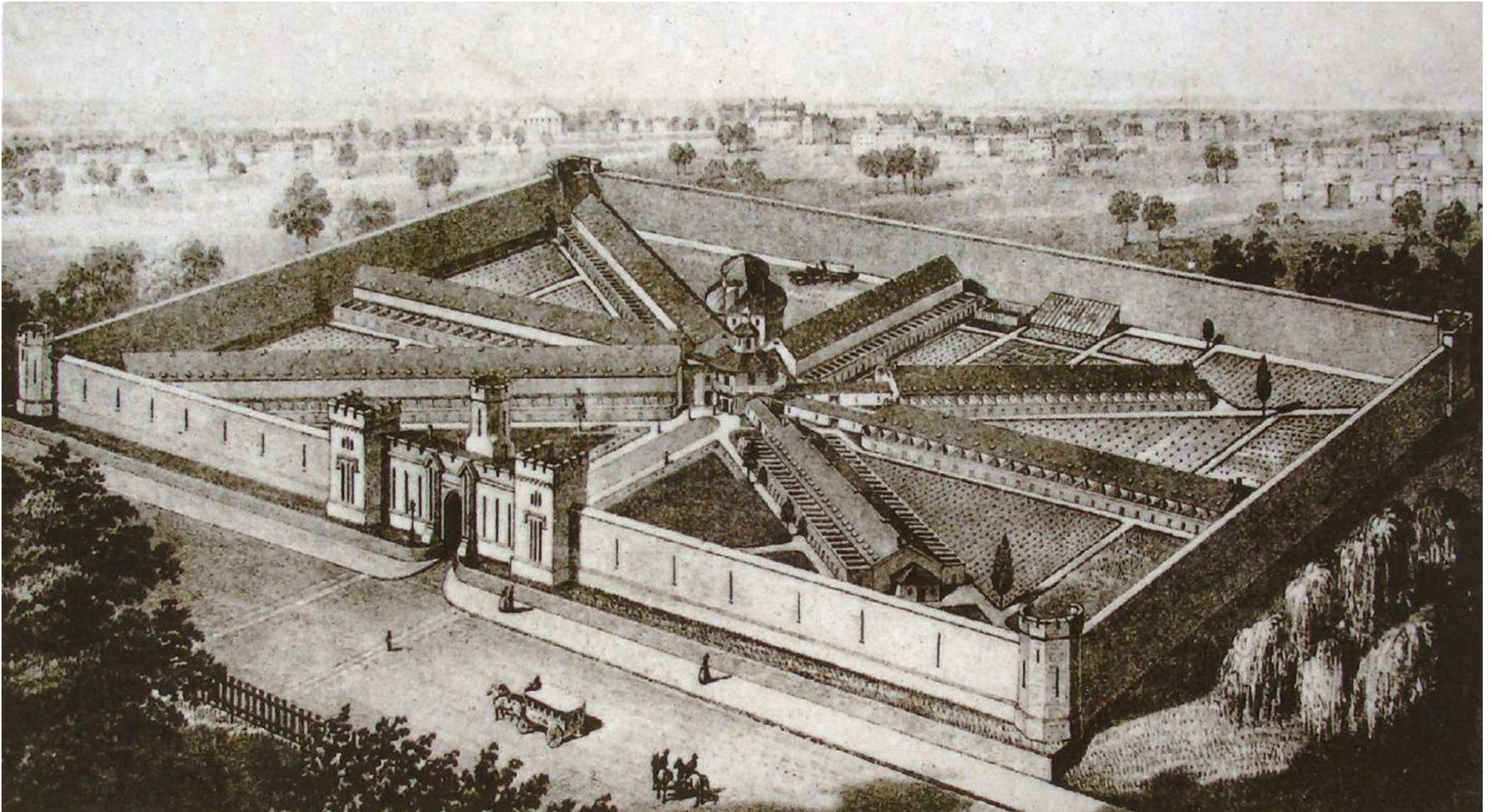
Above: The Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, exemplifies a typical radial organization of wards. (John Haviland, 1829, Lithograph by P.S: Duval and Co., 1855)

Right: A typical floor plan of the Pennsylvania, or Separate, System (left) shows a double-loaded corridor, and the Auburn, or Congregate, System displays cell blocks detached from exterior walls. Both ward plans isolated residents and led to intense sensory deprivation.
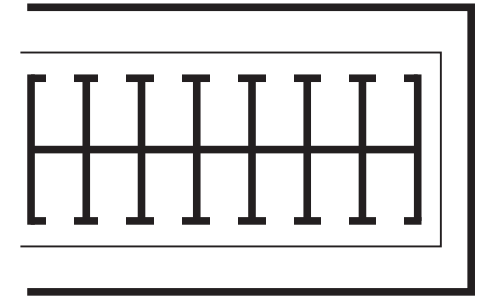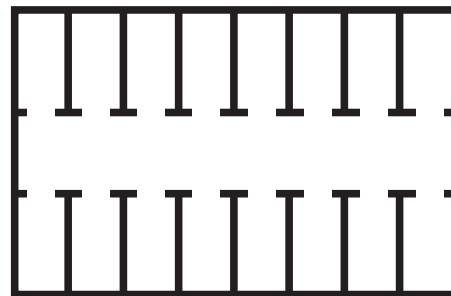
regularly with residents, improving communication and addressing problems before they arose. After a few years, this shift, which was also accommodated by design elements such as softer finishes, brightly-colored walls, carpeting, and upholstered furniture that deinstitutionalized the prison, vandalism, violence, and suicide rates all reduced dramatically.

Although the data showed that these more humane facilities worked remarkably well, public bias bemoaned that the facilities were "too nice" and not "punitive enough," effectively precluding a widespread adoption of deinstitutionalized facilities. While these buildings acknowledge the role of intentional design and programming, design standards remained noncommittal to a deinstitutionalized paradigm, included no incentives to go beyond the bare minimum, and suffered from a negative public perception. They were also nearly impossible to enforce, as the courts ruled inconsistently on their constitutionality under the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments.[7]

A Failing System
Since the inception of the typology, the prison's identity and architectural response has shifted along with cultural, moral, and philosophical postures. Whether focusing on a mission of torture, retribution, reformation, or rehabilitation, the prison—as an institution and through its design—tested different means of surveillance and physical environments in order to control and affect its inhabitants. Although research, data, resident protests, and public and scholarly outcry have informed different moments of reform, ultimately a punitive social and legal infrastructure has systemically ingrained retribution and bias into the American justice system.

Although crime rates in relation with population have in large part held steady over the past two hundred years, our societal focus on incarceration has only grown. If the goal of the prison was to make our communities safer and rehabilitate those who have offended, its legacy in America is one of failure.

Today, it is clear that no typology or architectural form can offer a complete response to our current conditions of mass incarceration. As we shift our attention to reimagining a different prison facility, we need to understand that changes to the design of facility cannot operate in a vacuum which leaves the rest of the system intact—this will immediately fail. However, we can develop an understanding of the more immediate context of the prison facility: the programs, policies, and perceptions that guide and shape the day-to-day experience.

II. The Incarcerated States of America
America's current condition of mass incarceration reaches back to a history of enslavement, institutionalized racism, and attitudinal bias, resulting in a country that boasts of both the highest incarceration rate and population in the world. Although the prison system—in theory—is intended to reduce crime, the number of state and federal correctional facilities continues to grow, despite a crime rate that has remained steady with relation to population. Through studying historical precedents and standards shifts, it is clear that our entire system must reform before (and while) the architectural response can be adapted. However, the prison facility itself—as it sits within the largest system of incarceration—plays a fundamental role in perpetuating the broken system.

Specifically, a prison's **mission** forms the basis for the facility's design and operations. **Aesthetics** (or *an*-aesthetics), **siting**, **programming**, daily **schedule**, and treatment of **users, staff, and community** each contribute to the achievement of the mission and actual **outcomes**.

Mission

In a 1994 essay, "Can History be a Guide to the Design of Prisons?," Thomas Markus identifies five design goals that characterize different paradigms in prison design: **punishment**, **protection**, **reform**, **cure**, and **exemplary righteousness**. Through history, each of these goals is reflected through the physicality of the prison itself. A prison intended to punish is designed to control residents through surveillance (or the perception of constant surveillance), discomfort, and a lack of privacy. This prison can also serve to deter future potential criminals from criminal behavior. Spaces with clear physical boundaries and separation of individuals and communities intend to protect residents from themselves and each other—and the larger society from both. A prison whose focus is on reformation includes specific programs of spaces: solitary confinement, labor camps, intentional vocational or social training, and regulated religiosity and social activities. A curative model depends on highly trained staff who can provide therapy and spaces that facilitate controlled interaction between groups of differ-ent sizes. External parties—such as family and community members—are also frequently present, so these spaces include a mix of public and private areas. Finally, according to Markus, a prison might strive to be a symbol that communicate virtue through spaces that signify its own humanity, as well as that of those who inhabit the facility.

Academic, activist, and author Angela Davis adds a sixth mission, **abolition**, arguing that we should ultimately abolish the entire institution of the prison. Instead of a condition where schools and housing mimics incarcerated life, our incarceral spaces should mimic schools and homes. In exploring these paradigms, their mission, historical context, and design qualities, we examine why past efforts ultimately have ultimately fallen short of sustainable reform.

Aesthetics & Design

In today's prison landscape, each of these missions is reflected in each facility's design—its aesthetics, programming, and schedule—affecting relationships between residents, staff, and the larger community. Typically, a facility's an-aesthetic, or the "purposeful absence of aesthetics" affects the daily experience of residents and staff, removing stimulus and inflict-ing psychological harm to its users. The cold, hardened facility also works as a symbol, shaping and reflecting the public perception of residents as cold, hardened criminals. As we reflect on our American incarceral system, we must—as a nation—ask ourselves: do we believe in the mission and the design ideas driving present-day prisons?

Siting

The locating of prisons reflects the guiding values of our incarceral system. Historically, prisons were intentionally located at the edges of towns—fre-quently in the gateway separating country and city itself. Serving both as portal and prison, a jail in a city gate physically marked the exclusion of prisoners from civil society. Before 1980, the vast majority of prisons (64%) were located in urban or suburban areas.[8] Physically and psychologically closer to centers of population, urban facilities facilitate travel and adja-cencies to services, simplifying connection to support infrastructure and housing for both staff and residents. The facilities also faced higher resi-dent turnover and larger volumes of visitors, resulting in increased stresses on operations and maintenance costs—leading to quicker deterioration and a simplification and downgrading of building material and furnishing selection. Like the urban facility, the suburban facility is located in closer proximity to communities where staff or resident herald. While its surround-ing context can provide many needed services, sometimes the facility itself

must accommodate additional amenities. However, today's trends have placed prisons in greenfield sites in rural areas, deliberately separating both residents and staff from social and infrastructural support. The facilities effectively must be self-reliant, infrastructurally, socially, and physically providing its own amenities and services. This move has also contributed to the gradual separation of incarceration from the public eye. Whether located in rural, urban, or suburban areas, known or unknown, visible or invisible, the prison remains central to American society.

Programming
Within each facility, the programs offered and spaces provided reflect the mission of the prison. Programmatic spaces like the solitary cell, warehouse dorm, and execution chamber enable a mission of undignified torture, punishment, and retribution to be carried out. Chapel spaces and individual, group, or family therapy rooms can be utilized to implement a mission of cure, reform, and/or exemplary righteousness. Libraries and classrooms point to an effort to rehabilitate and reintegrate. Access to the outdoors, communal/familial-sized kitchens, living rooms, and gyms provide opportunity for individual sovereignty over self, body, and food, and communicate a mission that prioritizes human dignity over retribution. A facility's supervision techniques will also influence the arrangement and design of the program: staff can be portrayed as omniscient guards, psychologists, teachers, or partners. Each of these programs, as well as its adjacencies, access, and circulation patterns reflect different efforts to control or offer residents control over their daily lives.

Schedule
Likewise, a resident's daily schedule mirrors the program and mission of a

facility. Long periods of unprogrammed time lead to overwhelming boredom, removing stimulus and desensitizing the daily experience of both residents and staff. Regimental counts multiple times a day and night disturb sleep, and remind residents of their loss of freedom, identity, and mobility. The practice of solitary confinement is even worse: residents are frequently only allowed to leave their cell for 60 minutes five days a week, are allowed two to three exits a week to shower, and are fed meals through a slot two to three times a day—the United Nations calls this torture.

Human Outcomes
The design, programming, and daily schedule of prison facilities in our current system limit opportunities for meaningful interaction between incarcerated people, staff, and the larger community. Although a prison is—in theory—intended to improve public safety, its design and operations ultimately lead to negative human outcomes and a poor return on investment. Not only are residents dehumanized through incarceral practices, but they also lack opportunities for meaningful engagement through employment, classes, self-study, exercise, nature, or human interaction. Overall, a resident's experience in the current system is psychologically taxing, frequently doing lasting damage to the human condition and rarely equipping residents to normalize or reintegrate back into society. Although 95% of residents will be returned to society, nationally, the country suffers from extremely high recidivism rates (statistics show a five-year re-arrest rate of 77% of those released from state prisons and 45% of those released from federal prisons).[9,10,11]

The stressful conditions and sensory deprivation experienced by residents is also mirrored in the lives of the staff, as well. Prison staff have a lower life expectancy (62 years, compared to the average 74 years) and are

If we truly believe in the dignity and human worth of all men and women, we must seek an alternative.

subject to high suicide rates.[12,13] The relationship between staff and residents suffers along with the quality of life in the prisons. Instead of being called by name, staff often call residents "inmate," "convict," or a number—reflecting and perpetuating a dehumanizing experience for both parties.

Families, friends, and the larger community are separated physically and programmatically from prison residents. Except in the cases where the prison is used as an economic stimulus for a region, the physical facility is viewed as a nuisance at best and otherwise dangerous and undesirable. The prison as a public investment has largely failed to perform its intended purpose.

In today's prison facility, the decisions related to aesthetics, design, location, program, schedule, and facilitation of human interaction, each—through the intentional design or lack of design—reflect an effort to deliver on a mission. As a society, we must wrestle with the mission of the prison: should it focus on punishing or rehabilitating? If we truly believe in the dignity and human worth of all men and women, we must seek an alternative.

III. The Reimagined System

What if we could imagine a system that sought to prioritize human dignity and societal well-being, instead of inflicting dehumanizing pain and torture? The Reimagined System begins with a Reimagined Facility: a place where punishment is solely the removal of freedom for a number of years. The design is harmonious and complementary, focusing on rehabilitation and reintegration through human-sized environments and empowerment rather than the stripping of identity.

Siting
The Reimagined System does away with the construction of prisons in re-

mote rural areas without access to public amenities or community services. Located in a community, the reimagined facility both serves and is served by the community. Justice is a civic duty that is embedded within the social fabric.

Programming
Designed to prepare residents to reintegrate into the community, the built spaces and programs offered reflect an investment in individuals. Resembling a school or rehabilitation facility, the Reimagined Facility houses classrooms, lecture halls, computer labs, and recreation spaces, as well as spaces designed to treat psychological challenges and addictions, such as individual or group therapy rooms. Instead of solitary confinement, which responds to challenges with torturous punishment, the facility responds with trained and therapeutic human mediation. The home environment celebrates the individual, placing residents within family sized units of 6 to 8 residents within well-lit, comfortable, and private bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen, and living rooms. Materials and finishes are soft, instead of institutional, and the experience mimics life outside. On the whole, the design of the Reimagined Facility is complementary rather than disjointed, calming rather than disorienting, and redemptive rather than punitive.

Schedule
Within this intentionally design space, the daily rhythm matches that of the outside world, and residents are able to take ownership over their days and futures. Along with the freedom to pursue personalized treatment, education, or capacity building, residents can choose their recreation activities: walking in nature, growing and preparing their own food, or exercising.

The prison as a public investment has largely failed to perform its intended purpose.

Human Outcomes

Instead of harming self-perception and social connections, the Reimagined Facility improves and rehabilitates relationships between incarcerated populations, staff, and the larger community. Residents are considered clients and are treated with respect by the trained staff with which they interact. Staff and residents engage on a first name basis, wear clothing of their choosing, and work together to achieve identified goals. Not only do residents have access to support networks, but staff are provided with outlets, a more relaxed environment, and adjacencies to needed services. The staff makeup is gender balanced and reflects the local community and resident demographics. Building on the relationships developed between residents and staff, residents are also able to stay connected to friends and family, who will form the basis of their support network when they reintegrate into society.

The community interacts more regularly with the Reimagined Facility, with the opportunity to take classes, teach, learn, serve, or even to buy and sell goods at the facility. This improved communication among residents, staff, and the community at large creates a community-based surveillance, focusing on preventative, rather than reactionary measures. By building in transparency and developing partnership, the prison as an institution is demystified, and societal and attitudinal biases are addressed, helping to destigmatize the perception of criminals and criminality.

The Reimagined System is predicated on a posture of criminal justice that is centered in human dignity: one that prioritizes therapy and empathy, rather than retribution, pain, and torture. Its design, siting, programming, schedule, and perception are each designed to rebuild personal and societal relationships, rehabilitating individuals and restoring communities.

ENDNOTES

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5   James J. Stephan, *Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2005*, Bureau of Justice Statistics, United States Department of Justice, 2005.

6   "The Danish Prison and Probation Service - in brief," Kriminalforsorgen, June 2015.

7   The Appendix to this Report, "Standards and Regulations," covers this discussion in further detail. Although the United States Constitution safeguards certain human rights of those incarcerated, the constitutionality of prison design standards have repeatedly fallen short against challenges under the Eighth and the Fourteenth Amendments. The U.S. Supreme Court case, *Bell v. Wolfish*, 441 U.S. 520, 543 n.27 (1979) ruled that "[W]hile the recommendations of these various groups may be instructive in certain cases, they simply do not establish the constitutional minima; rather, they establish goals recommended by the organization in question." Also see *Grenning v. Miller-Stout*, 739 F.3d 1235, 1241 (9th Cir. 2014), *Gates v. Cook*, 376 F.3d 323, 337 (5th Cir. 2004), *Graves v. Arpaio*, 2008 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 85935 (D. Ariz. Oct. 22, 2008), and *LaMarca v. Turner*, 662 F.Supp. 647, 655 (S.D. Fla. 1987). A summary of these decisions can be found at Friedman, Alex, "How the Courts View ACA Accreditation," *Prison Legal News*, October 2014, <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2014/oct/10/how-courts-view-aca-accreditation/>. Accessed 26 November 2017.

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9   Timothy Hughes and Doris James Wilson, *Reentry Trends in the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2002, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf>, accessed 25 November 2017.

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12 Jamie Brower, *Correctional Officer Wellness and Safety Literature Review*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center, 2013, 11.

13 Brower, 2013. Also see Michael D. Denhof and Caterina G. Spinaris, *Depression, PTSD, and Comorbidity in United States Corrections Professionals: Prevalence and Impact on Health and Functioning*, Florence, CO: Desert Waters Correctional Outreach, 2013, 8.

I.

I. A Brief History of the Prison
Learning from carceral typologies

Prisons have a near-permanent, almost preemptive status in our society today; it is almost unthinkable to consider a world without prison. But the prison is a relatively recent phenomenon. Its emergence as a civic institution occurred only towards the end of the Enlightenment, as social theorists wrestled with moral discipline during a time of incredible political and social upheaval. In light of fading tyrannical power, social theorists were careful not to re-introduce the arbitrary and retributive practices of fallen despots, but to invent new instruments for moral and spiritual rehabilitation.

Prior to the late 18th century, premodern prisons served a different ideal and purpose: people were imprisoned for affronts against the crown and the church, which were interpreted as offenses against absolutism and god, respectively. In the former, incarceration often served as a prelude to retribution in the form of public execution (the guillotine and the gallows) or exile; at other times, indefinite imprisonment and torture served as warnings to deter others from committing the same acts or crossing those in power. Confining people in fortified towers, usually located at city gates, in makeshift spaces within castles and estates, and in ships or hulks, the prison held an iconic quality that reinforced the power wielded by the crown and the church.

Affronts to the church were often met with excommunication and banishment; interestingly, however, monastic penance was far more common and lay the foundation for moral rehabilitation—which would later become the mission of the modern prison. In this context, monastic confinement, in which people adhered to certain restrictions but could leave the monastery, can be seen as a predecessor of the parole system. Likewise, the church's (often abusive and arbitrary) practice of selling indulgences can be seen as a precedent to the modern system that issues fines and remittances for certain crimes. For cases where the severity of crime or fear of recidivism may warrant further confinement, several monasteries, such as the 12th century monastery at Mont-Saint-Michel, featured subterranean dungeons without any access to light for this purpose.

Though they existed for different types of crimes, both the royal and the ecclesiastical approaches to imprisonment were similar in terms of their architectural spatiality as makeshift facilities, their use of exile as punishment, and their use of the prison as symbol. However, the role of

confinement underwent a paradigmatic shift during the French Revolution when revolutionaries stormed the Bastille on 14 July 1789. By then, an emerging anthropocentric worldview, paired with the rise of republican ideals on the social contract had increasingly undermined the divine authority of the church and the crown. Throughout the West, citizen rights and "the rights of man" (and outlined in the founding documents of the United States and the French Republic) pushed back against corporeal and political punishment, and people were instead imprisoned for crimes against humanity. In this context, the modern prison was born as a reaction against the arbitrary and retributive practices of tyrannical monarchy, and held the promise of moral rehabilitation.

And it would fulfill this promise through architecture. Or so thought reformers, such as John Howard, who, in his 1777 survey of English and Welsh prisons, *The state of the prisons in England and Wales*, remarked that anarchy, debilitating filth, and lack of surveillance had rendered the prisons ineffective, unhealthy, and morally corrupting. Like Daedalus' mythical labyrinth and the labyrinthine horror of Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *Carceri d'invenzione*, Howard's account of the horrors at Bridewells showed the harmful effects of prison architecture. In response, he laid out a proposal for a more rigorous and organized prison that would sustain its cleanliness, instill Protestant principles of hard work and discipline, and reform those who are incarcerated.[1]

Howard's survey features a section entitled "Proposed Improvements in the Structure and Management of Prisons," which outlines design principles for enhanced organization and management, such as separate facilities for males, females, debtors, and children, the provision of natural lighting and ventilation, the placement of latrines and the infirmary, and the siting of the facility. Howard was not alone in his ideas about prison design;

in fact, contemporaneous efforts in organizing the prison were undertaken in 1769 by George Dance the Younger, whose 3-courtyard scheme at the Newgate Prison (plan on facing page) in London housed a different group of residents—"debtors," male "felons" and female "felons"—in open wards arranged around each "quad,"[2] and by Claude Nicolas Ledoux, whose 1785 scheme for the prison at Aix-en-Provence offered a cruciform building with a central chapel and four separate courtyards, each intended for a different group of residents, who were arranged into wards and cells. Both Ledoux and Dance's designs have had an indelible impact on prison architecture; today, the repetitive formal arrangement of cells around dayrooms can be traced back to Aix-en-Provence and Newgate.

Beyond his recommendations improving the cleanliness and the overall organization of the prison, Howard more explicitly proposes prison architecture and solitary cells as a vehicle of control as well as an instrument of moral reform. Separation of residents, Howard argued, would prevent residents from scheming to riot or escape and protect certain residents from others who may pose a danger to their safety and well-being or who may stultify their moral recovery. Through this separation, architecture could be counted on to moralize, as Howard writes, "Solitude and silence are favourable to reflection; and may possibly lead them to repentance."[3] Such claims are illustrative of the fact that the prison, more than any other building typology, relies on architecture's ability to shape behavior.

The Panopticon Diagram

For this precise reason, social reformers, in particular Jeremy Bentham, a contemporary of Howard's, called for architecture that could establish a physical mechanism to carry out the redemptive mission of the prison. Conceived with the architect Willey Reveley in 1791, Bentham's solution was

NEWGATE.
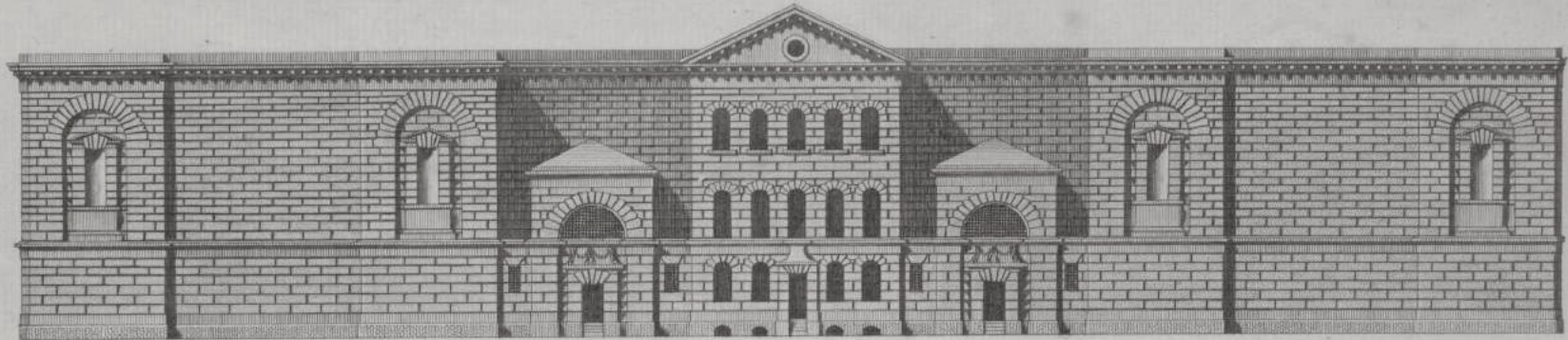
A. The Keeper's House
B. Lodges for the Turnkeys
C. Tap Rooms
D. The Arcade under the Chapel
E. Closets
F. Stair Cases

G. Cells for the Refractory
H. Passage to the Condemned Cells
I. Passage to the Sessions House
K. Wards
L. Bed-Rooms for Turnkeys
M. Cellar-Stairs
N. Passages.   a. Area on the Cellar Floor.
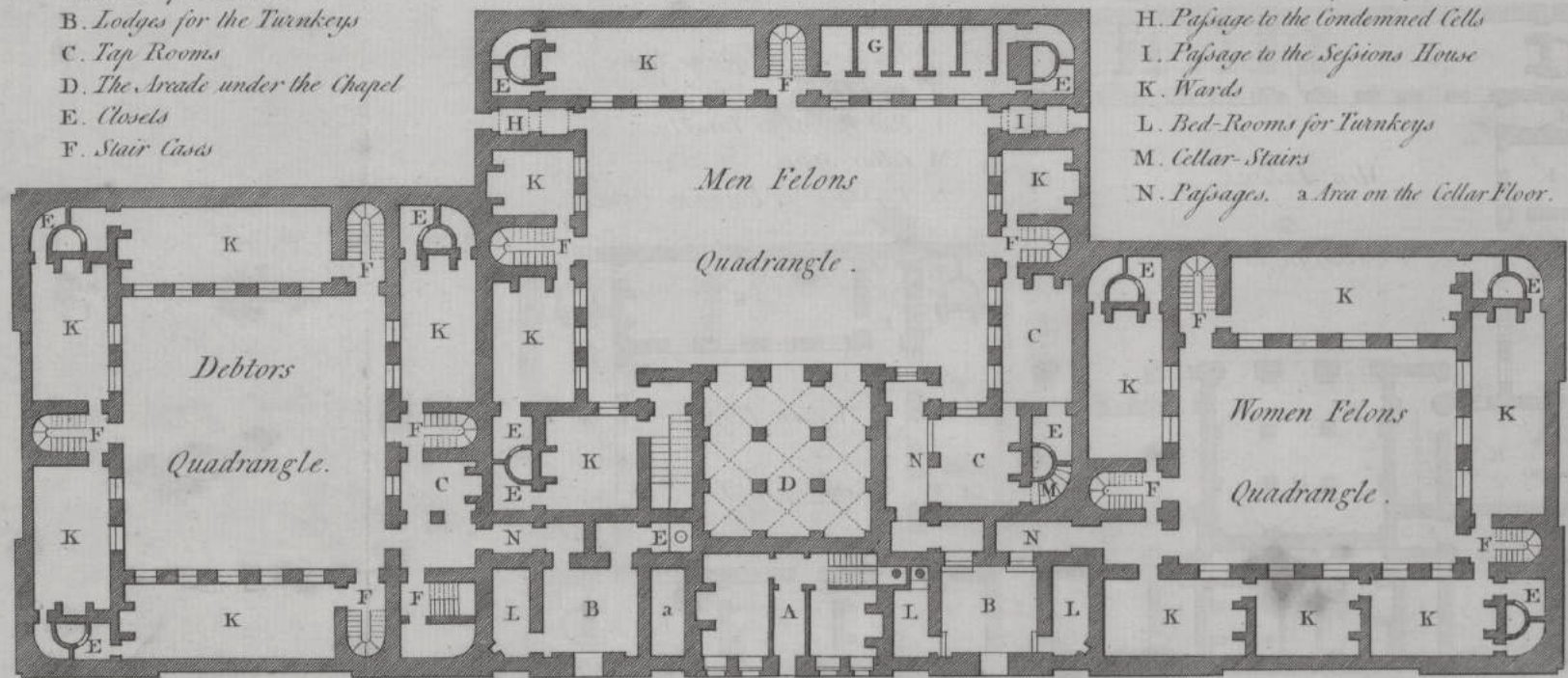
the panopticon—a circular structure about seven stories tall, encircled by solitary cells that faced inward to a singular observation tower. From this tower at the center of the circle, guards could observe each cell, which would be illuminated from windows located behind the inhabitants of each cell. The guard would only see the silhouette of the resident, whose shadow would in turn obfuscate sunlight from illuminating the guards situated in tower. In this camera obscura effect, the guards could observe without being seen, and residents had no way of knowing whether they were actively being watched. Thus, the panopticon could stimulate a milieu of omnipresent surveillance, that, in Bentham's mind, would subdue the "prisoner" into a docile being and force him to seek spiritual and moral salvation, thus reforming him into an obedient member of society.

Several prisons and projects in Europe and America attempted to put Bentham's design in practice, most notably at Benjamin Latrobe's Virginia Penitentiary, Robert Adam's unbuilt schemes for the new Bridewell prison in Edinburgh, the Millbank Penitentiary in London, and most closely, thanks to long-span steel construction, at Illinois' Stateville Correctional Center and the Dutch Koepelgevangenis in Haarlem, Arnhem, and Brenda. In reality, however, the panopticon scheme proved difficult: long distances between the tower and the peripheral ring of cells rendered surveillance ineffective. Walking distances were even longer, as guards had to descend the tower and ascend another set of stairs to reach a cell. Long, curved walkways created numerous blind spots for patrolling guards. In addition, it was difficult to supervise a large group of residents—numbering in the hundreds—in the central dayroom. Rather, the panopticon, for Foucault, is a diagram of surveillance and control that facilitated the distribution of disciplinary mechanisms:

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.[4]

The panopticon thus enabled a power dynamic that was markedly more sophisticated than simple brutality, and in its reliance on distributed networks, decidedly modern.

Solitary Confinement
During this time, surveillance continued to evolve on the cellular level. In premodern prisons, those incarcerated were detained in open wards that were often chaotic, violent, and unsanitary. Responding to these conditions, Howard proposes elevating the wards on arcades to facilitate ventilation, and organizing residents into smaller groups. While Dance's Newgate prison featured pinwheeling wards organized around a quad, he also introduces smaller rooms intended to detain those who were sick, notoriously violent, or required protection. In Aix-en-Provence, Ledoux's design, though never built, ingeniously organizes four large wards in the cruciform and supplements them with solitary rooms that formed the perimeter of the building and latrines at the corners. The appearance of solitary rooms in Ledoux's design is indicative of an emerging trend toward the end of the 18th century that associated solitude with reflection, and thus, spiritual communion and moral reform. These origins can be traced to the asylum, an architectural typology that shared similar goals of displacing, confining, and rehabilitating a segment of the population. The Pennsylvania Hospital, built in Philadelphia in 1756, dedicated its basement to mentally insane
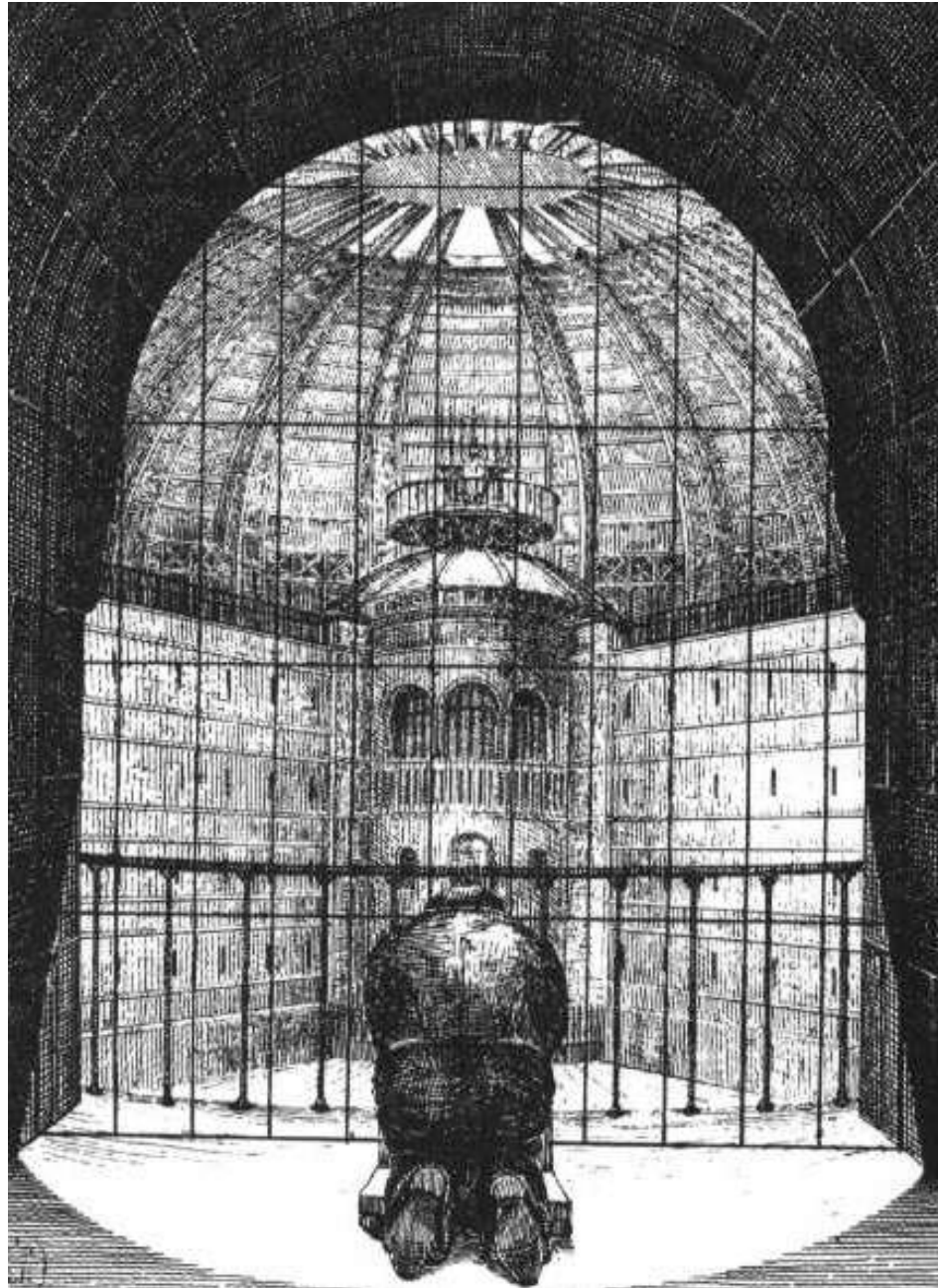
A view of the Panopticon from inside a cell. From this perspective, people cannot tell if they were actively being watched, engendering an ambiance of constant surveillance (*Plan for a Penitentiary*, N. Harou-Romain, 1840).

patients, who were placed in solitary cells with no access to daylight and only a Bible and a narrow window in the door. Isolation, it was believed, would lead to close study of the Bible, which would hypothetically have a corrective effect on the patients. Similarly, Howard cites the Juvenile House of Correction of San Michele, built in 1704 in Rome, Italy, as an exemplar for solitary confinement, emphasizing an inscription at the facility:

It is of little advantage to restrain the bad by punishment, unless you render them good by discipline.[5]

It was with similar sentiments that William Penn had founded Pennsylvania on the "Holy Experiment," the simple, yet radical notion of a society based on religious tolerance, inclusiveness, and a humane penal code. Inscribed in the colony's 1682 "Great Law"—which limited the death penalty to murder, effectively abolishing it—these principles would become fundamental values of the Society of Friends, or the Quakers, and prefigure their efforts to create a more humane criminal justice system. Included within the scope of this effort was an attempt to define the spatial and formal qualities of the prison to achieve a specific mission of affecting behavior change and moral reformation.

Architecture and Behavior

Convinced that monastic, solitary reflection would result in the spiritual salvation and the moral reformation of the residents, the Quaker-led Pennsylvania Prison Society endorsed solitary confinement upon their founding in 1787. The Walnut Street Jail, first constructed in 1773, was expanded in 1790 with 16 solitary cells in each block, in which people served entire sentences in isolation, not as retribution, but as a redemptive chance to

seek forgiveness from above. Emboldened by praise from European visitors to the Walnut Street Jail and spurred by violent riots at the same jail, the Prison Society saw a need for a larger, purpose-built facility. In 1829, Eastern State Penitentiary, designed by the architect John Haviland with outside oversight from the Prison Society, was completed, consisting entirely of solitary cells arranged in radial pavilions around a central administrative tower. It was a new kind of building—designed to gain penitence through solitude—in other words, a penitentiary. In the Penitentiary, people spent their entire sentences in isolation and separated from each other for twenty-four hours a day for the entire duration of their sentences, never seeing another resident (though they could meet with chaplains, wardens, and guards). Work activities were carried out in solitude, and meals were served through a slot in the door. This regime of complete separation, also known as the Pennsylvania (or Separate) System rapidly gained widespread popularity and was replicated throughout the West, largely helped by accounts from Alexis de Tocqueville and Marquis de Lafayette. Architecturally, the spatial implications of solitary confinement (which necessitated linear and intermittent surveillance) had forced the formal merger of the cruciform and the panopticon, morphing the two into the radial typology that came to dominate prison design well into the 20th century.

The Pennsylvania System was not without its drawbacks. The effects of complete silence and total solitude, many observers noted, could be psychologically taxing and torturous. Instead of providing a therapeutic path to moral redemption, solitary confinement seemed to cause its residents to descend into madness and even greater psychological and moral infirmity. Charles Dickens, writing in *American Notes* in 1842 upon his tour of the Eastern State Penitentiary, remarked of the solitary resident, "He is a man buried alive; to be dug out in the slow round of years; and in the mean
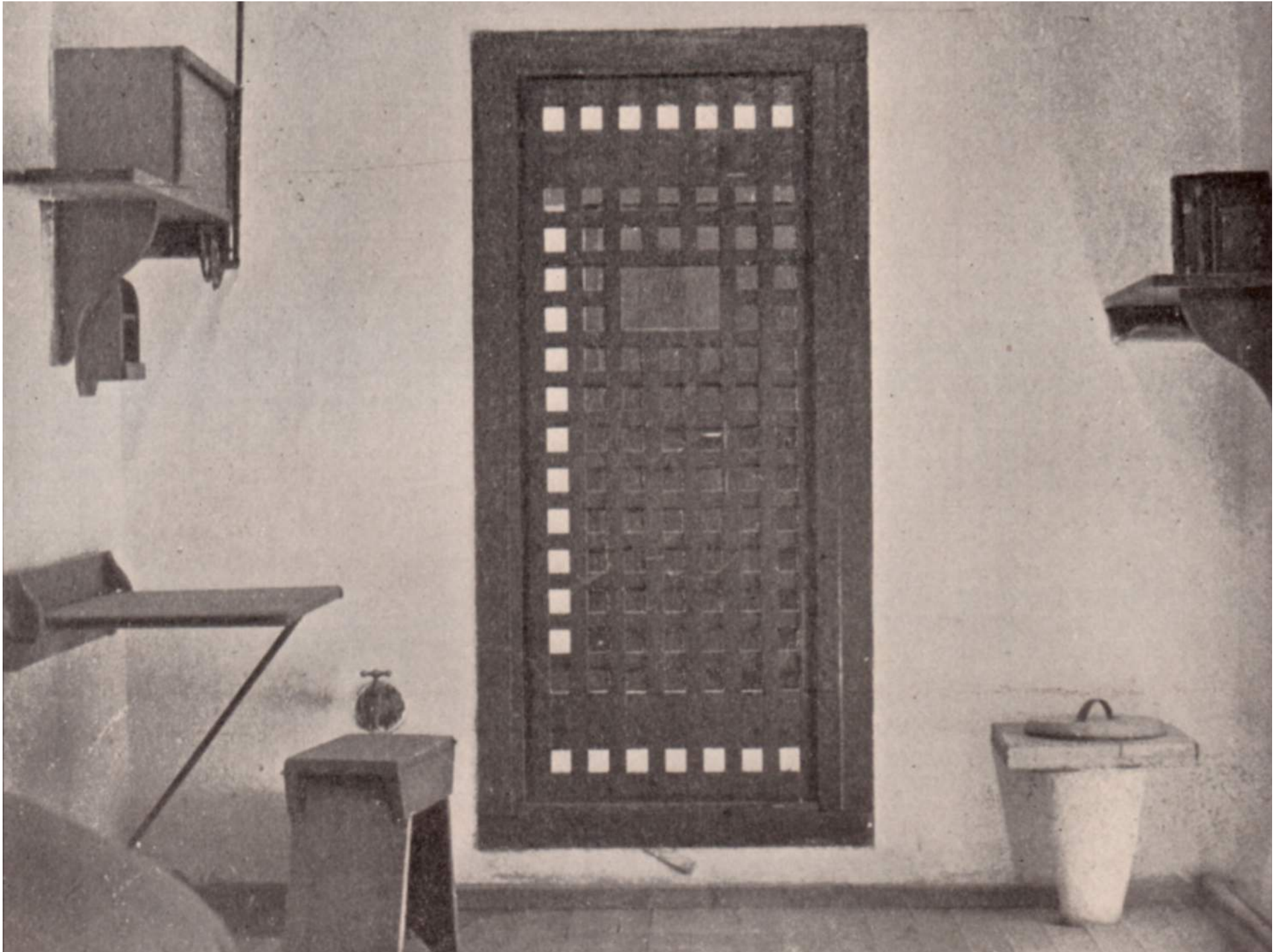
time dead to everything but torturing anxieties and horrible despair," adding, "nothing wholesome or good has ever had its growth in such unnatural solitude."[6] On the whole, he condemns the practice of solitary confinement as overwhelmingly oppressive:

> *In its intention, I am well convinced that it is kind, humane, and meant for reformation; but I am persuaded that those who devised this system of Prison Discipline, and those benevolent gentlemen who carry it into execution, do not know what it is that they are doing. I believe that very few men are capable of estimating the immense amount of torture and agony which this dreadful punishment, prolonged for years, inflicts upon the sufferers; and in guessing at it myself, and in reasoning from what I have seen written upon their faces, and what to my certain knowledge they feel within, I am only the more convinced that there is a depth of terrible endurance in it which none but the sufferers themselves can fathom, and which no man has a right to inflict upon his fellow-creature.[7]*

In addition, since the Pennsylvania System required each resident to serve their sentences in complete silence and solitude, it failed to take advantage of economies of scale. Meals were delivered individually to each resident through slots in the cell door, prison labor took place individually within each cell and produced negligible income, and since residents were not allowed to interact with others, guards had to escort each resident individually. Recognizing these inefficiencies, the superintendents at the Auburn prison in New York, Elam Lynds and John Cray, modified the Pennsylvania System to allow residents to converge for meals, prayers, and work activi-

ties, which would still be carried out in complete silence. Implemented in 1819, the Auburn, or "Congregate" System initially included special hoods that were used outside the cell and individual booths in the chapel devised to prevent residents from communicating with one another. To prevent escape, residents were shackled in weighted chains—the same instruments used in the slave trade—marched in lockstep, and performed manual labor, giving birth to the term, "ball-and-chain gangs."

Collective labor, the superintendents argued, would develop solid work habits, personal discipline, and the respect for others and for property. Most of all, it offered a path to redemption and reintegration in society. There were other benefits as well: working collectively, residents were less likely to go mad and were engaged in more productive labor that was not possible under the complete isolation of the Pennsylvania System. In groups, residents worked on large-scale infrastructural projects, constructing highways, roads, canals, and buildings and structures within the prison as well as industrial manufacturing, including cobbling, barreling, blacksmithing, seamstressing, machining, and mechanicing—activities which generated income for the prison and saved the state money.

The most notorious of these prisons was the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. Though the prison was not founded until 1901, its history begins in 1869 on a 28-square mile plantation purchased with profits from the slave trade, when the former Confederate Major Samuel James leased convicts from the state—frequently offenders of minor crimes, such as vagrancy and loitering—as laborers on the plantation. Even after the land was incorporated as a state prison in 1901, it continued to be run as a plantation, patrolled by guards on horseback, and consisted largely of buildings that were former slave quarters or constructed by those who were incarcerated there. Such a lineage further underpins the fact that the prison as

we know it today is a relatively recent invention in the United States that did not appear in full force until the end of slavery. Prior to abolition, there was little need to imprison, and those incarcerated were largely those imprisoned on capital offenses; however, during the Reconstruction Era, the prison emerged as a way of dealing with social anxieties about racial integration, or in less subtle terms, as an instrument of racial prejudice.

Formally, the Auburn System introduced a stacked cell structure, in which cells and cell floors were arranged back to back, decoupled from the exterior walls, adding a separate layer of security, bringing in more daylighting, and creating common spaces in the space between the cells and the exterior walls. In contrast, the Pennsylvania System tended to feature double-loaded corridors in which cells were arranged along the exterior walls and thus susceptible to escape. Like the Pennsylvania System, surveillance was linear and intermittent, but the racetrack circulation pattern that encircled cells in the Auburn System held an additional safety measure: because guards could walk by the cells one by one, this design prevented guards from being attacked from behind, and guards no longer needed to double back down corridors. By eliminating this redundancy, the Auburn System could accommodate longer wings, such as the Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, New York, completed in 1828. Before long, the Auburn System had largely supplanted the Pennsylvania System. Over time, many prisons originally designed for the Pennsylvania System would later adopt the Auburn System of management.

Towards the end of the 19th century, management needs, such as dividing residents by classification or buildings by their functions, led to the creation of the telephone pole typology popularized by the British Wormwood Scrubs prison. Built in 1891, the Wormwood Scrubs featured 1,244 cells organized into four parallel buildings, each connected by a central corridor that bisected each building into two wings. By compartmentalizing parts of the prison, this design facilitated increased control over the movement of residents and the spaces in which they gather as well as designated areas for classification groups that are given different privileges. Due to the layered spatial efficiency afforded by this design, the typology gained increasing popularity in the United States toward the mid-20th century among medium and high security facilities, including the United States Penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. In less than five decades from the first solitary confinement cells to the widespread replication of the Pennsylvania and Auburn Systems, the paradigmatic shift to modern incarceration was complete. In this time, the prison had gone from controlling groups in of people in open wards to controlling individuals in solitary cells, and in the Auburn System and later, the telephone pole typology, to simultaneously controlling individuals and groups. The Pennsylvania and Auburn Systems, their architectural form, and linear intermittent surveillance strategy would come to be known as the first generation of prisons.

Within these facilities, an increasing prison population had also exacerbated issues of overcrowding, effective management, sanitation, and safety. In both the radial and telephone pole typologies, each pavilion, or wing, is spaced at optimal intervals in order to facilitate ventilation and daylighting, essential qualities for a humane and sanitary environment. However, as the prison population grew at a rate that exceeded the amount of people being released, design outcomes began to defy logic. The Graterford State Correctional Institution in Schwenksville, Pennsylvania, completed in 1929, featured four excessively elongated pavilions, each housing a massive cell-block of 400 cells in an extraordinary exaggeration of the Auburn System, creating management challenges that made the facility susceptible to rioting. Similarly, several new wings were added to

Eastern State Penitentiary, opened
in 1829 on the Pennsylvania System
(Photo courtesy Eastern State
Penitentiary)
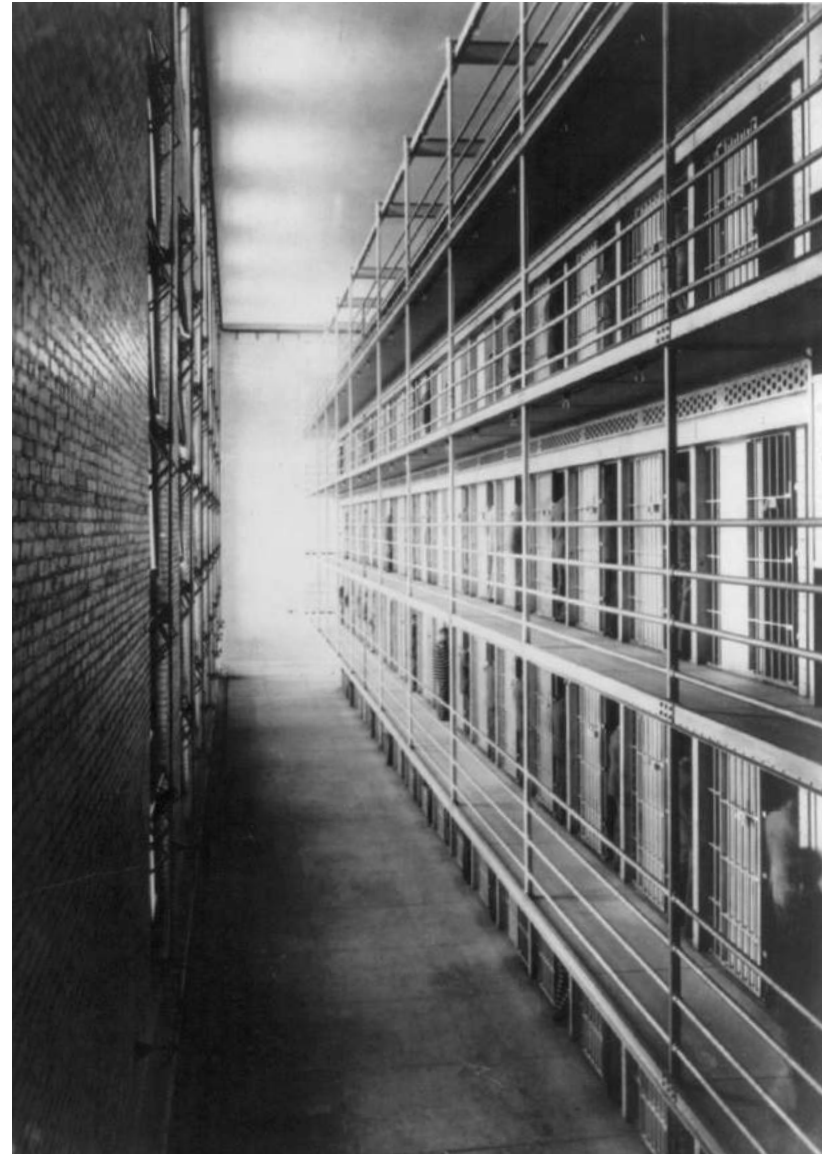
Atlanta Penitentiary, built in 1901 on
the Auburn System (Photo courtesy
the Library of Congress)

the Eastern State Penitentiary between each pavilion throughout its life, gradually corrupting the original radial design and preventing natural ventilation and daylighting, creating inhumane conditions in the prison until its closure in 1971.

Second Generation Prisons

By then, it was clear that a new model was sorely needed to address issues of overcrowding, sanitation, and effective management. In the 1960s, several jails and prisons experimented with a podular system that made use of emerging technology, such as CCTVs, to break down each prison into smaller "management units," or "pods" that usually ranged from 40 to 64 residents grouped by classification. In what would come to be known as the "Second Generation" prison, guards were stationed in secure glass enclosed control booths adjacent to or above each living unit. From these booths, officers observed and controlled every aspect of the living unit, including when and which cell doors open and which lights turn on or off, and conveyed orders through loudspeakers. Only in rare circumstances did officers enter the living units, and often had no direct interaction with the residents. The lack of interpersonal interaction and continued isolation in the remote system increased the likelihood of residents acting out individually in their cells and against the guards—sometimes just to get out of the unit. At other times, the lack of guards can increase the likelihood of riots or leave certain residents susceptible to attacks by other residents, thus endangering the lives of those who are incarcerated. Worse, the overall effect is desensitizing and dehumanizing to both the guards and those incarcerated and hinder their ability to respect each other.

Recognizing that it is easier and safer to prevent, rather than defuse, problems, and that it was possible to incarcerate more humanely,

the Federal Bureau of Prisons in 1973 proposed podular direct supervision as an alternative to the remote surveillance system. In this new concept, the guards are placed into each housing unit, instead of separate from the residents. The guards are more engaged in managing the residents and aim to interact with them in a collegial, yet firm manner. Reformers theorize improved communication would make it possible for guards to prevent problems before they arise. The results were promising, as vandalism, violence, and suicide drastically reduced within a few years of implementation. In the notoriously violent Manhattan House of Detention, colloquially known as the "Tombs," vandalism, violence, and suicide all but vanished in the two years after it reopened in 1983 as a direct-supervision facility.[8] Another case study comparing direct supervision to indirect supervision facilities in 1989 observed that the direct supervision facilities experienced a decrease in violence, vandalism, and suicide.[9] However, due to the cost and difficulty in retrofitting existing facilities for direct supervision and lingering bias against those who are incarcerated, the vast majority of some 500 prisons constructed during the early 1980s instead adopted some hybrid of direct supervision and remote surveillance.[10]

"New Generation" Prisons and Direct Supervision

As fundamental questions about the efficiency of prison emerged in midst of suicides, violent incidents, and riots within prisons toward the middle part of the 20th century, it was clear that the architecture of prisons needed to change in order to improve surveillance and supervision methods. Although the archetypal layout of cell blocks projecting from a central core in a radial or cruciform pattern in the Pennsylvania and Auburn systems suggest a design influence from Bentham's panopticon, in function the nature of surveillance differed fundamentally. Since cells were arranged
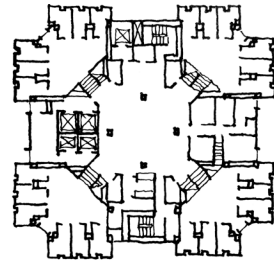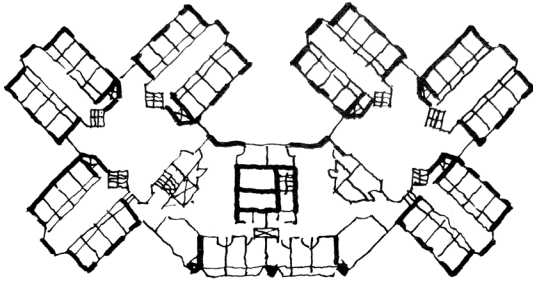
perpendicular to a long corridor—facing each other in the Pennsylvania system, and facing away from each other in the Auburn System—it proved impossible for a guard to continuously surveil each cell simultaneously. In the intervals between each visit from a guard, those incarcerated were free to fashion contraband, transact goods, engage in verbal, physical, or sexual abuse, self-inflict harm, or devise an escape or riot. In short, people could "perpetrate barbarous activities and security and safety breaches"—precisely the outcomes Bentham intended to avoid.[11]

In the 1960s and 1970s, jail and prison administrators looking to mitigate these episodes began to study the role of prison architecture on human behavior. Incrementally, jails and prisons under the Federal Prison System (FPS) began to incorporate a new management technique known as functional unit management, in which guards were no longer stationed in remote control stations but within the common areas of each cell unit.[12] In contrast with the "linear-intermittent" surveillance techniques fashioned under the Pennsylvania and Auburn models, prisons began to implement this new model of supervision, with the hope that it would prevent violence, increase communication between staff and residents, improve safety inside the facility, and treat residents more humanely. Designed to remove the structural separation between the guards and the facility's residents, reduce dependence on surveillance technologies such as closed-circuit televisions and remote-controlled access, the "direct supervision" model was based on the idea that trained guards would be able to identify and defuse potential problems before they manifest. In place of the largely reactive model of years past, direct supervision offered a proactive and preventative alternative, signaling a philosophical shift in the role of prison: "If you can't rehabilitate, at least do no harm."[13]

However, many existing prisons and holding facilities under the FPS were ill-suited for direct supervision, and conversion proved costly and non-optimal. Rising crime statistics coinciding with President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Crime" brought the situation to a head in the late sixties as FPS struggled to place pre-trial detainees into appropriate holding facilities. Crowding and deteriorating prison conditions, including vandalism, lack of sanitation, and increasing violence soon prompted the Federal Bureau of Prisons to devise a new, more humane prototype founded on direct supervision and its preventative mission.

In 1969, to meet the mandate for a more humane facility, the Bureau of Prisons commissioned three design firms—Gruzen & Partners, Harry Weese and Associates, and Sadler & Bennett—to design mission-critical, prototypical detention facilities in New York, Chicago, and San Diego, respectively, based on the direct supervision model. During the design process, each firm was prohibited from communicating ideas with each other, in order to generate three distinctly original responses to the same program. Continuing the podular scheme of the second-generation prisons, each housing unit, or "pod" was not to exceed than 50 inmates, a number believed to represent a size that a single guard could effectively manage.[14] Cells were to be arranged around the perimeter to provide access to natural daylight and a view to the outside. A communal multipurpose area, or the "dayroom" in prison parlance, was to be provided in each housing unit between the cells lining the perimeter and the core of the floorplan. As a space where residents could congregate (or retreat from), the dayroom facilitated a range of social activities without compromising the guard's ability to oversee the residents and maintain order throughout the unit.

Completed in 1974-1975, each of the three Metropolitan Correctional Centers (MCC) demonstrated a range of design responses to these principles. Both the San Diego and Chicago facilities were conceived as
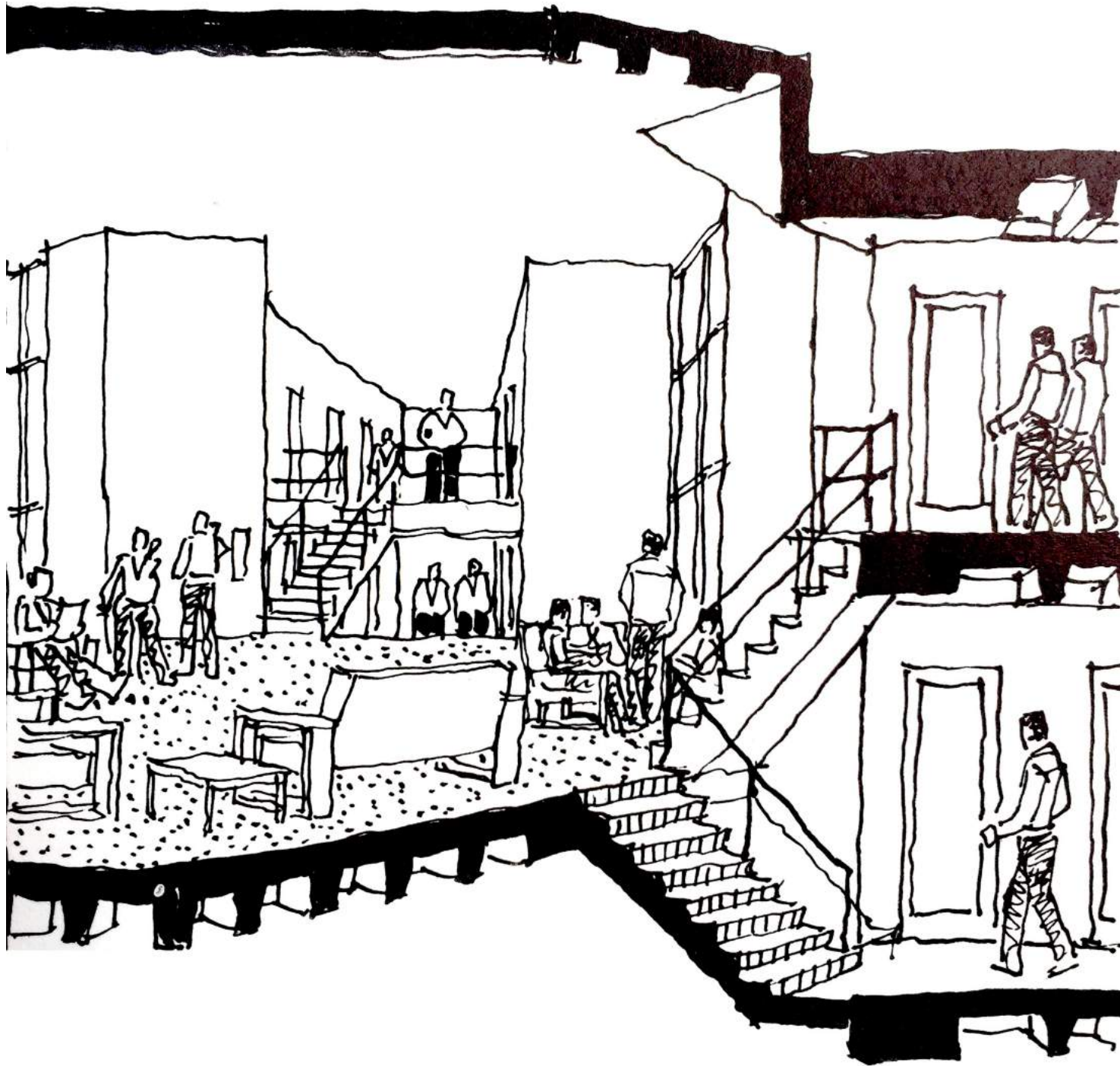
"The architecture of the MCCs allowed direct supervision to work as intended."

Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections report, 1987

high-rises, with 48 rooms per housing unit in San Diego (for a total of 1,000 cells) and 44 in Chicago (for a total capacity of 640), while the elongated footprint of the New York MCC responded to its irregular site and also featured a ratio of 48 cells per unit (total capacity: 732). In San Diego, each floor contained four units arranged as quadrants, with cells forming the perimeter of the structure. The triangular footprint of the Chicago MCC minimized excess dayroom space and blind spots. In the New York MCC, each unit is further subdivided into four modules each containing two stories of eight cells accessed through half-flight stairs that connect to a central dayroom.

Each facility featured softer commercial finishes, such as brightly-colored walls, carpeting, and upholstered furniture, instead of costly, indestructible vandal-proof furniture. This approach deinstitutionalized the experience of the residents and guards and proved cost-effective: people were less likely to damage an environment that was perceived as comfortable and humane.[15] The three facilities proved largely successful—violent incidents decreased by as much as 90%, rape and vandalism disappeared almost entirely, and job satisfaction among officers rose.[16] A 1987 report commissioned by the Department of Justice's National Institute of Corrections (NIC) proclaimed, "The architecture of the MCCs allowed direct supervision to work as intended."[17]

Despite the success of these facilities, skepticism lingered among prison administrators and policymakers, who remained unconvinced that the direct supervision model would translate to different classes, scales, legal systems, demographics, or even the perceived 'toughness' of their prisoners.[18] In addition, a lingering bias amongst the public regarding the nature of imprisonment held that direct supervision facilities, which tended to be associated with brighter colors, softer finishes, nicer spaces and

furniture, were "too nice" and not "punitive enough" slowed the adoption of direct supervision in numerous jurisdictions. Despite this resistance, the mounting success of the MCCs in their first five years—including sustained cleanliness, lack of graffiti and damage to furniture, suicide and crime rates that were nearly nonexistent, and reduced operating costs—made it more difficult to ignore the wide-ranging merits of direct supervision. The American Correctional Association (ACA) released the first edition of its standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities (ALDF) and Adult Correctional Institutions (ACI) in 1977, based largely on the design of the three MCCs. Over the next four decades, these standards had an indelible impact on prison design, construction, and renovation in the United States. However, while the standards outlined the humane benefits of direct supervision and state governments and federal courts generally agreed that the standards served as a model, they could not agree on a unified stance on compliance.
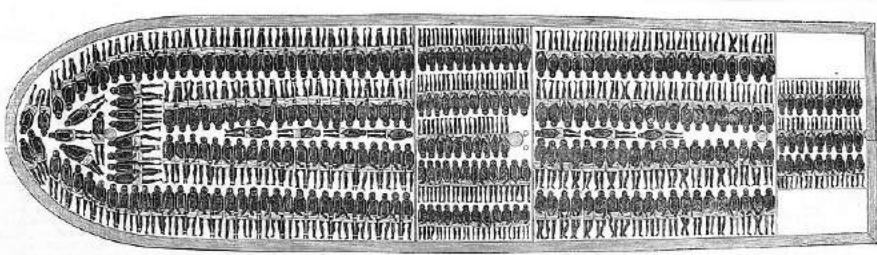
Unintended Consequences

The emergence of the direct supervision model with the three prototypical facilities in the seventies was an acknowledgment of design's impacts on human behavior, and that design led to outcomes. If design could injure through inhumane environments, then it too could prevent injury by creating humane environments. The success of these three facilities subsequently led to push to create standards to scale and implement these changes throughout the prison infrastructure. Although these standards aspired towards more humane conditions, the reverse usually took place. Beginning in the late seventies and the eighties, widespread pushback from the public, who bristled at the idea of spending money on criminals, limited potential impact of these standards in creating more humane environments. External drivers such as legislative directives, policing practices,

USCA

13,15,17,19

FUNCTIONAL UNIT – LOWER

widespread urban poverty, and rising social bias towards crime skewed the population and design of prisons in the opposite direction. Instead of trending towards smaller and more humane facilities, the prison became larger, less humane, and more pervasive to accommodate a growing number of incarcerated people. The standards were also difficult to retroactively apply to existing facilities, and instead of retrofitting old facilities, it often proved cheaper to build new prisons, thus expanding the prison infrastructure.

In addition, as the criminal justice system struggled to keep pace with these trends, prisons routinely operated over capacity. As a result, other types of readymade facilities, including military bases and prefabricated tents, were enlisted to house an overflowing population. New facilities, too, were designed to accommodate many rather than accommodate humanely, and in terms of aesthetics, were constructed with the bare minimum. By and large, prisons began to resemble human warehouses, and its residents treated not as humans but as numbers. The standards largely became a moot point.

The direct supervision experiment was an effort to create prototypes to serve as the basis for improved design codes and guidelines as well as a benchmark for measuring and evaluating outcomes. However, while the three MCC prototypes spurred changes in prison design and supervision nationally, and contributed to a slightly improved system, many of the aspirational objectives of the direct supervision did not endure. Instead, other factors, especially widespread negative public response and a rapidly expanding wave of mass incarceration undermined the systemic implementation of the aesthetic qualities of these early direct supervision facilities.

Today, with nearly 2.3 million people are incarcerated in 1,821 state and federal prisons, as well as local and county jails,[19,20] and over 80,000 in solitary confinement,[21] less emphasis is placed on aesthetics than the ability to rapidly house a large population. As a result, fast-tracking construction practices, including prefabricated modular construction, simple wall/slab construction, reproduced plans, and building on greenfield sites, have foreground a certain architectural response—shared with big-box warehouses and retail centers. Such responses, valued for their replicability and speed of construction, have further limited room for architectural experimentation and invention. Elsewhere, overcrowding has also necessitated the conversion of recreation facilities and yards into dorms and tent cities, effectively warehousing residents in double- or triple-bunked sleeping quarters, effectively rendering the improvements of the direct supervision approach largely moot.

For the better part of its history, prison architecture largely oscillated between theories of isolation and surveillance, as well as retribution and rehabilitation. In the name of public safety, the prison has been a means of separating unsafe behavior from society, but it has also been used to isolate and separate social difference and diversity. Even though the 13th Amendment abolished slavery, it did so while including a particularly injurious and unjust clause that made slavery permissible within the parameters of imprisonment. This clause, known as the due process clause, led to a systemic effort, especially in former slaveholding states and counties, to imprison African Americans for noncriminal acts and minor misdemeanors such as vagrancy, jaywalking, and drunkenness, and then selling these "criminals" as free labor in an elaborate system of convict leasing that was paramount to slavery itself. The system of incarceration was thus instrumentalized to extend the financial and social controls of slavery through the Jim Crow era, the Wars on Poverty, Crime, Drugs, and Terror, and to

present-day mass incarceration. Although crime rates in relation with population have in large part held steady over the past two hundred years, attitudinal and racial biases remain ingrained the very architecture of the prisons and continue to result in social inequity. If the goal of the prison was to make our communities safer and rehabilitate those who have offended, its legacy in America is one of failure.
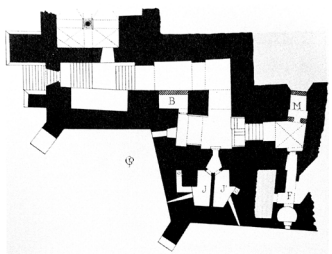
ENDNOTES

1   John Howard, *The State of the prisons in England and Wales with preliminary observations and an account of some foreign prisons*, Warrington, U.K.: William Eyres, 1777, online, <https://archive.org/details/stateofprisonsin00howa> accessed 1 December 2017.

2   Ibid., 150-155.

3   Ibid., 43.

4   Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: Vintage Books, 1977, 195-228, 202-203.

5   Howard, 1777, 114.

6   Charles Dickens, *American Notes*, London: Chapman & Hall, 1842, 81-93.

7   Ibid.

8   Richard Wener, F.W. Frazier, Jay Farbstein, "Direct Supervision of Correctional Institutions," in *Podular, Direct Supervision Jails*, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, January 1993, 3.

9   Jay Farbstein and Richard Wener, *A Comparison of, "Direct" and "Indirect" Supervision Correctional Facilities*, United States Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections Report, June 1989, 99.

10 W. Raymond Nelson, "New Generation Jails," in *Podular, Direct Supervision Jails*, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, January 1993, 25-41.

11 Herbert Sigurdson, "Pima County Detention Center: A Study of Podular Direct Supervision," National Institute of Corrections, 1987, 18.

12 Ibid., 19.

13 In a statement delivered upon forming the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice on July 26, 1965, President Johnson proclaimed, "I hope that 1965 will be regarded as the year when this country began in earnest a thorough, intelligent, and effective war against crime." Lyndon Baines Johnson, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, 1965, 382.

14 In later facilities built in the 'podular' direct supervision model, each unit was sometimes further subdivided into units ranging between 12 to 16 inmates. Nelson, 1993.

15 Wener, Frazier, Farbstein, 1993, 3-5.

16 Ibid., 2.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., 3.

19 James J. Stephan, Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2005, Bureau of Justice Statistics, United States Department of Justice, 2005.

20 Alluding to a 2013 Congressional Research Service Report by Suzanne M. Kirchhoff, *Economic Impacts of Prison Growth*, Bryan Stevenson writes, "Between 1990 and 2005, a new prison opened in the United States every 10 days." Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy*, New York, Spiegel & Grau, 2015.

21 Jean Casella and James Ridgeway, "How Many Prisoners Are in Solitary Confinement in the United States?" *Solitary Watch*, online, 1 February 2012 <http://solitarywatch.com/2012/02/01/how-many-prisoners-are-in-solitary-confinement-in-the-united-states/> accessed 1 December 2017.

		Birth of the Modern Prison		1st Generation		2nd Generation	New Generation	Mass Incarceration
	pre-1790	1786-1828		1828-1960		1960-1970	1974-	1980-
TYPOLOGY	Makeshift Prison	Cruciform	Panopticon	Pennsylvania (Separate) System	Auburn (Congregate) System	Remote Surveillance	Direct Supervision	Warehousing
MISSION	Punish and detain until execution or exile	Classification of inhabitants	Discipline and Punish; Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation, solitude, and self-assessment	Rehabilitation and productivity	Effective control of prison population	"If you can't rehabilitate, at least do no harm," humane incarceration	Mitigate overcrowding
SPACES	Subterrnean dungeon/pit or fortified tower Prison colonies	Cruciform configuration divides the building into four discrete sections, each with a courtyard, exercise area, workshops, and cells used by a specific group	Circular prisons with solitary rooms on the periphery and guard tower in center	Solitary confinement	Silent congregation during the day, solitary confinement at night	Manageable housing units called "pods" organized by classification Separate, centralized supervision rooms located adjacent to, or outside of units	Therapy rooms, classrooms, game rooms, normal furnishings	Expansive open-plan dormitories
SURVEILLANCE	Intermittent and minimal	Intermittent	Constant	Intermittent	Intermittent	Constant, centralized, and outside of the unit	Constant and distributed, guards within housing units	Constant
OUTCOMES	Madness, chaos, and death	Improved hygienie, increased social and functional organization	Servility	Madness, vandalism, assault, self-injury, or moral correction	Madness, vandalism, assault, self-injury, riots, or moral correction Creates a cheap and productive industrial labor force, prison farms and industries emerge across the country	Vandalism, Riots, assaults, lack of relationship between guards and residents Prisons incorporate more vandal-proof furniture, fixtures, and finishes, driving up costs and alienating residents	Guards defuse problems before they occur, improved communication	Lack of privacy, and personal space, lack of substantial communication between residents and guards, residents outnumber guards, residents experience lack of agency
PERCEPTION	Upholds and projects monarchical and religious authority	Symbolic and functional separation of criminals into classes	Formalizes expression of power, prison and surveillance become symbolic.	Reframes the social contract under democratic ideals, rehabilitation pushes back against punitiveness	Prison as labor camp, prison-industrial complex begins to emerge	Represents the prison as cold, hard, and dehumanizing space for cold, hardened criminals	Prisons become spaces of healing	Residents are numbers in a vast, impersonal system

MAKESHIFT PRISONS

BIRTH OF THE MODERN PRISON
SURVEILLANCE AND PANOPTICISM

FIRST GENERATION PRISONS
LINEAR-INTERMITTENT SURVEILLANCE

12th century
Prison rooms at Mont-Saint-Michel are subterrnean dungeons with no access to light
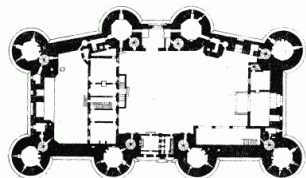
1417-1789
The Bastille, constructed in 1370, is converted from its use as a fort to a state prison until the French Revolution
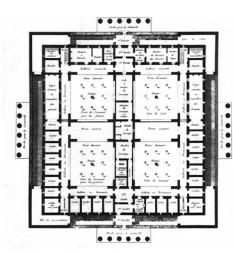
1786
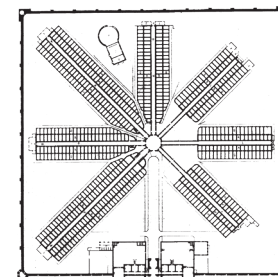Claude Nicholas Ledoux's prison project for Aix-en-Provence classifies groups of prisoners, organizing surveillance
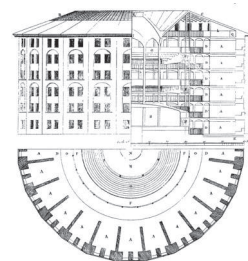
1791
Jeremy Bentham proposes the Panopticon as a diagram of surveillance and rehabilitation

1828
The Auburn System is featured at the Sing Sing Correctional Facility

1829
The Pennsylvania System is adopted at Eastern State Penitentiary, designed by John Haviland on ideals of rehabilitation and moral reform

1750	1800	1850

1762
The Social Contract, Jean Jacques Rousseau

1842
The Auburn system is adopted at Her Majesty's Prison at Pentonville, where convicts are allowed to congregate in lockstep but forbidden from speaking to each other

1750
Le Carceri d'Invenzione, Giovanni Battista Piranesi

2017
2.3 million incarcerated in the United States alone

1960s
Jail and prison design are subdivided into smaller, manageable "pods" with a guard stationed in an enclosed control center.
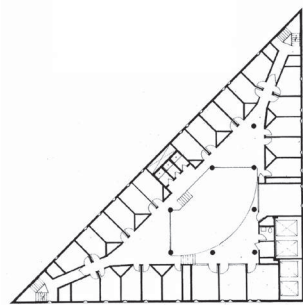
1974-75
U.S. Bureau of Prisons opens three prototype Metropolitan Correctional Centers based on the direct supervision concept, including the Chicago MCC, shown above, by Harry Weese and Associates
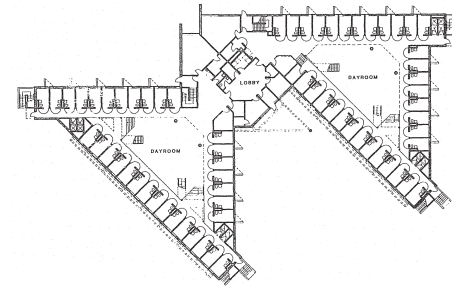
1980s
Prisoner warehousing and prison privatization begin

1900   1950   2000

1965
President Johnson initiates 'Great Society' program, "war on poverty," and "war on crime"

1960s
Master control station, remote surveillance prison

1901-present
The Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola, otherwise known as "The Farm" opens on the Auburn model, and is constructed by prisoners

1974-75
Direct-Supervision utilizes softer finishes, such as the above cell in Harry Weese's Chicago MCC

II.
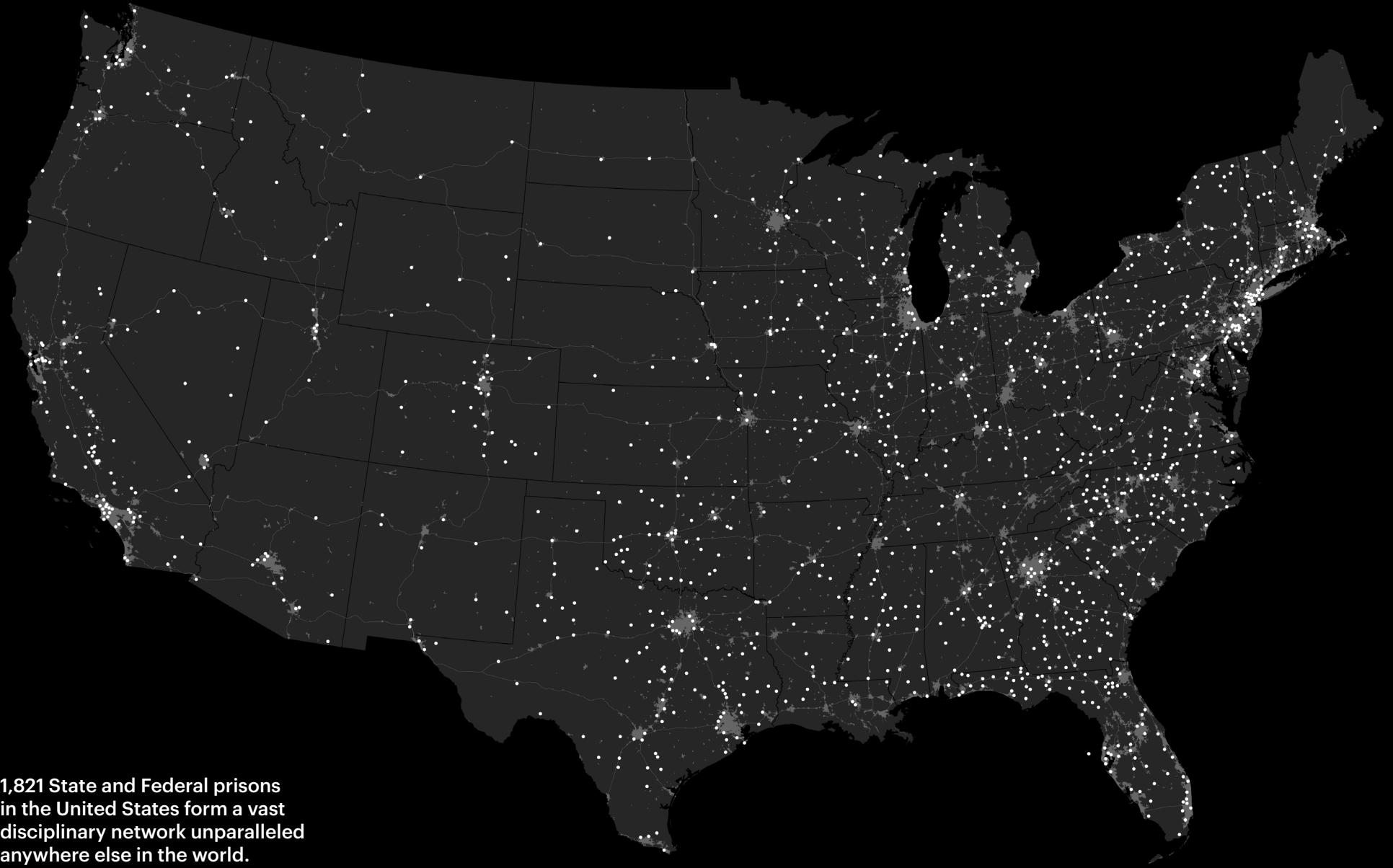
1,821 State and Federal prisons in the United States form a vast disciplinary network unparalleled anywhere else in the world.

(adapted from Jonathan Marino, "Rise of U.S. Prisons," https://mapstory.org/story/rise-of-us-prisons/)

II. The Incarcerated States of America
A framework for evaluating the effectiveness of the current prison system

As the previous chapter has shown, the prison, as institution and as architectural typology, has evolved along concomitant moral and philosophical paradigms. Its architectural forms and vocabularies reflect evolving and differing techniques of torture, surveillance, control, as well as power. Today, there are 1,821 state and federal correctional facilities, and the number continues to grow. While it is clear that our entire culture of social and moral punishment must change, so should the design and operations of the prison facility itself.

This chapter will dive deeper into the current landscape of prisons in America: creating a framework within which to understand how intentionally designed elements achieve a specific mission, and contribute to a persistent culture of mass incarceration. In order to understand the relationship between a prison's mission and the built environment that reflects that mission, we first need to understand the current paradigm: what is a prison for? With this framework, we can then elaborate upon how design, aesthetics, and *an*-aesthetics contribute to and exacerbate a mission of cruelty and inhumanity. The chapter will conclude with an analysis of how a prison's program and location—or intentional siting—contribute to a growing disconnect and disinterest among self, staff, and community.

Aligning Mission and Design
The prison carries two fundamental goals: it is intended to uphold the safety of our society by separating and incapacitating those who present a danger to society, and it should reform these dangerous people to the point where they no longer pose a threat. Yet, as we continue to invest billions in incarcerating people, persistently high recidivism rates suggest a comprehensive failure in our present criminal justice system: it is not making our society any safer. Collectively, we are now at a crossroads where we must debate whether the mission of the prison should be retributive or rehabilitative.

In his seminal *Buildings and Power,* Thomas Markus examined how architectural typologies project power and ideologue through form and function. The prison, according to Markus, is the spatial and material manifestation of a particular regime's ideologies and social theories about penal justice.[1] In a 1994 essay, "Can History be a Guide to the Design of Prisons?," he writes, "In studying [the] prisons of the last two centuries one can see all of today's goals of imprisonment, often dimly articulated and confused."[2] Markus organizes competing ideas about incarceration into five categories—punishment, protection, reform, cure, and exemplary righteousness. He then draws connections between these missions and specific spatial qualities in the prisons that result. Though these categories are not exclusively tied to specific eras, each era and regime has tended to lean toward a particular category, but may also borrow qualities of others.

Prison design today is often characterized by cold and hard finishes, indestructible furnishings, limited natural daylighting, security cameras, and an overall lack of humane design. Residents spend most of their days in "dayrooms" like these (left), which are considered "progressive" in the "Justice Design" subsector of the Architecture, Engineering, and Construction industry.

Punitive

In a punitive approach, the prison is held as a deterrent to committing crime. Its techniques of control are retributive and torturous; and therefore, so are its spaces. The majority of medieval prisons, which typically hold enemies of the crown and the church for purposes of torture or execution, can be characterized as punitive and torturous, but so can more recent prisons where sterile finishes, lack of nature, harsh lighting and materials, disproportionately long sentences, and solitary confinement cells create an extended experience of sensory deprivation. In states where death penalty is permissible, execution chambers in these prisons add feeling of inevitable hopelessness. In punitive prisons—usually intimidating and impenetrable—architecture reinforces mechanisms of control, separation, surveillance, isolation, discomfort, and injury that dehumanize those who are incarcerated as well as the staff. But more than that, their architecture, understood as a disciplinary warning to society, produces a symbolic image of vice and its inverse, virtue.

Protective

The protective model prioritizes the safety of society by incapacitating those who have committed crimes and those who are perceived to pose a threat to society. Lord Mountbatten's 1969 report to Her Majesty's Prisons endorsed this approach by proposing a four-tier classification system. Corresponding to recommended security levels, the tiers ranged from those requiring special housing to those who could serve their sentences in more relaxed arrangements. Though classification methods had been in place in prisons since Ledoux's eighteenth century prison at Aix-en-Provence and the Newgate prison that both separated male and female "criminals" and "debtors," Lord Mountbatten's report and the subsequent release of the ACA's first edition standards systematically codified the taxonomic organization of incarcerated people into manageable units not exceeding 40 to 64 residents. Inspired by Ledoux and Dance's designs, today's prisons, built since the seventies, reflect the focus on classification as exemplified through the management unit (cells, a dayroom, and an observation point).

In the protective approach, the threshold between the prison and society also becomes significant and the secure perimeter and the watch-tower are born

as separate architectural elements. Like punitive prisons, protective facilities may also feature execution chambers and solitary confinement cells, though the intent is not to punish, but to protect residents of the facility or society at large. Prisons that adopt protection as a goal are less concerned with symbolic reproach, and thus tended to be located more remotely so as to make escape and outside contact difficult; penal colonies (nineteenth century Australia) and prison islands (e.g., Alcatraz and Rikers Island) also fall under this category. Though such prisons are conceived with protection as guiding principle; the outcomes of making prisons remote yield certain outcomes that are particularly injurious. Due to the remoteness of these prisons, those who are incarcerated receive fewer visits from family, lawyers, and legal advocates who can provide invaluable emotional and legal support, resulting in extreme loneliness. Staff, too, suffer from long driving distances and being away from their families, which can negatively impact their on-the-job performance and morale. The remote prison is also so far removed from the social fabric of our communities that in many cases, it is altogether forgotten—which some could argue, is the point.

Reformative

The guiding mission of the reformative approach is moral salvation and redemptive return to society. When the Quaker-led Pennsylvania Prison Society endorsed solitary confinement upon its founding in 1787, it did so with the belief that monastic reflection would result in the moral reformation of the residents. Similarly, Bentham claimed the panopticon could reform human behavior through the constant gaze of an omnipresent, omniscient authority. So too, did proponents of the Auburn (congregate) system, who endorsed solitary confinement but also introduced manual labor as a way to discipline—and ostensibly reform—residents towards productive means. The "ball-and-chain gangs" that exemplified the congregate system also served another, quite different purpose: as prisons became increasingly expensive to operate, those who are incarcerated became a source of cheap labor that could offset expenses, contribute to the expansion and profitability of the prison, a theme that continues in today's prison industries. It bears repeating here, that, instead of moral redemption or productive reform, the opposite—madness, lunacy, suicide,

and violence—occurred frequently as residents faced dehumanizing experiences including oppressive sensory deprivation, persistent surveillance, and forced labor. More recent models of the reformative approach feature educational and vocational training programs designed to instill a change in what residents do and how they perceive themselves and others. In these models, classrooms, libraries, lecture halls, meeting spaces, craft rooms, multipurpose rooms, and vocational shops. In addition, such an approach opens itself up to teachers, volunteers, faith healers, and skilled tradespeople from surrounding communities and can foster relationships that transcend sentences and the walls of the prison and connect residents to jobs, churches or temples, support groups, and other essential services outside the prison.

Curative

In the curative model, the aim is therapeutic. Unlike the reformative approach, which focuses on the moral and daily reformation of residents, the curative approach recognizes that residents are likely to suffer from health and psychological issues, especially substance abuse depression, and disability, and are likely to have experienced significant trauma. This medical approach recognizes that skilled staff and therapeutic activities, such as individual and group therapy sessions, art therapy, physical recreation, board games, and leisure time, are essential to develop interpersonal communication skills, coping skills, social empathy, and a sense of healing. Spatially, supporting these activities requires variety in size, program, and materials to foster a therapeutic environment where visitors including family members, community volunteers, teachers, therapists and counselors can interact with residents.

Exemplary Righteousness

The fifth category, what Markus calls "exemplary righteousness" concerns how the facility presents its ideals to society. All prisons, Markus argues, reflects particular attitudes about its inhabitants and about criminal justice more broadly. A prison that is Romanesque and impenetrable conjures an image of dark, introverted, gravity closely associated with medieval fortifications and the punitive model. While a

prison that is well-lit and transparent demystifies what takes place on the inside and aligns more closely to the school or clinic and the reformative or therapeutic model. In exemplary righteousness, then, the design of the prison is a "public statement of moral, political, and social virtue." The Justizzentrum in Leoben, Austria, is one such example, where its transparent envelope offers the public not just a view the interior of the prison, but also an alternative to the secretive model of the prison. The prisons at Halden and Batsøy in Norway suggest a more normative, humane, and even playful environment that is almost resort-like, reflecting the idea that those who are incarcerated deserve dignity and have the capacity for a life of social and moral virtue.

Thus, aesthetics are just as important, if not more so than the inner regime. While several other prisons throughout Europe, particularly Germany, Finland, and the Netherlands have adopted this approach, very few American facilities have done so. In fact, the opposite is more common: prisons are cheaply and rapidly constructed to the bare minimum, and in turn reflect a punitive, torturous, or otherwise indifferent attitude towards those who are incarcerated—resulting in design outcomes that only serve to perpetuate societal biases towards the prison and its residents. Exemplary righteousness, then, might be called a restorative approach to incarceration, focused on the dignity of the residents, healing the communities affected by the current system, and changing the narrative of imprisonment.

Abolition

To the above categories, Angela Davis offers a sixth: abolition. In arguing her case in *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, Davis points to other social institutions, such as inner-city schools and social housing, that increasingly resemble the prison in the United States. Many schools and housing projects, for example, have imported the same surveillance techniques that are used in prisons—closed-circuit security cameras, metal detectors, security booths and desks, and school resource officers—and the same design qualities—indestructible vandal-proof furniture and fixtures, caged clocks and lights, metal bars over windows, chain-link fencing, cold and sterile finishes, and an overall lack of nature. This convergence of public housing and schools with the prison aesthetic, according to Davis, conditions entire communi-

Aesthetics, particularly in a prison, are deeply political.

ties to accept the inevitability of prison and worse, cognitively links criminality and the prison to public housing complexes and inner city schools—entire communities. To counter these harmful biases, Davis suggests starting with public housing and inner-city educational institutions to make them resemble homes and schools again rather than prisons, and by reassigning the incarcerated to other modes of punishment, such as mandatory schooling and counseling, we can abolish the institution of the prison. In illustrating the extreme counterpart to punishment, Davis presents a helpful argument that instead of aligning towards punishment, the prison can be aligned towards education, and that instead of schools and homes being like a prison, perhaps the prison ought to be more like a school and a home.[3] Although Americans are unlikely to adopt Davis' call for abolitionism, this thinking can provide a valuable guide in how we consider proposals for a reimagined prison.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics, particularly in a prison, are deeply political. It can be harnessed to manipulate user experience and deployed as a technique of oppression, control, and torture. Drawing parallels to organization studies, Yvonne Jewkes, a perennial critic of prison architecture, writes, "Aesthetics serve the ideological requirements of the organization, and may encompass injustice, inequality, and normalized surveillance, … instrumental in maintaining organizational order and control."[4] By and large, American prisons connote sterile spaces constructed with a limited material palette consisting of white or desaturated paint, cinder blocks, unfinished concrete, tile flooring, metal railings, steel doors, cold glass, and a mix of bright fluorescent lights and dim, flickering lights. "Clients mandate certain degrees of bleakness (one could argue ugliness)," Jewkes cites architect Michael Walden as saying.[5] The deliberate removal of anything resembling good design from the facility, Jewkes goes on to argue, constitutes an "*an*-aesthetics," or the "purposeful *absence* of aesthetics." An-aesthetics affects not only the psychological experience of the facility's residents and staff (who experience sensory deprivation) but also inscribe symbolic meanings that shape how society perceives the prison.[6]

After all, cold, hardened spaces tend to shape the perception of its inhabitants as cold, hardened criminals. Such a perception has also proved cyclical, with widespread public outcry against designing (and spending on) attractive facilities for cold, hardened criminals. As numerous reports, including a 1993 U.S. Department of Justice report on Podular Direct Supervision show, a facility that is cold and hardened is not necessarily more cost effective than one that is warm, inviting, and dignified.[7] Although this may appear counter-intuitive, facilities that are cold and hardened tend to incorporate indestructible steel, "vandal-proof" doors, furniture, and fixtures that are expensive to fabricate as well as elaborate security systems that rely on video cameras, monitoring and communication devices, and even biometric data, driving up construction and operating costs.

If an-aesthetic spaces create resistant behavior, as has been shown, then an argument which states that "criminals" don't deserve beautiful spaces, or aesthetic qualities, because they are being punished, is the wrong argument. Instead, we should be asking ourselves: What kind of society do we want to live in? And how should we invest towards an empathic, just, and virtuous society?

ENDNOTES

1   Thomas Markus, Buildings and Power, New York: Routledge, 1993.

2   Thomas Markus, "Can History be a Guide to the Design of Prisons?" in *Architecture of Incarceration*, ed. Iona Spens, London: Academy Editions, 1994, 13-19, 16.

3   Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003.

4   Yvonne Jewkes, "Aesthetics and An-aesthetics: The Architecture of Incarceration," in *The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment*, ed. Leonidas Cheliotis, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012, 27-46, 29.

5   Ibid., 27.

6   Ibid. 33.

7   U.S. Department of Justice, *Podular, Direct Supervision Jails*, National Institute of Corrections report, January 1993.

	Punishment	Protection	Reform	Cure	Exemplary Righteousness	Abolition
MISSION	Retribution	Incapacitation	Moral Rehabilitation	Therapeutic Rehabilitation	Public statement of moral, political, and social virtue	Remove the prison altogether
SPACES + SPATIAL CHARACTER	• Execution chambers • Torture rooms • Solitary confinement	• Execution chamber • Solitary confinement • Guard towers • Secure interior organization • Vandal-proof materials and finishes	• Panopticon • Solitary confinement • Education/religious facilities (classrooms/chapels) • Training + labor • Regulated communal spaces	• Therapeutic facilities • Group therapy/activity rooms at multiple scales • Visiting facilities for family/friends/social workers	• Symbolism integrated into the spatial qualities of the facility • Quality design, materials, and finishes • Spaces that are comfortable to inhabit and projects a positive imagery	• Demilitarized and revitalized schools • Mental and physical health facilities for poor people who suffer from serious conditions • Drug and alcohol treatment facilities • Improved homeless + low-income housing conditions
LOCATION	• Urban edge (city gates) • Castles and islands	• Remote • Secure + controlled Perimeter	• Rural, suburban, and urban	• Suburban and urban	• Suburban and urban	• Suburban and urban
SURVEILLANCE	• Intermittent	• Intermittent • Managed interactions inside and outside	• Intermittent or constant • Chaplain-supported • Parole officers	• Intermittent or constant • Case management • Mentorship • Parole and probation officers	• Constant, relaxed, and collegial • Case management • Mentorship • Parole and probation officers	• Parole and probation officers • Teachers • Case managers • Healthcare providers
OUTCOMES	• Physical discomfort • Insanity • Death/suicide • Mutual resentment between officers and guards • Increased occurrence of 'lashing out' including fighting or rioting	• Reduced interaction with surrounding communities • Prison escapes eliminated • Prevent residents from harming each other • Disproportionately long sentences • Family ties severed • Increased feelings of isolation and loneliness/increased psychological issues	• Improve intellectual, educational, social, behavioral, and spiritual development among those who are incarcerated • Reduced recidivism	• Improved access to support systems • Increased access and interaction beyond the facility • Reduced feelings of isolation/increased emotional intelligence • Reduced recidivism	• Inhabitants (staff and residents) feel happier in the facility • Improved interpersonal relationships between those who are incarcerated and the staff • Reduced incidents • Reduced recidivism • Those who are incarcerated feel empowered	• Reduced rates of first-time offenders amongst school-age individuals • Increased amount of high-risk people receiving appropriate medical and mental health care • Increase in controlled dosing and detoxing/reduction in unsupervised drug use
PERCEPTION	• Deter and frighten others from committing criminal behavior	• Minimize outside perception of and contact with the facility • Use of sentencing minimums to incapacitate	• Education and training become core experiences of incarceration • Redemptive potential seen in those who are incarcerated	• Reduces stigma, and those who are incarcerated are not perceived as inherently criminal, but that their actions are outcomes of biological or systemic circumstances • Incarceration is increasingly perceived as a healing process	• Demythologize and dismantle societal prejudices towards the facility and those who are incarcerated • Transition from retributive justice mentality to resortative justice • Mass decarceration • Proactive re-evaluation of public investments and bond issuances	• Improved perceptions of criminality • Mass decarceration • The prison is viewed as being obsolete • Prison construction ceases • Improved and equitable racial relationships and perceptions

Siting

The location and siting of a facility affects its ability to provide appropriate connection to residents, staff, and the community. Over the past few decades, trends in prison design have driven new prison construction to greenfield sites in rural jurisdictions deliberately located far away from communities and amenities necessary to support a community, but with the willingness and ability to accommodate the specific infrastructural demands of a facility.[1,2] As a result of this geographic distance from society, incarcerated people are effectively warehoused and the prison has, largely, exited public consciousness. Today, the population of the United States can be categorized into two segments: those who know someone who is in prison, and those who do not. For those who do not, rarely does the prison figure in any significant way in daily lives. However, the prison, by disciplining the bounds of acceptable social conduct and exerting socio-political mechanisms of power deployed through a massive network, remains central to American society despite its peripheral geography. As the architecture scholar and theorist Thomas Markus writes:

> From ancient times the walls around the edges of towns marked the boundary between human, artificial creation and the natural world of the gods. . . The gate was liminal, a threshold place: a dangerous no man's land where social and spatial categories broke down. . . Not surprisingly then, if a town wall is seen as a barrier against the intrusion of impurity or foreign elements, places such as hospitals and cemeteries are located outside. . . This is not only a sensible practical precaution but is because these places are metaphors for contamination. A prison, therefore, is located outside or at the boundary where its impurity—in this case of a moral kind—can be made visible and filtered out before it contaminates the interior insidiously.[3]

Historically, the city and the prison are closely related; to a large extent, they define each other. In medieval cities throughout Europe, as Markus notes, prisons were located on the very threshold between the city and country: the city gates themselves. In cities such as London, Amsterdam, Maatstricht, Essen, and Basel, among others, the gates Ludgate, Newgate, Den Haag, Helpoort, Jerusalemtor, and Spalen-

tor served dual functions as portal and prison, symbolically warning those entering the city, physically marking the boundary of civic society, and—to borrow a phrase from Robin Evans—metaphorically embodying the "fabrication of virtue."[4]

But today's prisons, particularly those in our country, are increasingly removed from public consciousness physically as well as cognitively. Yet, prisons comprise a vast network across America, with the total number of prisons in the United States numbering in the thousands. The prison weaves an indelible thread through America, yet it could not be more invisible or exiled from our society. In looking at where our society locates prisons, three categories of prisons emerge, corresponding to their geographic location: the urban, suburban, and rural facility. Using New York State as an example, the following descriptions and diagrams give a sense of how each type of prison varies in size, services provided, and relationship to the surrounding community.

In the United States, urban prisons are largely relics of past, harkening from eras of burgeoning urban growth, limited transportation options, and impenetrable monolithic Romanesque architecture. Today, rapid urban growth around these iconic structures and periodic renovations have obfuscated their presence in many cities. More recent facilities in urban centers tend to be inconspicuous to the average citizen, designed to blend in with the urban surroundings rather than create an iconic urban image, and usually serve as detention centers for those serving short-term sentences or awaiting trial. Because of their location around large population centers, urban facilities are more accessible to visitors, attorneys, and healthcare workers and can accommodate regular and frequent visits, but must also offer additional points of entry for different users. Connections and adjacencies to public transportation, medical infrastructures, and courts simplify travel and logistics for those visiting to, or traveling from, the facility. In addition, the availability of leasable office space around the facility in the city forms an ecology of services and amenities benefiting staff, visitors, and residents upon their release, ranging from law offices, parole and probation offices, work-release programs, halfway houses, officer training centers, job resource centers, healthcare clinics, and educational programs. In some cases, residents may take part in work, educational, or recreational activities outside the facility, adding spatial and monitoring complexity linked to practical concerns of surveillance. On the other hand, these ur-

1550 residents
Five Points Correctional Facility
Romulus, NY
travel time: 3+ hours

292 residents
Dutchess County Jail
Poughkeepsie, NY
travel time: 1.5 hours

900 residents
Manhattan House of Detention
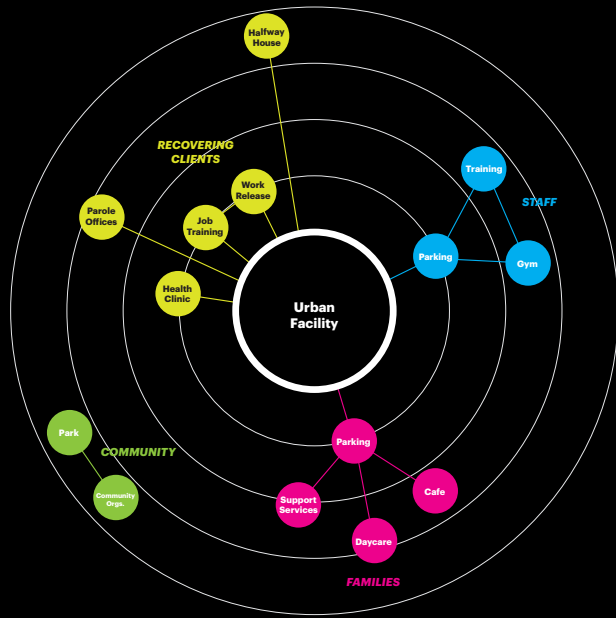New York, NY
travel time: .5 - 1 hour

ban facilities routinely experience high resident turnover, visitor traffic, and energy demand, which place additional stresses on facility upkeep and maintenance. As a result, urban facilities tend to deteriorate more rapidly, and in fact, often attempt to counter this trend by prioritizing indestructible and vandal-proof finishes over aesthetics. However, through this pragmatism, the outcome is more often than not, an environment that is cold, dark, intimidating, and institutional.

The opposite of the urban facility is the rural facility, set far away from urban centers in which sentencing took place. Because of their distance from the city, the cost and stress of traveling such distances, and the lack of neighboring amenities, rural facilities often prove inaccessible to families and service providers. The additional travel distance can also place stresses on staff as they travel over increasingly longer distances to reach certain amenities, attend trainings, or visit their families. As a result, rural facilities must provide additional resources internally including in-house educational, vocational, and training facilities, as well as apartments and other housing solutions for the staff—sometimes within the prison itself. The rural prison, so far removed from any community, is in a sense, a community unto itself. As such, they also typically require fewer gates and are aligned topologically to fortified medieval cities, where every exit and entry is controlled at gates along the perimeter.

Finally, the suburban facility lies, geographically and conceptually, in between the rural and urban facility. The suburban facility can be found adjacent to residential neighborhoods, and staff members come from surrounding communities. In many cases, may reside within the same community. The suburban facility also benefits from proximity to numerous amenities but may occasionally need to provide additional amenities that are otherwise unavailable in the community. The reverse is true: the facility can offer benefits, including shared amenities and increased security, to the surrounding community. In addition, the more flexible spatial, functional, and social demands of suburban facilities can break down the monolithic urban facility and the warehouse-like rural facility and re-assemble their parts in novel ways that stimulates healthy social relations, fosters shared experiences between the community and the facility, and symbolizes virtue through the humaneness of its architecture, spaces, functions, and interactions.

The following pages explore the topological relationship between programs and user groups in three hypothetical facilities, each situated in a different context illustrating how the decision to locate a prison in a particular context affects program, access, community, and scale.

Urban Facility diagram labels: Halfway House, RECOVERING CLIENTS, Work Release, Parole Offices, Job Training, Health Clinic, Urban Facility, Training, STAFF, Parking, Gym, Park, COMMUNITY, Community Orgs., Parking, Support Services, Cafe, Daycare, FAMILIES

Rural Facility diagram labels: Work Release, RECOVERING CLIENTS, Parole Offices, Job Training, Health Clinic, Rural Facility, Training, STAFF, Parking, Gym, Parking, FAMILIES

Urban Facility

At the urban facility, staff would park at offsite parking lots or arrive to the facility via public transportation, and the majority of staff training takes place off-site. The urban location also makes it possible for staff to work out at a local gym and eat at local restaurants around their work hours.

Families and other visitors would arrive to the facility via public transit or park their vehicles around the facility or in dedicated parking garages. They would have access to numerous support services that are typically found in a large metropolitan center, including counseling, family therapy, daycare, legal aid, and private counsel. Visitors, especially family members, may arrange other appointments in a neighborhood that contains these support services, and spend time at neighborhood amenities such as restaurants, cafes, and coffee shops.

At an urban location, clients who are returning to society may find a range of release services occurring in the vicinity of the facility and the city, including work release programs, job training, employment services, health clinics where they can receive treatment and primary care, and halfway houses that assist with their transition. In addition, parole offices are conveniently located for frequent check-ins, so the client's progress can be monitored and supported. In an urban setting where the community uses neighboring parks and local community organizations have offices, there are several opportunities for interaction between the facility and the community.
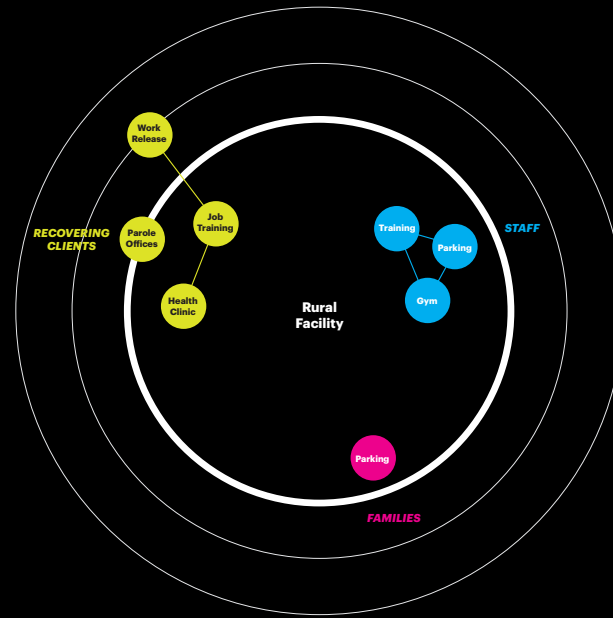
Rural Facility

With limited community amenities, the rural facility has to assume certain programs that are typically located around an urban facility, while other programs are unavailable. Often out of sight, the rural facility may not even have a thriving community in the vicinity.

Staff would park their vehicles within the rural facility, and public transportation is usually not an option. Staff members are also less likely to come from the same community, and frequently have to travel long distances to work. In other cases, staff may travel to an apartment in the closest town for a week at time, and in some cases, staff housing as well as a staff gym, may even be provided at the facility. Because they spend the majority of their time at the facility and are subject to their superiors, staff members may feel like they are also residents of the rural facility.

As long driving times are the norm rather than the exception, visiting the rural facility can take up the entire day and sometimes longer. Family members would need to arrange for longer childcare hours, which may prove difficult financially and logistically. With the lack of community amenities, visitors spend the majority of their time within the facility, and these visits are both emotionally and physically taxing.

Often located far from specialized hospitals, the rural facility has to take on certain medical services usually provided by the hospital. Clients returning to society would find job training and re-entry services within the facility.
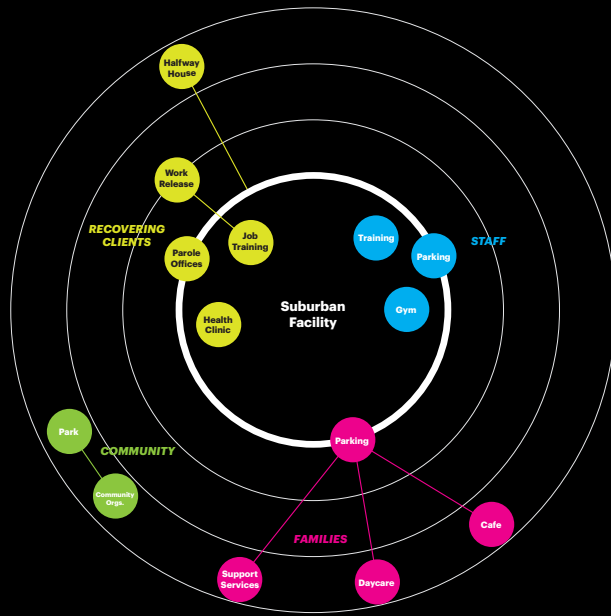
A prison's location affects its programs, and subsequently, a relationship exists between prison size and location. In the diagrams on the left, the thick white circle approximates a prison's size based on its programmatic relationship to locale.

Suburban Facility

The footprint of the suburban facility is usually larger than the urban facility and smaller than the rural facility, accounting for land costs, the amount of available land, and the amount of specialized programs, services, or amenities the facility offers. In a suburban community where some amenities might be available and others unavailable, the suburban facility can close certain programmatic gaps by including them into the facility.

Staff training usually takes place in an offsite site located in or near surrounding communities. Staff members can also choose to use the basic staff gym within the facility or instead use a local gym, increasing their interaction with the community and demystifying the facility in the process.

Family and other visitors to the facility would arrive by public or personal transit, and would be able to access community-based support services in the surrounding area. With a number of amenities in the community, family members can retreat from the facility for a few hours in between visiting hours, or bring additional people for emotional support.

Job training and healthcare may take place within the facility, but clients would have work-release opportunities and those on early release may find housing within the community.

In addition, the proximity of municipal parks and community organizations to the facility enhances the visibility of the institution, though architectural symbolism of impenetrable walls, razor-wire fence, and guard towers can undermine the interactions between the facility and the community.

ENDNOTES

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2   Rodney Morgan and Alison Liebling, "Imprisonment: an expanding scene," in *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*, ed. Mike Maguire, Rodney Morgan, and Robert Reiner, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007, 1100-1138, 1102.
3   Thomas Markus, "Can History be a Guide in the Design of Prisons?" in *Architecture of Incarceration*, ed. Iona Spens, London: Academy Editions, 1994, 13-19, 16.
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Programming

Like the aesthetic design of a facility, the programs offered and spaces provided for in the facility reflect the mission of the prison. The programming of the housing unit, including the cells, dayrooms, and outdoor recreation yards, forms the basic building block of today's conventional American prison. In the modern prison, housing units account for an overwhelming percentage of a prison's footprint compared to spaces dedicated to healthcare, education, and training.

The following programmatic breakdowns are based on the American Correctional Association (ACA) guidelines and also borrow from the ACA's 1999 publication, Planning and Design Guide for Secure Adult and Juvenile Facilities, compiled by architect Leonard Witke, for a "medium-sized" facility with 500 beds. Whether the prison is intended to be punitive, protective, reformative, or therapeutic, the programmatic breakdowns on the opposite page illustrate the dominance of the housing unit.

However, in a prison that is intended to be punitive, there is negligible to very little provision of recreational, religious, or resident-oriented space, usually required by constitutional minima. In these prisons, religious spaces exist for the residents to repent or receive last rites prior to receiving capital punishment. Visitation is nonexistent or extremely limited in punitive prisons, and other spaces such as factories, workshops, and fields subject residents to forced labor. In a prison that is protective, the provision of a communal space may appear in direct supervision facility, which are intended to improve supervision so as to prevent

violence within the facility. In addition, facilities that are protective feature multiple security layers that separate the residents from the world outside. Recreational and therapeutic spaces do not form a large part of the protective program. However, in the reformative facility, there is a greater provision for recreational and educational spaces, as prisons seek to reform the behavior of their residents into socially acceptable molds. In these prisons, vocational training and academic classes aim not only to equip residents with the tools and habits needed for successful re-entry into society, but also to instill residents with a redemptive sense of virtue and citizenship. Finally, facilities that adopt a therapeutic approach recognize that many residents enter the prison with pre-existing trauma and mental health issues, substance abuse, and disability or may experience emotional trauma or become disabled while inside the prison, and makes appropriate provision of clinical spaces (in addition to educational and vocational spaces) to respond to these issues. Two tenets guide therapeutic facilities: the idea that each resident deserves appropriate and comfortable medical care, and the belief that by clinically addressing emotional trauma, substance abuse, and treating disabilities, the prison can help its residents recover.
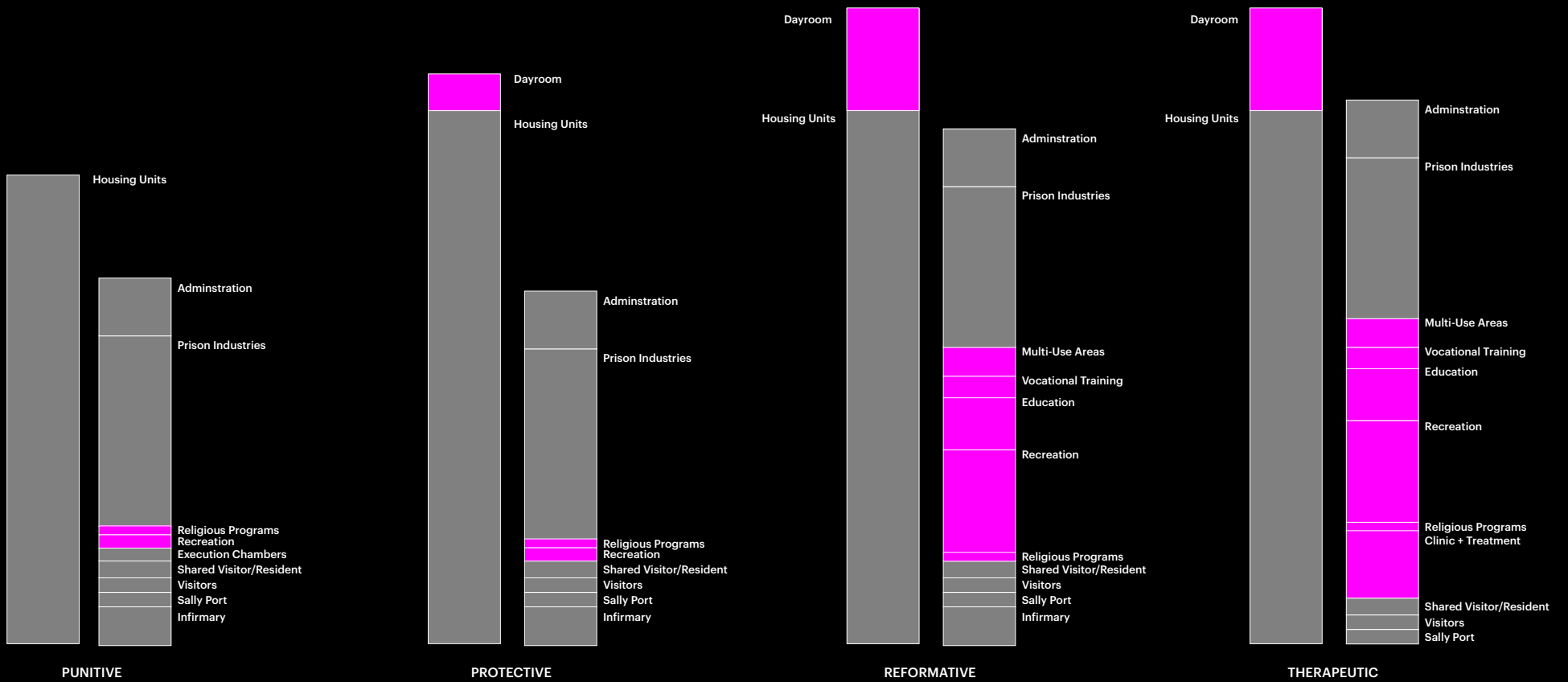
PUNITIVE

Housing Units

Adminstration

Prison Industries

Religious Programs
Recreation
Execution Chambers
Shared Visitor/Resident
Visitors
Sally Port
Infirmary

PROTECTIVE

Dayroom

Housing Units

Adminstration

Prison Industries

Religious Programs
Recreation
Shared Visitor/Resident
Visitors
Sally Port
Infirmary

REFORMATIVE

Dayroom

Housing Units

Adminstration

Prison Industries

Multi-Use Areas

Vocational Training

Education

Recreation

Religious Programs
Shared Visitor/Resident
Visitors
Sally Port
Infirmary

THERAPEUTIC

Dayroom

Housing Units

Adminstration

Prison Industries

Multi-Use Areas

Vocational Training

Education

Recreation

Religious Programs
Clinic + Treatment

Shared Visitor/Resident
Visitors
Sally Port

Daily Schedule

In addition to taking away the freedom of those who are incarcerated, prisons largely fail to provide opportunities to engage in meaningful activities. Long periods of unprogrammed time are counterproductive to the facility's ability to rehabilitate its residents towards reintegration in the community.

In prison today, there isn't much to do. In general population units where residents sleep in a housing unit and congregate freely around a shared dayroom, limited programming opportunities and limited mental-health treatment and restorative programs and services amount to significant chunks of time spent in unprogrammed recreation, sitting around common areas, the dayroom, and in the cell. Regimental counts at least three times a day are a painful reminder of each resident's loss of identity and even mobility. The overall lack of a structured schedule in the facility can prove desensitizing for both the residents and the staff, and results in overwhelming boredom, or worse. In solitary confinement or restricted housing, even less goes on and the effect is even more dehumanizing: people receive two to three meals a day in their cell and leave the cell for 60 minutes five days a week for recreation and two to three times a week to shower.

A prison that is punitive in nature affords little programmed activity, and the resident may remain in the cell for up to 23 hours a day, receive meals through a slot in the door, and only venture to a narrow outdoor space that is either caged or enclosed by four concrete walls. In such prisons, residents experience overwhelming sensory deprivation and circadian disorientation owing to white walls, fluorescent or dim lighting, lack of daylight, constant white noise, and a bare aesthetic palette. In a facility that adopts the protective approach, residents are subject to regimented counts through the day, intended to constantly account for each resident, but has the effect of reducing the resident to a number. To facilitate these counts, residents wear a number, and are acknowledged by staff as numbers. Though residents are allowed out of their cells every morning, they must follow a regimented schedule which may involve employment and a fixed amount of "free time" in the facility's recreation yard, and are routinely locked every night. In facilities where the residents' successful reform and re-entry into society forms the central mission, residents can obtain jobs or attend classes, training, and other programming designed to prepare them for life after prison.

Designed to instill productive habits for successful re-entry into society, the daily programming of the reformative facility mimics the patterns of industrial society, and thus mandating regular counts to account for each person. In therapeutic facilities, since staff and residents work more closely together in a client-provider relationship, staff are more likely to know residents by their names, making regular counts less urgent. Throughout the day, residents have more opportunities for vocational, educational, and therapeutic activities in various sizes, groups, and disciplines. In addition, residents may meet with case workers individually rather than in groups to address their personal problems, realize their individual goals, and work towards their potential. Overall, daily programming is personalized and targeted to each resident in the therapeutic facility while offering ample opportunities for improved group communication.

time of day

| 0 | 6 | 12 | 18 | 24 |

PUNITIVE
eat — eat — outdoor — eat

PROTECTIVE
wake-up | eat | work | eat | yard time | eat | lights out
count — count — count

REFORMATIVE
wake-up | eat | work | eat | class — class — group mtg | eat | lights out
count — count

THERAPEUTIC
wake-up | eat | work | eat | class — class — therapy | eat | group mtg | lights out
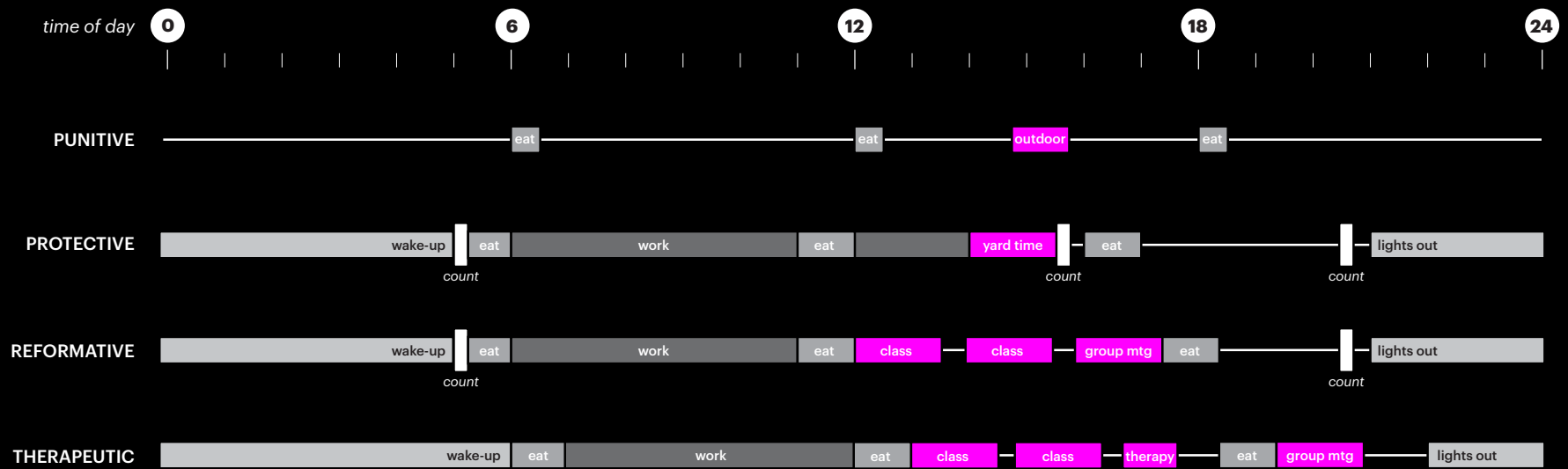
Users

The current system excessively limits opportunities for meaningful interaction between incarcerated people, staff members, and the community. The high number of incarcerated people in the United States, the lack of a proportionate number of well-trained and highly-skilled staff, the growing number of facilities constructed in rural locations across the country, and persisting societal attitudes towards the prison and its residents, among other factors, have severely limited opportunities for meaningful dialogue between the three groups that have the most at stake: the residents, the staff, and the community.

Residents
In our current system, residents are classified by the severity of their criminal act, or by the level of security required to ensure the safety of others, or to ensure their safety from others. Residents are typically assigned to the general population, or "gen pop" and grouped into housing units, or "management units" of between 40 to 64 people, perceived to be an ideal number of people that can be effectively managed by one or two guards. In certain cases, residents may be assigned to Special Housing Units, SHUs, more commonly known as solitary confinement, where they remain in a single cell for at least 23 hours a day. These cells are typically narrow, accommodating only a single bed, an en-suite toilet, a thin sliver of natural light, and a narrow slot in the door through which they are served food. The experience is one of extreme loneliness, sensory deprivation, and disorientation. The United Nations has called the practice of solitary confinement "torture."[1]

Residents face numerous additional restrictions on their daily lives, from the clothes they wear, food they eat, activities they partake in, medical and therapeutic care they receive, to when and whom they can connect to outside the facility. Although prisons have incorporated educational programs only few residents can access these programs, as rewards for "good behavior." Only a small percentage of residents are granted access to libraries. Out of 2.3 million incarcerated people, approximately 900,000 have a prison job, which offers some stability but is also an exploitative practice that pays between $0.12 and $0.40 an hour in federal prisons.[2,3] Food of limited nutrition value is either served through a slot in a door in solitary confinement, or in a large mess hall in general population. Each resident wears the same clothes, often labeled with name of the prison, the jurisdiction, and a number.

Phone usage is at a premium, as residents only have a short amount of time and so many phones to make phone calls, which can cost as much as $3.75 per minute in some states, effectively cutting residents off from their families and support systems.[4] Privacy is almost completely non-existent, as residents are subject to constant surveillance from staff, who, at many facilities, must accommodate residents to bathrooms and showers, and who may employ excessive search techniques at the slightest suspicion. Residents must also navigate complex interpersonal and group dynamics, which can prove overwhelming in a large group of people. Overall, the resident's experience in the current system is stressful, psychologically taxing, and dehumanizing.

Staff
In the current system, staff members suffer from long, stressful, and chaotic hours in spaces that are sensory-deprived, subject themselves to paramilitary training and hierarchical power structures with few psychological outlets, encounter a lack of emotional and mentoring support, face long commutes or placements that can separate them from their families, and experience a shortage of community amenities such as gyms, grocery stores, cafes, restaurants, and medical clinics. In addition, many are former law enforcement or military and bring existing fears and traumas to the job. In fact, as numerous indicators reveal, staff are generally very unhealthy, including a life expectancy of 62 (12 years lower than average)[5] and high suicide rates.[6] Because both incarcerated people and staff members are often made to live far away from their homes, they often represent vastly different demographics. Representative of an inability to relate to clients, staff often call clients by labels that are dehumanizing such as "inmate," "convict," or a number. Overall, a reduced quality of life among staff members can also influence the quality of care that clients receive.

The Community
Because our current system deliberately sites many prisons far from urban settlements, or sheltered from the public gaze, our communities have little connection to the prison. Except in communities where the prison is seen as stimulus for economic growth and employment, the prison is seen as nuisance to be hidden out of sight instead of an asset and an essential piece of civic infrastructure. However,

studies have shown that prison construction can often be a retardant to economic growth, driving away community-based enterprises while accommodating large national big-box and fast-food chains that displace economic gains to corporate headquarters, investors, and bankers instead of distributing wealth locally. In addition, since prison jobs require specialized training and education, a high percentage of jobs are more likely to be filled by employees who are not from the community. In most cases, community involvement in prisons tend to be limited to church organizations, faith healers, community organizers, and non-profit groups offering classes, medical care, therapy, or legal aid.

Though the prison is often invisible in our society, it is constantly enmeshed into the fabric of our communities—a fact to which our communities are often oblivious. In parks, urban squares, around churches, medical clinics, and homeless shelters, and at transportation hubs and employment centers, we unknowingly interact with formerly incarcerated people on a daily basis. However, as formerly incarcerated people receive little preparation in our current system and struggle to reintegrate into society, there is a 95% likelihood of these people relapsing into substance abuse and experiencing chronic homelessness and desperation.[7] Recidivism rates of formerly incarcerated people are reported to be as high as 45% nationally, and up to 77% in some states.[8] Proponents of prison claim that prison is essential to public safety; on the contrary, such outcomes as those in our current system are not improving our communities and making them safer.

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3   Federal Bureau of Prisons, "Work Programs," website, <https://www.bop.gov/inmates/custody_and_care/work_programs.jsp> accessed 30 November 2017.
4   Prison Phone Justice Center, "Rates and Kickbacks," website, <https://www.prisonphonejustice.org/>, accessed 30 November 2017.
5   Jack Parker, *Florida Mortality Study*, Brevard County Office of the Sheriff, October 17, 2011, 62.
6   Jamie Brower, *Correctional Officer Wellness and Safety Literature Review*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center, 2013, 11; and, Michael D. Denhof and Caterina G. Spinaris, *Depression, PTSD, and Comorbidity in United States Corrections Professionals: Prevalence and Impact on Health and Functioning,* Florence, CO: Desert Waters Correctional Outreach, 2013, 8.
7   Thomas Hanlon et al, "The response of drug abuser parolees to a combination of treatment and intensive supervision," Prison Journal, 78, March 1998, 31-44.
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Spatial Taxonomy - Program

| solitary cell | execution chamber | guard tower | remote surveillance guard station | direct supervision guard station | chapel | classroom |
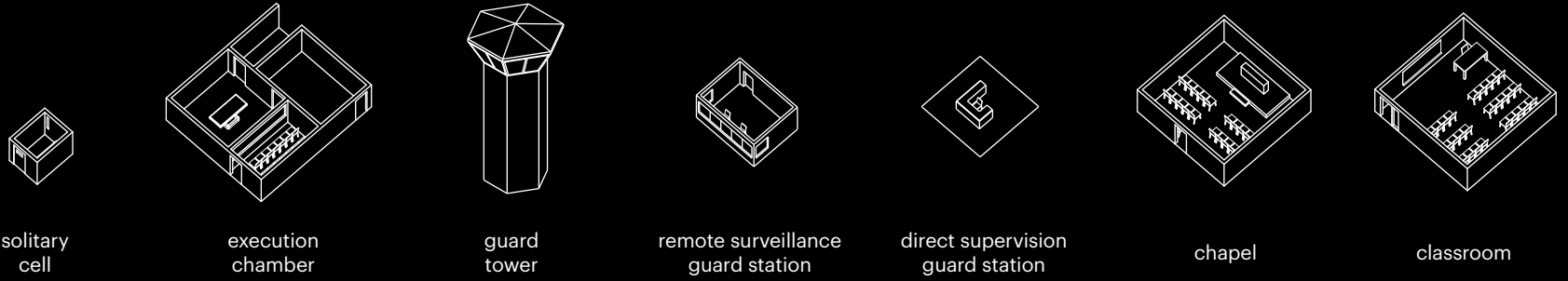
PUNISHMENT

PROTECTION

REFORM

CURE

EXEMPLARY RIGHTEOUSNESS

ABOLITONISM
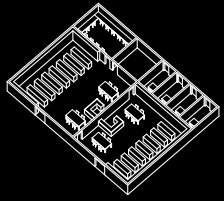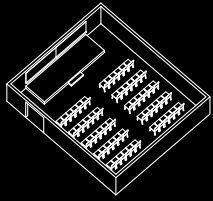
library multipurpose
room
individual therapy
rooms
group therapy
rooms
family therapy
rooms
medical
clinic
gymnasium courtyard and
walkway
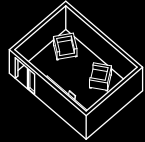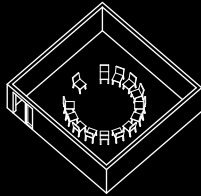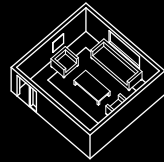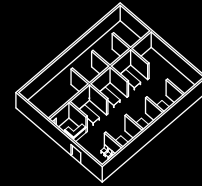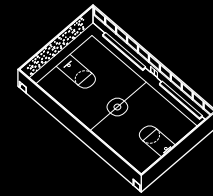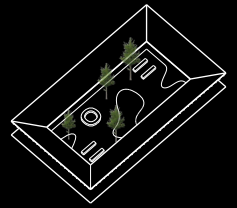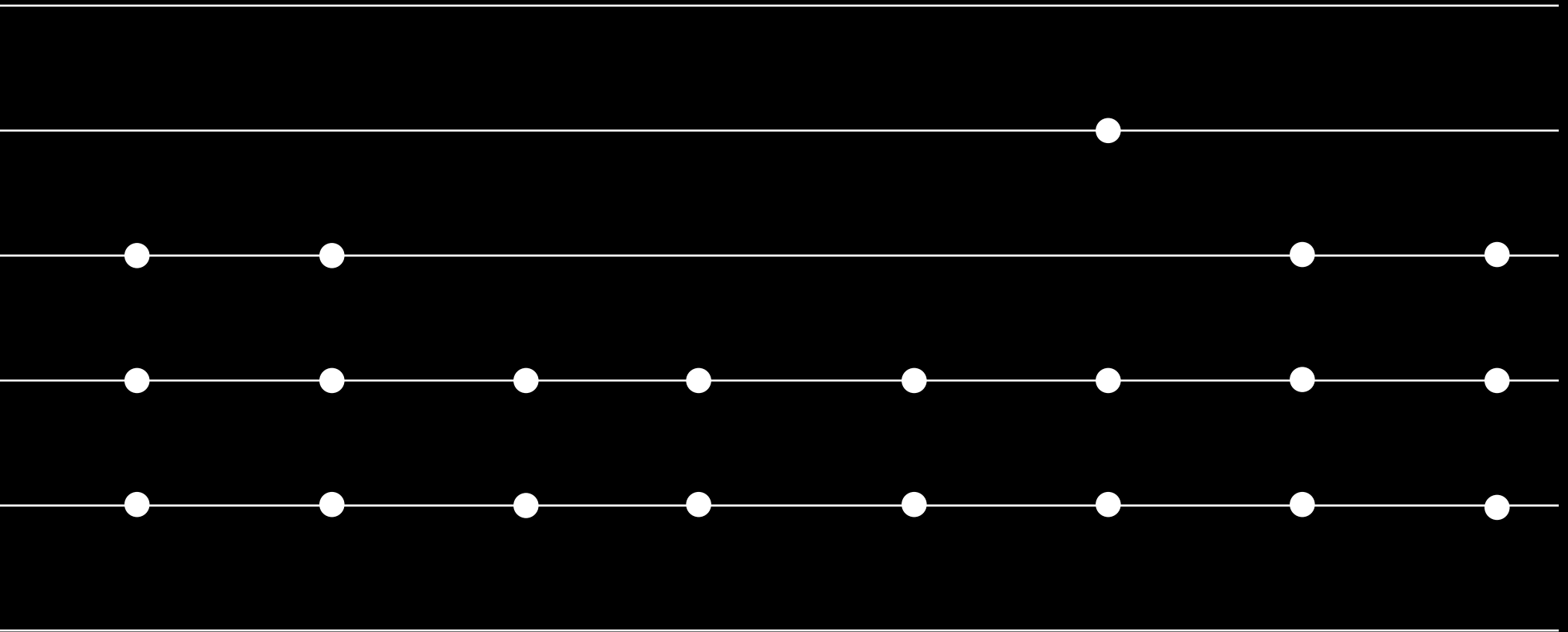
Spatial Taxonomy - Living Units
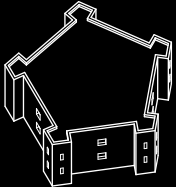
fortified
strongholds
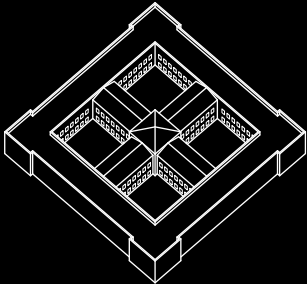
cruciform
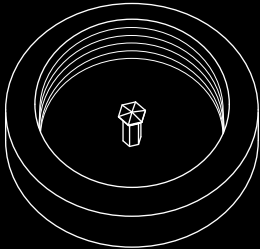
panopticon
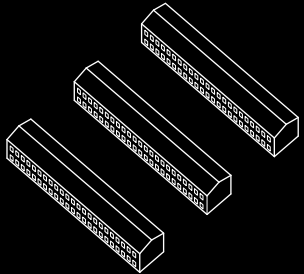
barracks

PUNISHMENT

PROTECTION

REFORM

CURE

EXEMPLARY
RIGHTEOUSNESS

ABOLITONISM
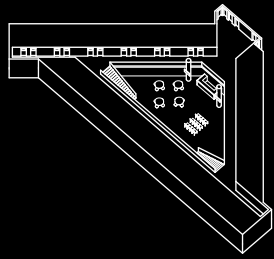
dayroom
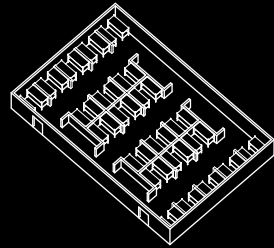
warehouse dorm
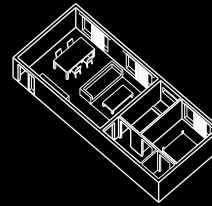
monitored apartment
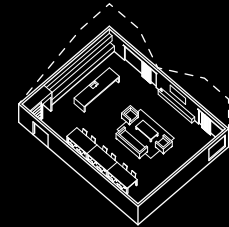
communal kitchen
and living room

1966

**Report of the Inquiry into
Prison Escapes and Security;
"The Mountbatten Report"**
The Home Office, Her
Majesty's Government

Incapacitation of prisoners

HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT
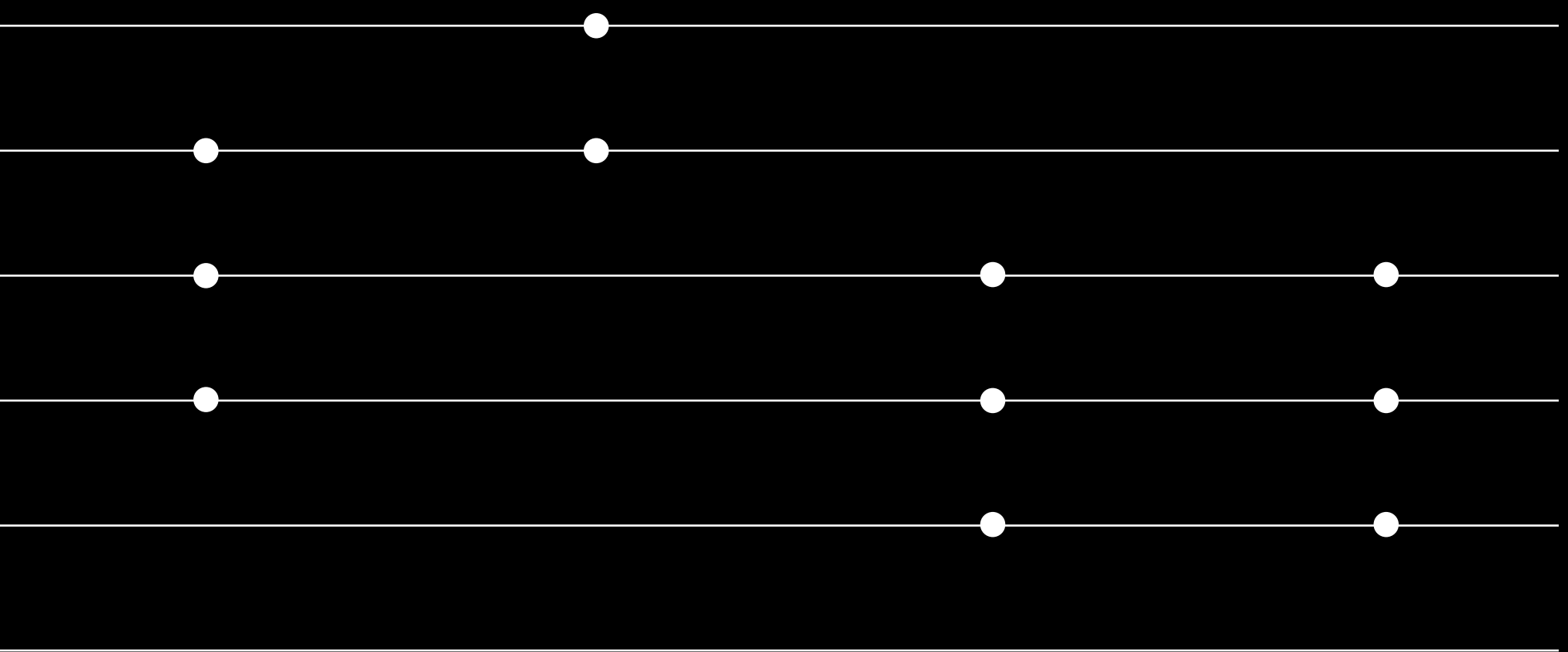
NPA / APA / ACA (Prisons)
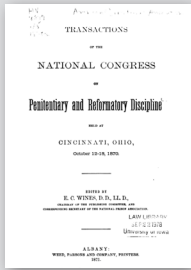
1870

Declaration of Principles
National Prison Association

1870

Founding of the National
Prison Association,
predecessor to the
American Correctional
Association
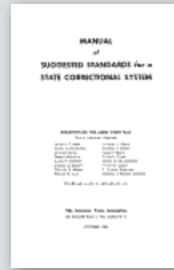
1946

**A Manual of Suggested
Standards for a State
Correctional System**
American Prison Associaion
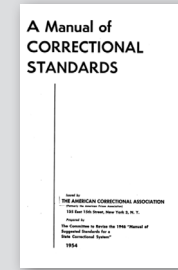
A Manual of
CORRECTIONAL
STANDARDS

Regulatory Standards and Guides, 1870-present

Systemic efforts to standardize prison mission,
design, and construction began as early as
1870, but gained traction in midst of protests
aimed at protecting the human rights of those
incarcerated. The push to standardize prison
design and construction would later coincide
with the rise of mass incarceration in America,
and to some extent, helped facilitate it by
offering a replicable framework. In this diagram,
text in black refers to publications that set
standard codes, practices, and guidelines,
while text in grey correspond to key moments in
prison governance. Finally, texts in red highlight
paradigm shifts in prison design.

UNITED NATIONS

2016

**Technical Guidance
for Prison Planning**
UNOPS

Incorporates Nelson
Mandela Rules (2015)

1980

The Dirty Protest,
Northern Ireland

1977

**Adult Correctional
Institution (ACI)
Standards, 1st Edition**
American Correctional
Association

1980s

Prison Privatization
begins in the U.S.

1981

**Adult Correctional
Institution (ACI)
Standards, 2nd Edition**
American Correctional
Association

1990

**Adult Correctional
Institution (ACI)
Standards, 3rd Edition**
American Correctional
Association

Performance-based
standards introduced

2003

**Adult Correctional
Institution (ACI)
Standards, 4th Edition**
American Correctional
Association

Current standards for
ACA Accrediation

1974

Commission on
Accreditation for
Corrections founded

ACA (ALDF)
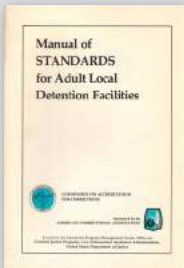
1977

**Standards for Adult
Local Detention
Facilities (ALDF), 1st
Edition**
American Correctional
Association
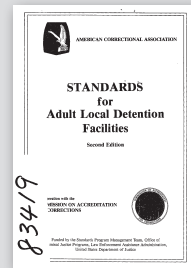
1981

**Standards for Adult
Local Detention
Facilities (ALDF), 2nd
Edition**
American Correctional
Association

1990

**Standards for Adult
Local Detention
Facilities (ALDF), 2nd
Edition**
American Correctional
Association

Performance-based
standards introduced
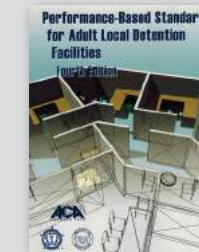
2004

**Performance-Based
Standards for Adult
Local Detention
Facilities (ALDF), 4th
Edition**
American Correctional
Association

Current standards for
ACA Accrediation

ACA (CORE)
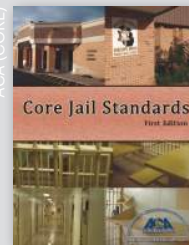
1990

Core Jail Standards
**American Correctional
Association**

Establishes minimum
national standards in jail
design

DOJ (NIC)

1974

U.S. Department of Justice
debuts Podular Direct
Supervision in three
Metropolitan Correctional
Centers (MCCs) located
in New York, Chicago, and
San Diego.

1983

American Institute of
Architects (AIA) and
American Correctional
Association (ACA)
endorse Podular Direct
Supervision
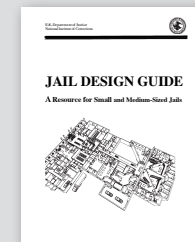
1998

**Jail Design Guide:
A Resource for Small
and Medium Sized Jails**
Department of Justice
(National Institute of
Corrections)

Conclusion

The rise of incarceration in the United States coincided with rapid urban and economic growth, political tumult, changing race relations, and increasingly stringent and punitive laws. As the mission of the prison adapted and formed alongside religious, social, and cultural shifts, so too did the architectural response of the prison facility. This analysis has reviewed the history of the prison, our attitudinal perceptions and prejudices toward the system, the facility, and its residents. We have seen that, though the prison facility sits within a larger system that emphasizes incarceration, punishment, and criminality, the architecture, aesthetics, spatiality, and design of the facility plays an important role in perpetuating bias, negative perceptions, and continuing trauma.

We cannot afford to acquit the current state of prison as a foregone conclusion of systemic constraints. There are other possibilities. Americans across the political spectrum, including justice reformers, politicians, law enforcement officials, faith leaders, and victim's rights advocates, have begun to question our incarceration system. Public opinion polls show a shift in values away from a harsh retributive model toward a treatment-based, rehabilitative model. Some have looked to Europe for models of criminal

sanction that leave everyone better off. Others have looked to data and studies. Still others look to history for lessons.

Drawing inspiration from all of these sources, we have come up with a vision for how prison might look if we set out to benefit everyone—incarcerated people, staff, victims, and communities.

III.

III. The Reimagined System
Towards increased public safety and societal well-being

In the Reimagined System, everyone works towards a common goal of promoting safety and societal well-being. In this system, the mission and objectives of the prison shifts from a retributive and protective approach to a restorative and therapeutic model. The prison exists to incapacitate dangerous people and prevent these people from physically harming other members of the community. However, the Reimagined System dotes punishment solely in the restrictions on freedom for a term of years served and provides crucial programming and treatment to its residents in order to support healthy, stable, fulfilling, and law-abiding lives upon release. For members of the community who are convicted of crimes and do not need to be incapacitated, other sanctions exist—probation, parole, house arrest, community service, and fines.

To achieve these goals, the design and spatial quality of the Reimagined Facility plays an integral role in creating an environment of collegiality between residents, staff, and the community. The Reimagined Facility aims to create exemplary spaces that can support therapeutic and restorative programming and promote safer environments for residents and staff. It draws on what residents, staff, and community members have identified as the dual purposes of an ideal facility: punishment and the opportunity for a second chance.[1]

In the Reimagined System, a federal protective body oversees all incarceration environments and has teeth to regulate and litigate and demand compliance to a certain standard of practice in each state. It would also be charged with the task of collecting data and evaluating short- and long-term outcomes at individual facilities and collectively, determine which prisons should be decommissioned or retrofitted, and ensure that design aligns with a rehabilitative and restorative mission.

When the sole punishment is the term of years served, the design of the Reimagined Facility can instead aspire towards healing and redemption. The Reimagined Facility is harmonious and complementary with its surroundings in color, materiality, and function and is perceived as a part of a community rather than an intrusion or an island. In the Reimagined System, prisons would no longer be located in rural enclaves far removed from communities and society, and which demand long commute times for members of the staff, the clients' families and support networks. Instead of discord between the staff and client demographics, in the Reimagined System, facilities are strategically located within local communities, and both clients and staff come from these communities, representing similar demographics.

It feels like an organized school, in both décor and operations. Rather than large warehouses of 20-40 people, the Reimagined Facility is scaled to 6-8 person pods, each carefully classified for compatibility and staffed at a resident-to-staff ratio of 4:1 or lower. These smaller groups simulate the size of a nuclear family or household, ensuring that clients feel supported through all phases of their time at

Human-sized environments reinforce the dignity and human worth of each individual, empowering rather than terrifying the residents.

The scale of the Reimagined Facility does not overwhelm the community; instead, its scale and aesthetics are complementary to its surroundings. The arrangement of human-scaled buildings help to define the edge condition, and contributes to a social atmosphere at the Reimagined Facility that is discrete, yet not completely detached, from its surroundings.

the Facility and empowered to make decisions that affect their lifestyle.

In the Reimagined Facility, staff are highly-trained members of local communities, and play a role of service provider rather than law enforcement officer. In this role, staff make themselves accessible to clients and help residents plan their goals, overcome their difficulties, and support each other. Neither clients nor staff wear uniforms, but each wear clothing of their choosing and refer to each other on a first-name basis. In the Reimagined Facility, the staff and clients are partners that work together to create a supportive community and atmosphere, treating each other with respect.

Unlike the overwhelming majority of facilities in the United States today, everything in the Reimagined Facility is on a human scale. Doors are doors, instead of indestructible, vandal-proof steel doors. Hallways are hallways without imposing metal gates that oppressively compartmentalize each part of the facility. Each space is designed to bring in ample natural lighting using windows and soft or bright finishes. Clients can personalize their individual rooms and decorate them with photos and possessions from home. Each client posses their own key, and can choose to socialize in common areas or retreat in the privacy of their rooms during free time. The Facility is not trying to put the fear of god in you. The human-sized environments reinforce the dignity and human worth of each individual, empowering rather than terrifying the residents.

Such a facility would aspire to increase safety for community members, survivors of crime, incarcerated people, and prison staff. The Reimagined Facility would also strive to improve the residents' ability to re-enter society, secure meaningful opportunities for their success upon release, and reduce recidivism rates—ultimately helping to achieve a greater return on investment in our criminal justice system. With a more positive and humane atmosphere, the Reimagined Facility also endeavors to decrease turnover and increase satisfaction and fulfillment among staff, create more inclusive economic opportunities in the surrounding communities, increase faith in the criminal justice system, and through healing the stigma of incarceration, foster greater unity within affected families, communities, and society as a whole.

This is a reimagined prison.

ENDNOTES

1   Cindy Reed, Sarah Lustbader, Cara Compani, *Reimagining Prison*, report, Vera Institute of Justice, February 2017.

Siting

The Reimagined Facility is located intentionally to support connection to community and supportive networks. In the Reimagined System, prisons will no longer be built in remote hinterlands where services and amenities are few and far in between, where officers reside far away from the facility, where the community is entirely separated from it, where criminal justice is not a collective responsibility but an uncomfortable civic duty delegated to a small cohort of officers and elected officials, and where the prison is not an intertwined part of our social fabric. The Reimagined Facility will be located in the community, serve and be served by the community, and require collective commitment. Increased communication between the community and the Reimagined Facility will increase our faith in the criminal justice system. Embedded in their communities, the Reimagined Facility will be able to respond to specific issues that affect a community, and will allow the community to engage in ongoing efforts and dialogues to reconcile systemic biases and inequities. Though the Reimagined Facility will doubtless meet resistance, reluctance, and ambivalence in some communities, these same communities, over time, will come to see the Reimagined Facility as a new kind of civic institution and an indispensable community asset.
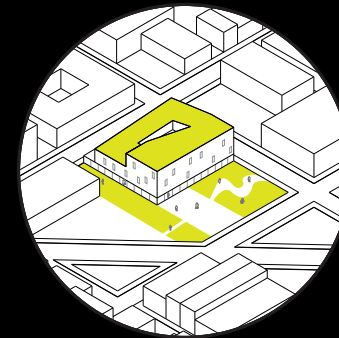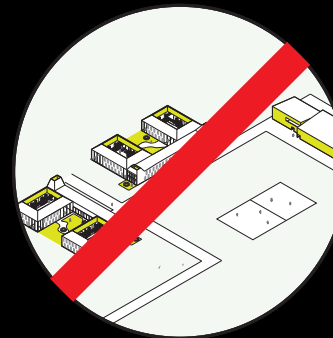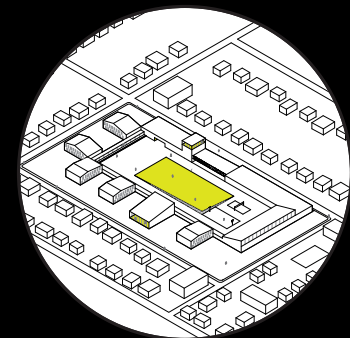
Communities will come to see the Reimagined Facility as a new kind of civic institution and an indispensable community asset.

URBAN

RURAL

SUBURBAN

Programming

Aspiring to be a model of sustainable social housing and cooperative community, the Reimagined Facility will provide exemplary housing, healthcare, and education and training for its residents. Instead of spaces driven by housing units, the Reimagined Facility recognizes the importance of a balanced approach and distributes space more proportionately between housing, healthcare, education, and training. Designed to more closely resemble a rehabilitation facility or school, it features well-lit and well-ventilated classrooms, lecture halls, computer labs, and indoor and outdoor recreation spaces, as well as waiting rooms, treatment and therapy rooms, meeting rooms, and conference rooms. Housing in the Reimagined Facility is on a more humane scale and each unit is capped at 6 to 8 residents, reflecting their smaller scale and community-based distribution. At this scale, a communal living room replaces the dayroom, and is configured in open-plan concept with the kitchen and dining room. With ample natural lighting, this communal space is the backdrop for multiple settings throughout the day—breakfast, lunch, dinner, and during the clients' leisure time. In addition, each unit features Internet-equipped computer workstations, smaller recreation spaces for contemporaneous gathering and play, spaces for individual reflection and rest, and private bedrooms and bathrooms. The materials and finishes of the housing unit mirrors those of the home, and bring a sense of normalcy and dignity to an experience that is frequently cited as confusing, stigmatizing, dehumanizing, and alienating. On the whole, the design of the Reimagined Facility is complementary rather than disjointed, calming rather than disorienting, and redemptive rather than punitive.

Living Room

Housing Units

Adminstration

Multi-Use Areas

Vocational Training
Education

Recreation

Religious Programs
Clinic + Treatment

Shared Visitor/Resident
Visitors
Sally Port
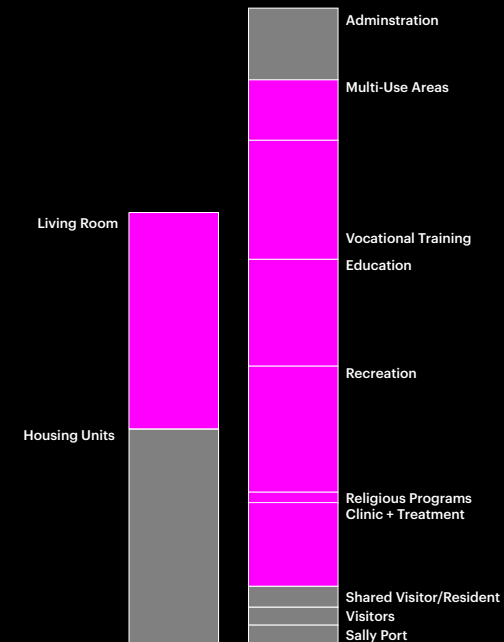
THE REIMAGINED SYSTEM
In the Reimagined Facility, the program emphasizes spaces of healing and therapy, community interaction and investment, and individual training and capacity building, represented in pink.
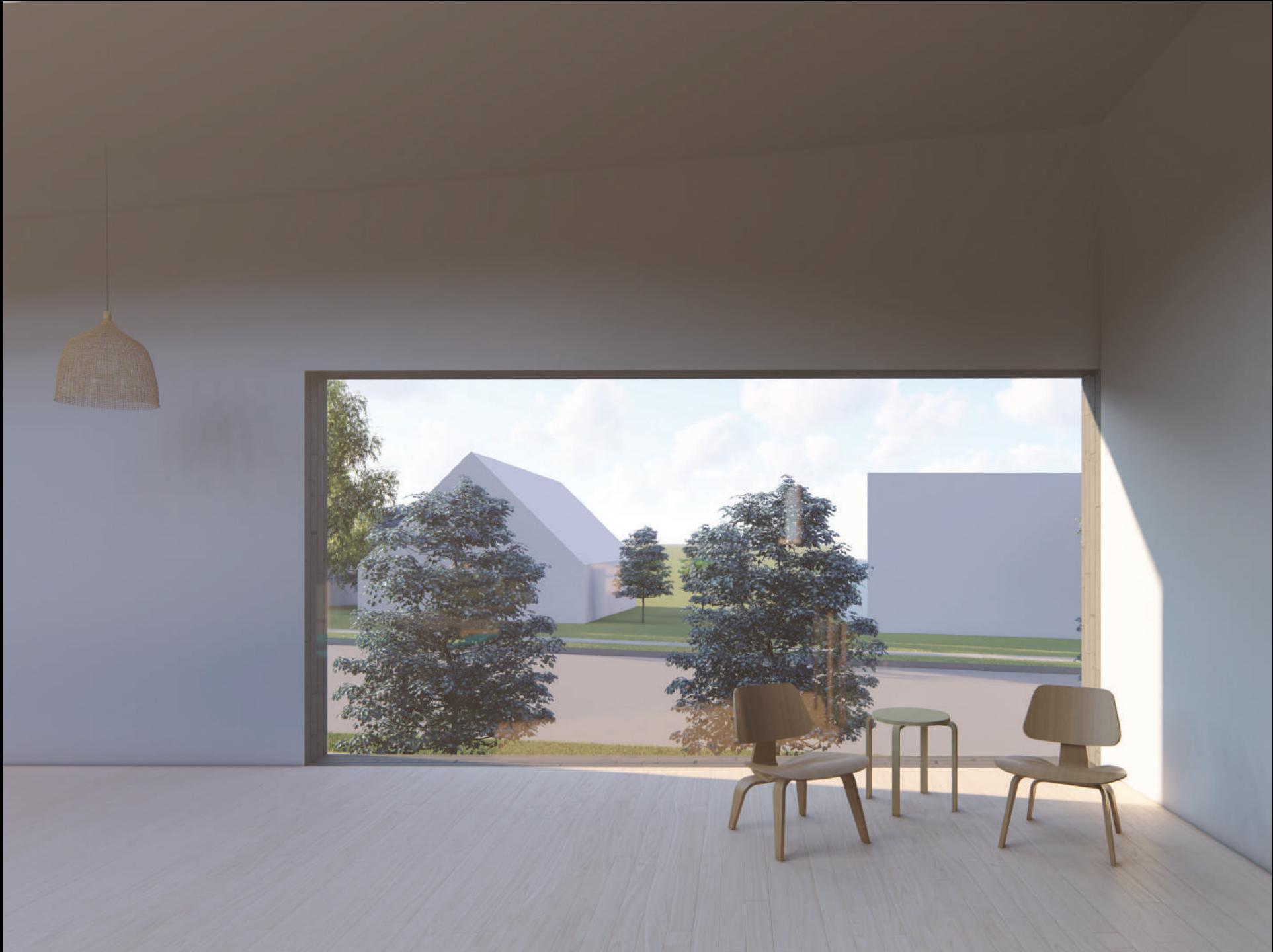
Daily Schedule

In the Reimagined Facility, the daily routine and the rhythm of the day simulates that of the outside world, aimed at developing productive habits and keeping both residents and staff engaged in the communal spirit of the facility. Residents wake up at a normal time, approximately seven o'clock in the morning. A staff member knocks on each door to make sure they are awake, and to say "good morning." Usually the resident calls out from inside, greeting the staff member, and may on occasion open the door or poke their head out to say good morning. The resident will then arise, shower, and fix breakfast in a communal kitchen before starting their day.

From Monday to Friday, from approximately eight o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the evening, each resident's day involves personalized individual and group treatment, compensated work, educational studies, vocational training, or other structured activities. Members of the community or local employers often lead vocational training, which also creates opportunities for residents to seek gainful employment from these employers upon release. Similarly, local teachers, trainees, educators, and academic programs lead classes and help develop academic programs in the reimagined facility. Other structured programming include peer support groups and restorative programs where residents can meet with victims of similar crimes and begin a dialogue.

At the end of the day, and during weekends, residents spend their time around the facility's recreation facilities, libraries, study rooms, outdoor spaces, and the housing units until dinner time, when each unit congregates again for a chef-prepared dinner. As part of their vocational training and daily work, some residents may take part in cooking and preparing dinners as chef or sous-chef, working with the entire unit to make communal decisions on menus and meal budgets. Dinner is a communal event and an invaluable bonding opportunity for residents and staff to get to know each other and share their daily experiences, accomplishments, or struggles. Throughout the evening, before and after dinner, residents can also spend time on their academic studies, watch television, read books, play games and video games, and communicate via online peer-to-peer communication and video sharing services or meet in person with family members as well as those assisting with their release preparation. Reflecting life outside the facility as much as possible, the Reimagined System equips clients with social, therapeutic, vocational, educational, and decision-making tools needed to successfully and fully participate and reintegrate into society upon their release.

Typical Day in the Reimagined Facility

7:00-8:00am	Wake-up
8:00-9:00am	Breakfast
9:00am-12:00pm	Work, classes, or training
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00-5:00pm	Restorative Programming Individual Therapy Group Therapy Family Therapy Work Training Library / Study Sessions Tutoring Visitors Legal Aid
5:00-6:30pm	Leisure + Recreational Activities
6:30-8:00pm	Free Time Internet, Phone, TV, Games Dinner Prep
8:00-9:00pm	Communal Dinner
9:00-10:00pm	Free Time Internet, Phone, TV, Games
10:00-11:00	Quiet TIme

time of day   0   6   12   18   24

REIMAGINED   wake-up | eat | work, classes, training | eat | restorative programs | leisure | eat | lights out

Users

The Reimagined System will improve the experience of, and relationships between incarcerated people, staff members, and the community. Aimed at destigmatizing deep-seated prejudices towards incarceration and criminality in our society, the Reimagined System re-conceptualizes the social roles, responsibilities, and relationships between three key user groups: incarcerated residents, staff, and the community. Through structured team-building, interpersonal engagement, and community-based activities, the Reimagined System works to cultivate a high level of trust amongst clients, staff, and community members to eradicate prejudice within the facility and our communities.

Residents

In the Reimagined System, clients are grouped together by classification and personal compatibility and are empowered to be proactive in their daily lives: determining their own activities, making their own meals, wearing their own clothes, maintaining their own personal spaces, and participating in group discussions amongst their residential units. In addition, residents have their own private bathrooms, keys, and lighting and temperature controls.

    With support from staff and peer mentors, each resident takes the lead with their personal planning. For different periods throughout each year, residents may participate in classes, job training, and paid employment, learning and applying productive skills that can enrich their stay in the facility and contribute to their eventual reintegration into society. In addition, clients are equipped with access to a variety of health and personalized services, from individual counseling, educational and employment planning, group therapy, peer mentorship, and primary care.

    In the Reimagined Facility, residents have access to smartphones, tablets, and workstations equipped with Internet and can speak to their family members or close friends on FaceTime or Skype, allowing families to stay connected throughout the client's time at the facility. In addition, the Reimagined Facility sets aside a nominal number of apartments where residents can spend a day visit or up to two nights with their families and maintain strong bonds that will ultimately help them reintegrate.

Staff

In the reimagined system, staff members adopt a service-provider approach and play an important role in clients' daily lives as well as their eventual reintegration into society. Drawing from diverse skillsets, staff members in the Reimagined System are highly professional nurses, psychologists, professors, treatment specialists, priests, imams, yoga instructors, counselors, fitness specialists, and expert tradespeople. Some are even former residents, capable of relating firsthand experience and advice to current residents. In contrast to the current system, staff walk around the facility and the campus relaxed, cheerful, and motivated; there is little overt symbolism of their status as staff members, and one could not tell that they are in a prison from the way staff members approach their work or each other. Everyone is on a first-name basis.

    Staff members help residents set goals for themselves, support them as they pursue the goals, and share in their successes when they achieve them. Regularly-scheduled staff meetings and smaller team meetings ensure that all staff are on the same page and improve the quality of care within the Reimagined Facility. A break lounge offers staff a space to find refuge and respite as well as to recover and re-energize, ensuring a consistently high quality of service. The Reimagined System flourishes on a relaxed hierarchy where staff members are empowered and encouraged to speak to supervisors about any issues that arise on the job, and residents are granted opportunities to mentor fellow residents. Contributing to this constructive atmosphere, the makeup of the staff in the Reimagined Facility is gender-balanced and representative of local community and client demographics.

The Community

In the Reimagined System, the facility is seen as an asset to the community, and both clients and community members work toward greater empathy. Staff members would come from and reside in the community, and other members of the community will take on active roles in teaching, learning, and discussion opportunities with clients. In addition, community members, organizations, and groups and will be able to rent space at the Reimagined Facility to host community meetings, film screenings, sporting events, and other mission-aligned activities that can also

benefit the clients and support their reintegration into productive lives after their sentences. On the whole, the facility would be visually and functionally transparent, allowing visitors, volunteers, community members, and the media in while balancing the residents' need for privacy. Improved communication between the Reimagined Facility's clients and staff with the local community will enhance soft, community-based surveillance, and although the atmosphere is more relaxed, security would be enhanced rather than weakened, as staff will be able to detect and defuse potential problems before they emerge. As a result, this improved communication would help debunk myths and destigmatize biases about incarceration, gradually mitigating concerns about residing next to a facility or walking dogs and children around the facility.

Positive Reinforcement:
Any minor or major rules violation in today's prisons are often subject to arbitrary decision-making processes and solitary confinement in special housing units. Sanctions for violating rules and processes for restoring privileges tend to vary from facility to facility. In addition, residents who are perceived to be at-risk or whose special needs either require greater supervision or complicate their ability to integrate into a housing unit are often assigned to solitary confinement, although these units were not intended for such purposes. The reimagined system not only avoids the misuse of solitary confinement; it abandons its use altogether. In the reimagined system, a rules infraction prompts a calm and non-judgmental meeting with a counselor to discuss the incident and what may have drove it, and a subsequent mediation with staff members or other residents involved in the incident. A resident may lose certain privileges for a brief period of time, and the goal is not punishment, but reflection, reinforcement, and reconciliation.

The Reimagined System is predicated on the belief in the human worth of each person, whether incarcerated or otherwise. If we take this position, it then follows that our criminal justice system shall prioritize therapy and empathy rather than retribution, pain, and torture. The design, siting, programming, and daily rituals contribute to a certain perception that allows, rather than prevents, incarcerated people and affected communities to restore their relationships.

7:30 AM

10:00 AM

1:30 PM

2:00 PM

2:30 PM

3:00 PM

4:00 PM

6:30 PM

7:30 PM

8:00 PM

9:00 PM

9:30 PM

A Reimagined America
What is our definition of a humane society?

Can we believe, as Bryan Stevenson does, that "Each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done."?

It is critical for our society to reimagine our spaces of incarceration, and, in doing so, our definition of criminality and our definition of humanity. Can we commit to healing and rehabilitation, instead of pain and torture? To investing in individual reconciliation and community restoration? What would our society look like if we removed environments that are physically and psychologically punitive and torturous? If we prepared children for the office, instead of the prison? If your zip code or the color of your skin were no longer determinants for the likelihood of a criminal conviction? It is fundamental that we reimagine our spaces of incarceration—our spaces of society.

This is not a novel idea. Several exemplary facilities around the world have shown that prisons need not be sprawling complexes of unremarkable cinder-block structures, sterile and monotonous finishes, and indestructible furniture and fixtures that lend a cold and dreadful atmosphere to prison. These facilities (which include the Justizzentrum of Leoben, Austria, the Waldeck prison of Germany, the Batsøy and Halden prisons of Norway, and the Suomenlinna of Finland) show that prison can be warm, inviting, and architecturally unique, human-scaled facilities that are bright, colorful, cheerful, hopeful. Within each of these facilities, programs that focus on meaningful training and education and offer therapeutic support prepare residents for productive reintegration in society. Instead of being dehumanizing methods of inflicting punishment, these facilities are a testament to architecture's ability to inspire, heal, and infuse dignity into those most in need. Can we build this here?

To Reimagine Prison visit **vera.org/projects/reimagining-prison**.

O, let America be America again—
The land that never has been yet—
And yet must be—the land where every man is free.
The land that's mine—the poor man's, Indian's, Negro's, ME—
Who made America,
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the rain,
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—
The steel of freedom does not stain.
From those who live like leeches on the people's lives,
We must take back our land again,
America!

O, yes,
I say it plain,
America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath—
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,
We, the people, must redeem
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.
The mountains and the endless plain—
All, all the stretch of these great green states—
And make America again!

Langston Hughes, "Let America Be America Again" (excerpt), 1935

Appendix

Standards and Guides
Regulatory reform in the United States, 1870-present

While the American criminal justice system has had a governing body and guiding principles since the 19th century, a lack of a single unified view, slow mechanisms for change and oversight, negative external pressure, and growing prison populations have limited the systemic implementation of more humane design approaches. In charting the evolution of principles, standards, and guidelines relating to prison design, it is possible to trace shifts in intent, attitude, and technique, or more specifically, techniques of surveillance and incapacitation.

The first push towards articulating what a prison is, and what it ought to do, came at the first convening of the National Prison Association (NPA) in 1870, when prison administrators throughout the country met in Cincinnati to develop a set of core principles establishing the mission and the guiding values of prison. The outcome of that meeting, *Declaration of Principles*, proclaims:

> The treatment of criminals by society is for the protection of society. But since such treatment is directed to the criminal rather than the crime, its great object should be his moral regeneration. Hence the supreme aim of prison discipline is the reformation of criminals, not the infliction of vindictive suffering.[1]

Among its thirty-seven principles, the Declaration touches upon topics of clemency, lunacy, labor, recidivism, and human dignity as well as the organization of residents, the ideal characteristics of staff members, the length of sentences, the nature of educational and work programs, the administrative structure, the employment of female staff, and the architecture of prisons. Of the criminal justice system, it stresses the importance for the prison to be a restorative institution:

> The state has not discharged its whole duty to the criminal when it has punished him, nor even when it has reformed him. Having raised him up, it has further duty to aid in holding him up. In vain shall we have given the convict an improved mind and heart, in vain shall we have imparted to him the capacity for industrial labor and the desire to advance himself by worthy means, if, on his discharge, he finds the world in arms against him, with none to trust him, none to meet him kindly, none to give him the opportunity of earning honest bread.[2]

In 1946, the American Prison Association (APA), as the NPA came to be known, responded to requests from state governors and prison associations to coordinate best practices and disseminate successful strategies, and issued more detailed recommendations in *A Manual of Suggested Standards for a State Correctional System*. The *Manual* outlined systemic, administrative, and operational guidelines for

different types of facilities and classifications of residents. In 1954, the APA became the American Correctional Association (ACA) as it is currently known, and released the *Manual on Correctional Standards* with revised and expanded guidelines.

By the mid-twentieth century, rising crime, expanding prison populations, and deteriorating facilities brought attention to the importance of design goals and parameters. Based on the successes of the three prototypical Metropolitan Correctional Centers in the early seventies, the ACA released the first edition of its standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities (ALDF) and Adult Correctional Institutions (ACI) in 1977. The standards outlined the benefits of direct supervision, but did not mandate compliance to the direct supervision paradigm.

In fact, until the ACA founded an official accrediting body in 1974, the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, there had been no national governing body that provided oversight over prisons. Today, accreditation requirements vary by state and the type of facility—for example, a juvenile, an adult correctional, and a detention facility will each have different standards, and health care facilities within correctional facilities are overseen by a separate commission. Despite these limitations, the last 150 years has seen numerous publications on standards and a push for accreditation. While these efforts signify an ongoing attempt to define what a prison should be, what it should accomplish, and how it should look, the lack of a unified view on accreditation has hindered their adoption. In some jurisdictions, accreditation is not required at all; in some scenarios, accreditation requirements may be enacted by case law rather than legislative process. In addition, several courts have ruled that accreditation standards do not necessarily adhere to constitutional standards, particularly under the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendment.[3]

But such shortcomings was not for a lack of effort: by the early 1980s, backed by statistics that asserted its effectiveness, direct supervision—or what was also called the "new generation" model—was demonstrably superior to the outdated linear-intermittent surveillance (first-generation) and remote supervision (second-generation) models. In 1981, California's Contra Costa prison adopted the direct supervision model, and other jails and prisons, including the renovated Manhattan House of Detention (famously dubbed the "Tombs" for its notoriously atrocious conditions) soon followed suit. In the same year, the ACA released the second edition of the ACI and ALDF standards that clarified the goals and intentions of the first edition and further stressed smaller, human-scaled facilities and units. In 1983, the ACA endorsed direct supervision in a special publication, *Design Guide for Secure Adult Correctional Facilities*. In the same year, the American Institute of Architecture's Committee on Architecture for Justice endorsed "new generation jail concepts."[4]

In 1987, the ACA, with grants from the National Institute of Justice, commissioned new research intended to shape revisions in the third edition of the ALDF and ACI standards (which were released three years later, in 1990). Prior to this study, the standards stopped short of mandating direct supervision or a hybrid of direct and remote supervision as a precondition to accreditation, since the vast majority of prisons continued to operate as remote supervision or linear-intermittent facilities.[5] Spanning three years from its inception in 1987 to the final report in 1989, this research introduced two fundamental concepts that would shape the spatial and experiential quality of the prison to the present day: conditions of confinement and performance standards.

"Conditions of confinement," as the study suggests, is a spectrum relating various aspects of the spatial experience in the prison or jail from one extreme to another; for example, the minimum square footage per resident required by courts and legislation to the optimum needed to fulfill a facility's mission. Other considerations, including budgetary constraints or the prison profile (a planning document that indicates jurisdiction, resident classifications, security level, type of surveillance, type of perimeter, resident population, staff population, housing unit size, and building size) can be determinants of where a prison fits on the continuum.

Facilities designed for the minimum acceptable conditions of confinement will tend to utilize hard, institutional finishes and fixed furnishings and place control on movement, lighting, and temperature in the hands of the guards. On the other end of the spectrum, institutions that adopt a more aspirational stance towards the mission of "do no harm" will utilize softer finishes (such as carpeting vs. concrete) movable wooden and upholstered furniture, and give inmates greater agency over movement, lighting, and temperature to create a more humane environment. Although intended to offer a range of design options ranging from normative to institutional, the usefulness of the conditions of confinement as a rubric is limited

when the trend, driven by factors such as social and political attitudes and construction replicability, is overwhelmingly institutional.

Acknowledging the fact that the design of prisons and detention facilities had to respond to specific profiles and classifications as well as a diverse set of administrative and inmate needs, the study also introduced "performance standards," a set of key metrics responding to these needs and driving the spatial quality of the direct supervision prison. For instance, the second edition standards mandated that each cell must afford each resident a minimum of 80 square feet, but gave little consideration to the placement of furniture and fixtures within cells that might cause the space to be less functional. In comparison, a performance standard would account for their placement by requiring a minimum amount of clear and unencumbered space. In 1990, the ACA published the third edition of ALDF and ACI standards, incorporating findings from this research and emphasizing performance metrics intended to improve the conditions of confinement. With a new section on "staff/inmate interaction," it also required some degree of direct supervision in the general population.[6] More recently, the fourth edition standards incorporate updates in building technology and an added emphasis on healthcare and mental health, reflecting gradual changes in societal understanding of the factors affecting incarceration.

While the ALDF and ACI standards both establish standards, they do so through a suggested "range of practice" rather than a mandatory checklist, leading to confusion and wide range in design quality. The recent release of ACA Core Jail Standards attempts to establish a national minimum standard for accreditation that can be used as supplement to the ALDF and ACI standards. However, by establishing a minimum threshold, the Core Jail Standards fall well short of the aspirational objectives outlined in the ALDF and ACI standards and offers no incentive to go beyond the bare minimum, further limiting innovative design approaches to creating a more humane environment.

While the various iterations of design codes and guidelines inspired by the three MCC prototypes were intended to encourage more humane forms of incarceration, they failed to anticipate the explosive growth of mass incarceration and recognize a limited ability to retrofit old prisons. In addition, by offering a range

of acceptable practices, the proposed guidelines opened an avenue for prisons to adopt the minimum acceptable standard, which in turn allowed warehousing to take hold, limited innovation as prison construction came under scrutiny of risk managers and value engineers, and have continued to shape the spaces of the American prison today.

To be sure, these reform efforts held useful lessons backed by quantitative data and qualitative metrics, but simply could not keep up with our punitive social and legal infrastructure. More importantly, it is clear proof that our system must reform before the architecture can respond to it.

The current outlook is bleak: stagnant regulatory standards, industry economics, and practices have severely undermined formal and aesthetic innovation and invention in the design of prisons. Although the Third and Fourth Editions of the ACA's Adult Correctional Facilities Standards have turned towards performance-based standards and current accreditation checklists prioritize normalized conditions of confinement, improvements and changes remain incremental and piecemeal. Fast-tracking design and construction processes, design replicability, entrenched viewpoints about incarceration, the sprawling scale of the facilities, and even certain aspects of the guidelines and standards effectively result in the construction of new facilities that do little to challenge the status quo in any meaningful way. By and large, in the prison design and construction industry, risk mitigation takes precedence over risk-taking. The following pages illustrate how certain standards allow for a range of solutions, yet also limit the invention of new approaches.

ENDNOTES

1   National Prison Association, *Declaration of Principles*, 1870. PDF, <http://www.aca.org/ACA_Prod_IMIS/ACA_Member/AboutUs/Dec.aspx?WebsiteKey=139f6b09-e150-4c56-9c66-284b92f21e51&hkey=a975cbd5-9788-4705-9b39-fcb6ddc048e0&Principles=2#Principles>. Accessed 26 November 2017.

2   Ibid.

3   The U.S. Supreme Court case, *Bell v. Wolfish*, 441 U.S. 520, 543 n.27 (1979) ruled that [W]hile the recommendations of these various groups may be instructive in certain cases, they simply do not establish the constitutional minima; rather, they establish goals recommended by the organization

in question." Also see *Grenning v. Miller-Stout,* 739 F.3d 1235, 1241 (9th Cir. 2014), *Gates v. Cook,* 376 F.3d 323, 337 (5th Cir. 2004), *Graves v. Arpaio,* 2008 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 85935 (D. Ariz. Oct. 22, 2008), and *LaMarca v. Turner,* 662 F.Supp. 647, 655 (S.D. Fla. 1987). A summary of these decisions can be found at Friedman, Alex, "How the Courts View ACA Accreditation," *Prison Legal News,* October 2014 <https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/news/2014/oct/10/how-courts-view-aca-accreditation/>. Accessed 26 November 2017.

4   Nelson, "New Generation Jails," 1-2.

5   A 1992 New York Times article stated that only 65 of 3,042 detention facilities in the United States operated on the direct supervision model. "New Jails Breaking Down Old Habits," The New York Times, 8 January 1992.

6   3-ALDF-2B-01: "Physical plant design facilitates continuous personal contact and interaction between staff and inmates in the housing unit." Also see 3-ALDF-2B-03: "Written policy and procedure require that all living areas are constructed to facilitate continuous staff observation, excluding electronic surveillance, of cell and detention room fronts and areas such as dayrooms and recreation spaces." Morris Thigpen, et al. "ACA Guide for Adult Local Detention Facilities," U.S. Department of Justice, 1993. 75.

Semi-autonomous Management Units

According to the 1993 ACA Guide for Adult Local Detention Facilities, the previous two editions of the ALDF and ACI standards "had somewhat arbitrarily" capped each facility at 500 beds, noting that "an 'absolute' limit on the maximum size for an institution cannot be supported by research or practice at this time."[1] Instead, the third edition standards afforded greater flexibility, to engender "creativity and innovation," by allowing institutions to subdivide into semi-autonomous units of between 160 and 300 inmates or less, in which support facilities are managed separately.[2] Based on the success of the direct supervision model, each management unit is further subdivided into living units of up to 64 beds (considered the maximum amount of inmates that could be effectively managed by a single officer, and coincidentally, the number of beds provided in each unit at the New York MCC) where "continuous, direct, and barrier-free interaction" is possible.[3] Factors such as the size of the institution or security requirements may further justify smaller living units of between 12-16 residents. As intended, these concessions allowed correctional institutions to plan expansion in scalable increments of modular, or "podular" clusters and made it economically advantageous to build large institutions in which essential infrastructure, such as power generators, kitchens, and laundry facilities could be shared.

[1] Thigpen, *ACA Guide for Adult Local Detention Facilities*, 66-67.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Nelson, "New Generation Jails," 26.
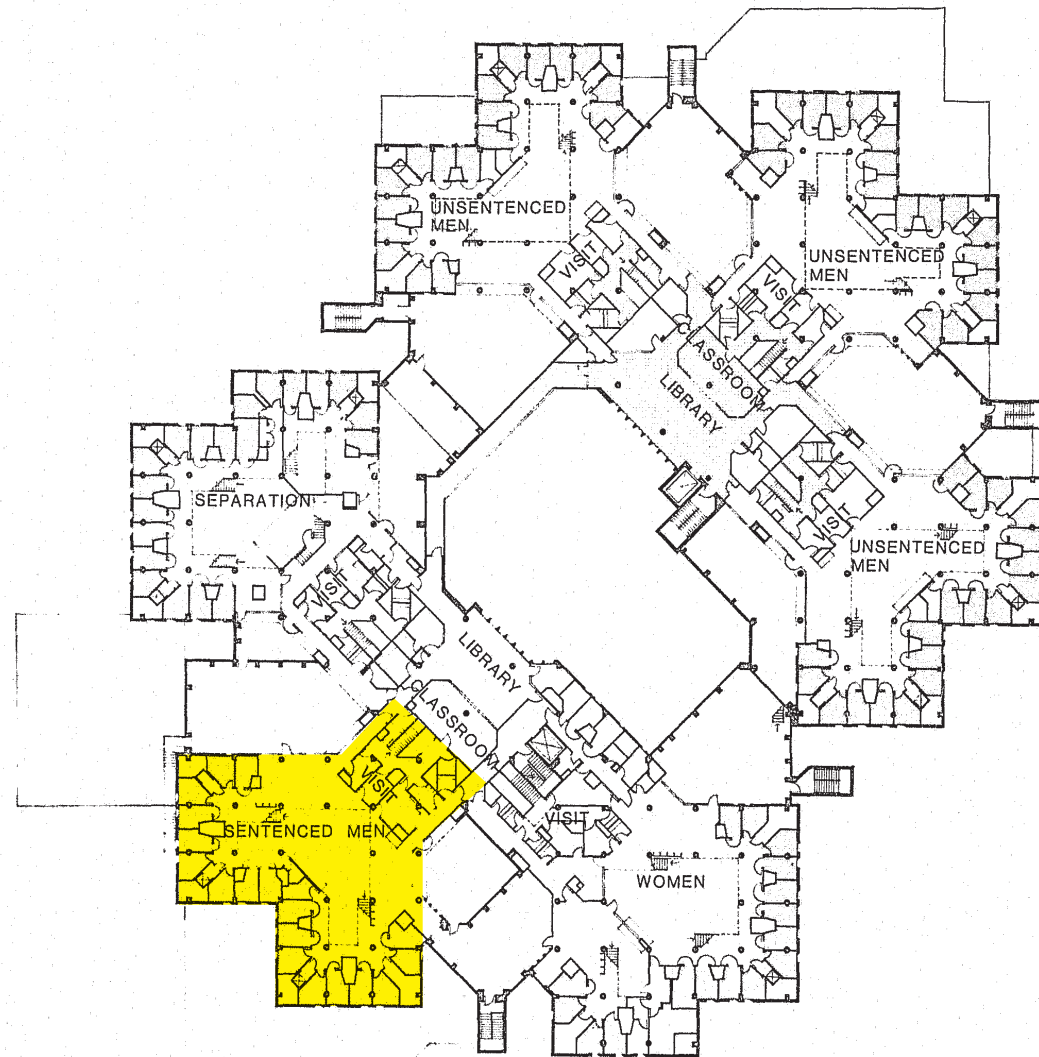
Contra Costa County Detention Facility Martinez, California

The 180,000 square-foot facility, one of the first post-MCC facilities to adopt the direct supervision model, comprises of housing units organized into four distinct management units.

Unencumbered Space in Cells

Responding to the fact that a focus on measuring the overall square footage of a cell tended to result in awkward furniture placement in the cells, the Third Edition of the ACA Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions and Adult Local Detention Facilities placed greater emphasis on the activities occurring within the cell than on the overall square footage of the cell.

3-ACI-2C-01 stipulated the following:

- All cells and sleeping areas must contain a minimum of 35 square feet of unencumbered space.[1, 2]
- At least 7 feet of clear space in one dimension

In addition, when confinement exceeds ten hours per day, the previous standard of 80 square feet per occupant applies. However, by shifting away from a static measure to a performance metric, the unencumbered space provision ensures that the cell can comfortably accommodate the range of a resident's activities without necessarily increasing the space required per cell. Resulting increases in cell sizes are only marginal; however, the performance standard makes it possible to save considerable space where dry cells are utilized and toilet facilities located outside of individual cells. Such arrangements 'normalize' the inmate's experience and significantly reduce space and costs associated with installing and maintaining plumbing fixtures.

[1] "Unencumbered space" is defined as the "usable space that is not encumbered by furnishings or fixtures"

[2] In multiple occupancy cells, 25 square feet of unencumbered space per inmate in required instead of the 35 square feet required in a single occupancy cell.
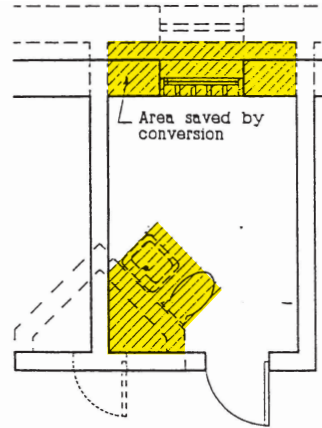
As long as a resident has access to toilet and sink facilities in the housing unit, dry cells can be utilized to save considerable space and cost.
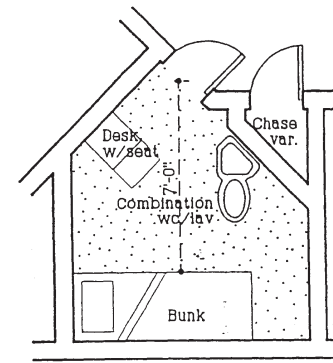
In the second edition standards, this cell arrangement would have been acceptable since it provides greater than 60 square feet of space. Although this layout also exceeds the 35 square feet of unencumbered space, it does not provide the 7-foot clear span in any direction required by the third edition standards.
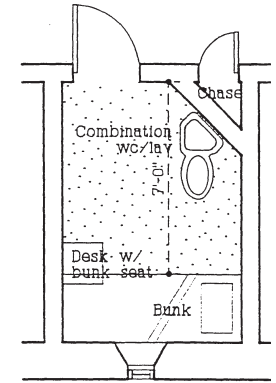
This layout is compliant with the third edition standards, providing over 35 square feet of unencumbered space and a 7-foot clear span.
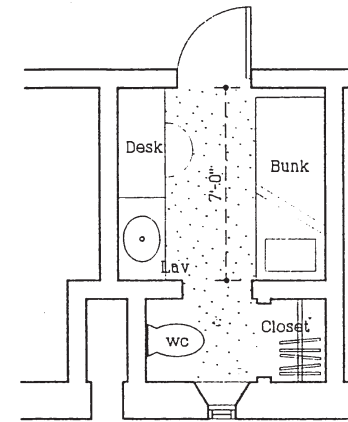
Separating the toilet and the lavatory in a cell can normalize the experience of incarceration; however in this example, only 31 square feet are unencumbered, which does not comply to the third edition standards. (Image: ALDF 3rd Edition Guide, 1993)
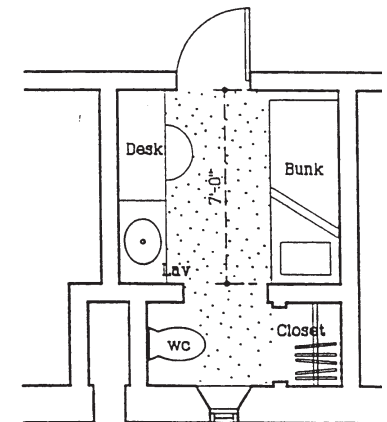
By slightly widening the cell, this configuration complies with the third edition standards.

Immediately Adjacent Dayrooms

The dayroom, along with the cells that line its perimeter, as Stephen Carter notes in the "Conditions of Confinement" study, is the predominant "form-giver" and "footprint-generator" of a facility.[1] The shape, appearance, and sectional quality of a dayroom carries implications on the guards' ability to effectively supervise the population of a single unit. A rectangular dayroom, while structurally efficient, may result in blind spots where an officer's visibility into the cells are obstructed. In addition, a rectangular layout could result in a dayroom that is either disproportionately narrow and incapable of supporting a variety of activities, or excessive in relation to the required amount of space. For these reasons, the triangular layout pioneered at the Chicago MCC is often preferred since it eliminates blind spots, cuts down on wasted space and accommodates multiple activity scales. To further minimize the amount of dayroom space per inmate that exceeds the 35 square-foot minimum, a second story of cells are often added to a housing unit. Numerous prisons designed after the third edition standards adopt a two-story or multi-level triangular scheme as it creates economical dayrooms that facilitate efficient supervision.

In the second edition of the ALDF and ACI standards, the dayroom was required to be "adjacent and accessible" to the cells. However, the Conditions of Confinement study found this language vague and that in practice, it was possible to have a dayroom that was adjacent and accessible via a corridor—a configuration that did not support the ideals of direct supervision. In addition, the presence of a narrow corridor was found unconstitutional in the 1983 case, Inmates of Allegheny County Jail v. Wecht. As a result, a corridor that provided access to an adjacent dayroom is considered unsatisfactory in the third edition.[2]

In addition, new performance-based standards tabulated the minimum space requirement for dayrooms. As mandated by American Correctional Association's Adult Correctional Institute (ACI) Standards 4-4135:

> Dayrooms with space for varied inmate activities are situated immediately adjacent to the inmate sleeping areas. Dayrooms provide a minimum of 35 square feet of space per inmate (exclusive of lavatories, showers, and toilets) for the maximum number of inmates who use the dayroom at one time, and no dayroom encompasses less than 100 square feet of space (exclusive of lavatories, showers, and toilets). (4-ACI-4-4135).

A minimum size requirement of 100 square feet was also introduced in the third edition standards to ensure that even small housing units provide ample communal space. In addition, spaces intended for circulation are included in dayroom calculations except where there is a physical separation and the separated space is used exclusively for circulation, for instance, the second-story walkway in a two-level housing unit.

[1] Stephen Carter, "Discussion Ideas for Reviewing The Conditions of Confinement in *The American Correctional Association Standards*," 1987, 5.

[2] Thigpen, *ACA Guide for Adult Local Detention Facilities*, 100-104.
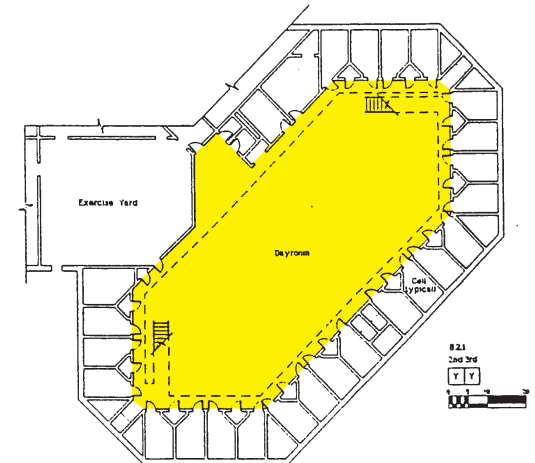
Compliant to both the second and third edition performance-based standards for dayrooms (Image: ALDF 3rd Edition Guide, 1993)
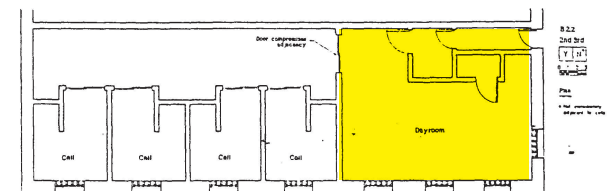
This configurationoes not satisfy 3rd edition performance-based standard for dayrooms: the dayroom is not immediately adjacent to the cells. (Image: ALDF 3rd Edition Guide, 1993)

Visibility and Staff Supervision

The ability to continuously observe incarcerated people has been an aspiration of prison design since Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon. Within each living unit, sight lines must be optimized for effective surveillance, whether from a singular point, as in remote-supervision prisons, or from all points, as in direct-supervision prisons. Although the Panopticon maximizes sightlines into the cells, other practical considerations, primarily the distance between the guard's control station and the cells, make it an ineffective supervision model.

However, in the direct supervision model, the provision of a dayroom immediately adjacent to cells, a desire for floor plan efficiency, and optimal sight lines lend themselves to a variety of design approaches. Recognizing that a square floor plan resulted in significantly more dayroom space than was required per prisoner, Harry Weese proposed a triangular floor plan not only to eliminate blind corners, but also reduce the dayroom space-to-resident ratio. This ratio can also be reduced by adding a second, or "mezzanine" level in each housing unit while keeping the dayroom space proportional to the number of cells at each level, or by extending one segment of the perimeter to form a corridor. Other facilities prioritize optimal visibility throughout the entire housing unit rather than a single point, resulting in trapezoidal plans. In many instances, facilities have also integrated outdoor spaces within, or adjacent to, housing units in a manner that makes it possible for officers to supervise both interior and outdoor spaces from a single control station.
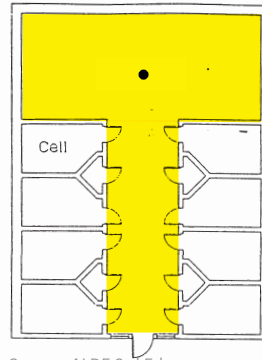
Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Low Visibility:
Dayroom is not visible from the unit entrance or from the cells, and vice versa.
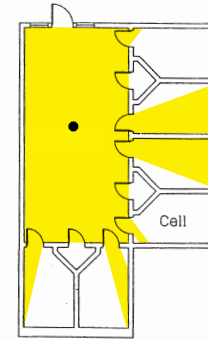
Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Moderate Visibility:
Improved visibility of cells from the dayroom, but right angles limit view into certain cells.
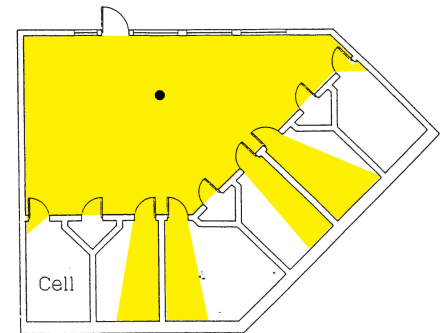
Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Optimal Visibility:
A skewed arrangement of cells improves visibility into cells.
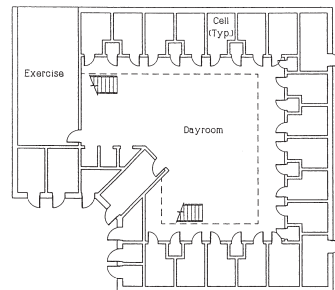
Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Convex Plan:
Although visibility is good from the officier's station in the center, when officers move to one side of the unit, their sightlines to the other side are occulded.
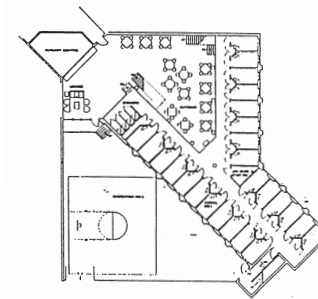
Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Triangular Plan with Extension
To reduce "extra" dayroom space, corridors along one segment of the triangle can be extended, or the plan can be stacked to form a multi-level housing unit.
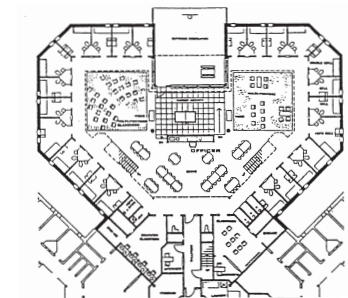
Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Trapezoidal Plan
A trapezoidal plan is often adopted in order to maximize visibility throughout the unit, with the officier station in the center, and the outdoor recreation space integrated into the perimeter of the housing unit.

A View to the Outside: Glazing and Natural Daylighting

While earlier versions of the ALDF and ACI standards included a provision for natural lighting in cells, the third edition, responding to findings of the "Conditions of Confinement" study, acknowledged the importance of providing a view to the outside—defined as a view in which a horizon is visible—and mandated that such apertures must be located within 20 feet of a cell. In addition, each dayroom must have an opening greater than 12 square feet and must provide a view to the outside. In addition, the standards also require that "all inmate rooms/cells provide access to natural light."

Within each cell, a window is normally a minimum of five inches in either direction, "too narrow for virtually any adult to pass through."[1] Moreover, "view conflicts" such as being able to look into other spaces or interact with people on the outside, ought to be kept to a minimum by utilizing louvers, heavily landscaped buffers, clerestory windows, and exterior screen walls.[2]

However, when residents spend most of their waking hours outside of their cells or in a dayroom, the benefits of having a window in each cell often go unrealized. In placing windows in cells, the required glazed surface in the dayroom decreases, and as a result, may deprive the dayroom from adequate natural lighting. The third edition of the ACA standards anticipated this tension with the following condition:

Each dayroom provides a minimum of 12 square feet of transparent glazing with a view to the outside, plus two additional square feet of glazing per inmate whose room/cell does not contain an opening or window with a view to the outside. (3-ALDF-2D-05)

In fact, a recent trend is to forego placing cells along the perimeter of a facility, popular in early direct-supervision facilities, in favor for a windowless-cell layout in which cells line interior walls. Such a layout would also reduce the amount of primary circulation required to provide access to the cells, shrink the net-to-gross ratio (as well as construction and operating costs) for the facility by consolidating the building footprint and the perimeter, increase natural lighting in the dayroom, but reduce natural ventilation within the cells or sleeping quarters. Where inmates spend the majority of their hours, from 10 hours to as many as 23 hours a day, particularly in high security and special housing units, a window in each cell is preferred.

Residents in the general population who are confined in their rooms/cells for 10 or more hours daily have access to natural light by means of an opening or window of at least three square feet with a view to the outside. (3-ALDF-2D-04)

Alternatively, facilities can also adopt a hybrid approach and exceed the minimum requirements by placing windows in each cell and providing ample glazing in the dayrooms.

[1] Thigpen, *ACA Guide for Adult Local Detention Facilities*, 109. Also see: National Institute of Corrections, *Jail Design Guide: A Resource for Small and Medium Sized Jails*, U.S. Department of Justice, 1998, 3-8 to 3-9.
[2] Thigpen, 109.

Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

Source: ALDF 3rd Ed.

vera.org/projects/reimagining-prison