
Unlocking Heritage at the Eastern State Penitentiary

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The Heritage Site

Eastern State Penitentiary is a decommissioned state prison in Philadelphia that opened in 1829, was registered as a US National Historic Landmark in 1965, and closed its carceral operations in 1971. The building and grounds subsequently sat vacant before reopening as Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site in 1994 (fig. 1). The site is maintained as a stabilized ruin, with the building and grounds preserved in some state of ruin rather than having been restored to their original condition, which gives the site a feeling of abandonment. However, the mission of Eastern State is anything but abandonment, seeking instead “public understanding of the criminal justice system and its impact on the lives of those affected by it.”¹ To this end, the “haunting world of crumbling cellblocks and empty guard towers” has become a site for dialogue on the legacy and reform of criminal-justice systems.² The curators allow the stabilized ruin to speak for itself while also framing it with descriptive, critical, and conversational narratives, told through, respectively, an audio guide and signage throughout the site; an innovative program of temporary, site-specific art installations; and an interpretation center. Each narrative, in its own way, amplifies what the site has to say. The stabilized ruin and its discursive framing weave together to create what philosopher Charles Taliaferro refers to as an *open museum*, modeled on philosopher Karl Popper’s concept of the “open society,” one that commends “critical reflection and dialogue on matters of value” such as the state of justice within the criminal legal system.³ Eastern State’s curators use the past as a tool for excavating the present, starting with the concrete past: the heritage building and grounds themselves.

Material Evidence

A visit to Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site begins with a visual impression of the buildings and grounds. The viewer will likely have some idea of what they are looking at—for example, that it is a decommissioned prison. They may also know that it was built for the solitary confinement of its inmates. The penitentiary system was devised by religious-minded prison reformers in the late eighteenth and nineteenth



FIG. 1. — Aerial view (looking east) of Eastern State Penitentiary, 2125 Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, after 1933. Photograph by Jack E. Boucher for the Historic American Buildings Survey. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, HABS PA-1729.

centuries who modeled imprisonment on the monastic practice of silent retreat. Each inmate was to be confined to a single cell and not see or speak to other inmates or staff. In the case of Eastern State, its architect, John Haviland (1792–1852), designed the penitentiary to also prevent clandestine communication between or outside the cells, and the prison administrators required staff to make their rounds in silence, even wearing socks over their shoes to dampen the sounds of their footsteps. On the rare occasions that inmates were taken outside of their cells, they were hooded to sustain their isolation, which was intended to foster contemplation and penitence—hence the name *penitentiary*. The reformers believed that humans are inherently good even if they have acted badly, and are therefore redeemable through penitence. However, despite the well-meaning intentions and optimism of reformers, it soon became apparent that prolonged isolation—“this slow and daily tampering with the mysteries of the brain,” as English writer Charles Dickens put it after a visit to Eastern State in 1842—led not to redemption but to mental breakdown.⁴ Well before the Philadelphia penitentiary was decommissioned in 1971, the practice of solitary confinement had come to be seen as pointless and cruel, and Eastern State had discontinued the practice by 1913. Ironically, the prison was subsequently used to incarcerate individuals serving life sentences, a practice based upon the less-optimistic belief that some humans are not inherently

good or redeemable and should be imprisoned—albeit not in solitary confinement—for life. Over time, these early penitentiaries were either refitted to accommodate new carceral practices or they were decommissioned. Some of them, including Eastern State, became historic sites, often referred to as *dark heritage* for their association with human suffering.

The designation of Eastern State as a heritage site and its preservation as a stabilized ruin invite “attentive looking” at the building and grounds, akin to how a viewer would look at an artwork or a monument.⁵ The building’s peeling paint and rusted metal, its crumbling structures, and the encroachment of vegetation on the grounds all reflect the abandonment of incarcerated life. At the same time, the bulk of the building, though decaying, evokes the oppressiveness of this life.⁶ The foreboding Gothic Revival entrance facade adds to the heaviness with its crenellated towers and barred lancet windows, in contrast to the churchlike interior of the prison with barrel vaults and skylights, presumably where redemption takes place (figs. 2, 3). As criminology and criminal-justice scholar Jeffrey Ian Ross aptly summarizes, “the building speaks for itself.”⁷

Heritage preservation prioritizes the material-historical identity of artifacts and sites. This is not to say that conservators are reductive materialists, valuing heritage for nothing more than its materials. If Eastern State’s building and grounds had degraded into a heap of rubble, most would agree that it is not the rubble as such but the penitentiary that is worth preserving—the idea or plan. Thus, conservators would likely be open to a reassembly of the rubble into the penitentiary as it might have once



FIG. 2. — Eastern State Penitentiary, 1920s entrance facade before the addition of a vestibule. Photograph courtesy of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, PA.



FIG. 3. — Cellblock seven at the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Photograph by Carol M. Highsmith, 2019. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Carol M. Highsmith Archive, LC-DIG-highsm-56325.

looked, or even a modest reconstruction using some new materials. However, they would likely be far less open, if at all open, to replacing the rubble with a replica of the penitentiary built from entirely new materials. While the idea and plan of the penitentiary is important, the material object, which would be lost with a replica, also matters.⁸ Eastern State as a stabilized ruin may not look precisely as it was originally planned and built, but it is at least the authentic remains of the building and grounds, broken and worn, with enough resemblance to the original plan to be legible.

A harder question than how to preserve the ruin is whether and why any version of Eastern State Penitentiary should survive at all. Architect Rem Koolhaas notes that the kind and number of artifacts and sites deemed worthy of preservation has widened over time.⁹ Preservation “started logically enough with ancient monuments” but has expanded beyond “sacred” structures to more “sociological” ones, “to the point that we now preserve concentration camps, department stores, factories and amusement rides.”¹⁰ While Koolhaas finds it “slightly absurd” that “everything we inhabit is potentially susceptible to preservation,”¹¹ he also finds it promising, as a spur to overcome mediocrity in the built environment. Be that as it may, there is an argument to be made for allowing some cultural works to expire. For example, architectural historian and Holocaust scholar Robert Jan van Pelt wonders if it might be best, once the last survivor of the World War II concentration camp at Auschwitz has passed away, to let the buildings decay, return to nature, and be forgotten, so that we “finally

efface that most unnatural creation of Man.”¹² However, Van Pelt also thinks there is value in excavating the evidence and conserving the history of Auschwitz, and he has curated a number of important exhibitions on the subject, including *Seeing Auschwitz* (2020–ongoing), curated in partnership with Musealia and the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, initially exhibited at the United Nations headquarters in New York and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) headquarters in Paris and ongoing at various UN Information Offices worldwide.¹³

Ross raises an additional concern about the preservation of historic prisons. It normalizes prisons, according to him, and as they become a familiar part of the cultural landscape, we find ourselves not especially bothered by their existence.¹⁴ The curators of Eastern State Penitentiary address this concern by framing the site in a way to disrupt, not entrench, prison culture. The art installations, in particular, question, rather than legitimize, criminal-justice institutions and practices. Nevertheless, there is debate about the wisdom of preserving dark and dissonant heritage. Historian Steven Conn takes a moderate position, along the lines of philosopher Paul Ricoeur, who, Conn notes, “wonders whether and how we might achieve some sort of balance between remembering and forgetting.”¹⁵ Conn elaborates: “The risk in our attempt to ‘never forget’ is that our landscape, metaphorically and literally, becomes so cluttered with our attempts to remember the past that they crowd out our capacity to imagine the future.”¹⁶

While curators and conservators need not save absolutely everything, then, they might at least preserve the heritage artifacts and sites that contribute productively to the cultural life in which they are rooted, in much the same way that Eastern State Penitentiary is used to raise pertinent questions on the justice of mass incarceration. Conserving heritage artifacts and sites for their place in a cultural ecology equally allows certain heritage objects to expire, such as offensive monuments.¹⁷ It also allows for taking modest liberties with heritage materials. For example, the art installations at Eastern State require minor preparatory alterations to the material site. All this is to say that the question before the curatorial team at Eastern State is not how to preserve the heritage site for its own sake but to ask in what way might the site be relevant within its cultural milieu. Finding contemporary relevance does not require the curators to hide the site’s dark past, but rather, in the words of art historian Annette Loeske, to find a way to bring the “political inheritance” of the site to bear on “contemporary contexts.”¹⁸ To use the heritage site in this way—to illuminate contemporary conditions—requires moving beyond bare preservation by framing the site with descriptive, critical, and conversational narratives.

From Forensics to Narrative

There is a large literature on how best to stage or frame a heritage site.¹⁹ Conn, for one, cautions against ambitious narratives that eclipse the artifacts or site, subordinating them to the narrative. This defeats what Conn calls the power of heritage

objects to, on their own, “convey knowledge, meaning, and understanding.”²⁰ Better, he suggests, to prioritize the heritage objects, allowing a narrative to emerge from looking at and reflecting on their strategic presentation. As art historian Alan Wallach put it, “A successful exhibition is not a book on the wall, a narrative with objects as illustrations, but a carefully orchestrated deployment of objects, images, and texts that gives viewers opportunities to look, to reflect, and to work out meanings.”²¹ In line with this, the curators at Eastern State present a light narrative touch, with minimal signage and an unobtrusive audio guide. As I will show, so do the art installations and the interpretation center rely on the material site to make their critical points.

The curatorial program begins with a descriptive, self-guided audio tour providing historical and contextual information—straightforward facts about the site, such as its construction details, and its history—to help the viewer better understand what they are looking at. Impartial and factual, a descriptive narrative may nevertheless shape someone’s impression of a site. The more a viewer knows, the more they may come to see and experience the site differently. A challenge for curators of dark heritage is to frame that heritage in such a way that elicits empathy. This is especially challenging for the curator of a prison museum, who must find a way to summon viewers’ empathy for not only what prisons stand for—presumably the preservation of law and social order—but also for those individuals formerly imprisoned inside.

Any carceral institution—which includes prisons and jails, prisoner-of-war and internment camps, gulags and so forth—is susceptible to abuses of power. However, within liberal democracies, state prisons are understood to incarcerate only those who have violated commonly agreed-upon laws. In fact, a justification for the practice of state punishment in liberal democracies is that it preserves rule of law. As political philosopher Thomas Scanlon argues, the threat of punishment for breaking the law not only fosters compliance with the law but also conveys the weightiness of the rule of law itself.²² Prisons are also associated with the protection of citizens from the harm of crime. Therefore, the visitor to a prison museum may enter with a predisposed idea of the site and what it represents, lacking, at first look, empathy for the incarcerated.

Sometimes simply informing visitors of the historic realities of life at a prison will provide a sobering perspective on the prison in question. Learning, for instance, that a person was incarcerated for breaking an outdated or unjust law will likely evoke some sympathy for the inmate. In 1881, Eric Hall was sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment at Eastern State for what was at the time considered a crime: a consensual, same-sex relationship between adults. Conveying knowledge about the criminalization and imprisonment of people for actions not considered transgressions today typically elicits outrage on behalf of the incarcerated, not a sense of justice served. Accordingly, Eastern State’s audio guide includes this sort of humanizing historical information.²³

Complicating matters, certain visitors to a site of dark heritage may search for sensational stories of infamy or titillation at the site, which can stifle viewer empathy. Unlike experiences of empathy, which involve seeing others through their own eyes, sensationalism is voyeuristic, with the viewer looking at others from the outside, as



FIG. 4. — Cindy Stockton Moore (US American, b. 1975). Installation view of *Other Absences*, 2014, ink wash portraits on mylar and ledger on pedestal. Photograph by Jaime Alvarez, 2014. Art © Cindy Stockton Moore. Image courtesy of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, PA.

props in a story for their own thrill and gratification. Curators of dark heritage may cater to these inclinations as a way of attracting visitors while at the same time looking for ways to temper sensationalism. The exhibitions at Eastern State, for example, showcase celebrity inmates Al Capone and Slick Willie Sutton but give more overall attention to the prison's majority, lesser-known inmates. It must also be said that Eastern State does not put incarcerated people currently serving prison sentences on display, as it once did in its early days when national and foreign delegations visited, eager to study the new prison system. The practice of putting living inmates on display for the edification of the viewing public, which is a dehumanizing and morally troubling practice, continues at certain prisons to this day.²⁴

Respectfully crafted, a biographical vignette such as the one describing Hall's time at Eastern State humanizes the imprisoned, inviting the visitor to imagine a person—however flawed—and to reflect on his or her path to imprisonment. Of course, vignettes are not always a defense of those who were historically imprisoned. Philadelphia-based artist Cindy Stockton Moore's installation *Other Absences* at Eastern State in 2014 featured portraits and biographical vignettes of fifty individuals killed by former inmates of the penitentiary (fig. 4). These vignettes are a reminder of the harm and suffering borne by the victims of crime. They, too, humanize the site. In either case, humanizing vignettes are an attempt to recognize the interests of all the stakeholders in the conversation on justice in the criminal legal system—including the injured, wrongdoers, and the public.

Although Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site does not advance any one theory of criminal justice over another, the site is historically associated with Quaker thought and its advocacy for prison reform. Contemporary Quaker thinkers, along with those of other pacifist Protestant orders, who are now aware of the harms of solitary confinement but still committed to prison reform, have more recently taken an interest in restorative justice.²⁵ Restorative justice is a public-minded, social model of criminal justice, carried out in forums where wrongdoers and the injured, or their proxies, deliberate the appropriate punishment for a crime. Like the penitentiary movement of the past, restorative justice prioritizes rehabilitation. However, the objective is no longer only to rehabilitate the individual lawbreaker for reentry into society but also to rehabilitate the community that has been damaged by the crime—or a society that has been damaged by practices such as mass incarceration—through dialogue on the appropriate response to the crime or societal problem. By contrast, the more familiar models of criminal justice, such as the deterrence and retributive models, are not primarily concerned with the rehabilitation of those who have committed crimes or the impacted community. The more familiar models aim to protect society, but not necessarily to restore it. Deterrence justifies punishment as a way to deter future crime, and retribution justifies punishment simply as just deserts for committing a crime.²⁶ Restoration, in addition to protection and justice, also aims to restore the well-being of individuals and communities in the aftermath of crime.

A central tenet of the restorative-justice movement is that even wrongdoers are stakeholders in society, and while they may be punished, they do not, as philosopher Jonathan Jacobs put it, forfeit “the regard and treatment distinctive of the civility of a liberal democracy.”²⁷ That being said, the wrongfully injured are also stakeholders in society. A criminal-justice system that does not recognize the resentment of the wrongfully injured would likewise erode that person’s dignity and standing in their community.²⁸ This is the point of Stockton Moore’s installation, *Other Absences*. Her work shows a small sampling of the total number of murder victims associated with the penitentiary but serves as a sufficient reminder that the wrongfully injured—the victims who may not even live to see the aftermath of a crime, and the families and communities who do—are indelibly present in the conversation on crime and punishment.

From Description to Interpretation

In the late Middle Ages (circa 1300–1500) in Europe, prisons were meant for short-term detention, and were maintained as rudimentary lockups where wrongdoers could be held until their trial or punishment, which was likely to be the pillory or a flogging or hanging.²⁹ At times lockups also held debtors or dissidents for longer periods, but these were not purpose-built prisons. They were large rooms without amenities housed within castles, gatehouses, or military complexes, in which unsupervised prisoners lived communally and in squalid conditions. Early in the modern era (circa 1500–1800),

purpose-built prisons began to appear, although they were still foul, chaotic places. English reformers such as John Howard (1726–90) and Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845) advocated for more habitable living conditions in prisons as well as for more humane forms of punishment. Eventually, the idea came about that imprisonment itself could be used as a form of legal punishment. In Britain, the 1779 Penitentiary Act sanctioned imprisonment as an alternative to traditional forms of punishment such as the pillory and floggings. Imprisonment seemed on the surface to be a more humane form of punishment, but nonetheless imposed a sufficiently heavy penalty, considering the ever-increasing value attached to individual liberty in the modern period. By the late modern period (circa 1800–1945) a new type of prison appeared, primarily in Europe and its colonies in the Americas: the penitentiary, which was purpose-built for the supervised detention of inmates in solitary cells—barren but habitable—as a form of punishment.

There were variations in the penitentiary systems. The system at Eastern State, known as the separate system, was rigorous in keeping inmates isolated and separate from each other, and it became a model for a number of other prisons that not only emulated the penitentiary’s system but also its distinctive radial plan, with long cellblocks arranged like spokes around a central supervisory hub (see fig. 1). All penitentiary systems were thought by reformers to convey two benefits. First, it was believed that the isolation of inmates from one another would prevent the spread of moral corruption among inmate populations. The earlier lockups, which housed all manner of offenders and lawbreakers in an unsupervised common room, were described in 1884 by American reformer Richard Vaux as “moral pest house[s].”³⁰ Similarly, French civil servants Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville, after visiting Eastern State in 1831, commended the new penitentiary systems for preventing the “association of the wicked” and thus averting the blight of criminality among prison populations.³¹ Second, cellular confinement would not merely punish and deter crime—it would also be an instrument to reform the individual criminal. Through solitude and contemplation, the wrongdoer could repent and be rehabilitated as a useful member of society. Solitary confinement, it was believed, would not merely contain the spread of criminality but cure it.

This was the ideal; the historical record of how the separate system performed in reality reveals disparities between theory and practice. A state government report on the alleged misconduct of Eastern State’s first warden, Samuel Wood, describes many irregularities at the prison, including inmates fraternizing with one another and with prison guests.³² Correspondingly, while Beaumont and Tocqueville find much to admire in the new penitentiary systems, their report also expresses misgivings. For one thing, the authors note that all that is required of an inmate to survive a penitentiary system is to display outward conformity to its penitential ideals, without necessarily taking them to heart, which would seem to foster hypocrisy as opposed to genuine penitence and reform.³³ After returning to France, Tocqueville went on to write *Democracy in America* (1835–40), in which he identifies the conditions necessary for democratic society to

flourish—conditions not found within the penitentiaries.³⁴ For example, a penitent's fixation on the self and isolation from others dulled their faculty for the associational life that Tocqueville thought central to democracy.³⁵ The question that the writings of Beaumont and Tocqueville raise is whether there is a better path to rehabilitation, one that kindles rather than extinguishes the character required for reentry into democratic society.

Eastern State now as a heritage site and museum poses a similar question. Is there a way to present the heritage not just as a historic site but as a living one that engages the public on present-day issues, particularly mass incarceration in the democratic state—which is a modern-day blight on democratic society itself?³⁶ It is increasingly apparent that, just as solitary confinement was found to be unsuited to the objective of rehabilitation, mass incarceration is proving to be unsuited to the objective of deterrence, instead weakening social structures that might be more effective in deterring crime. Accordingly, the descriptive path through the prison and grounds leads to an interpretation center in cellblock four, with a permanent interactive exhibition opened in 2016 titled *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration* (fig. 5).³⁷ The minimalist approach to signage throughout the heritage site is here set aside in favor of a comprehensive interactive display consisting of educational graphics and didactics for the viewer to navigate (figs. 6, 7). In the adjacent yard stands a massive bar graph constructed of plate steel titled *The Big Graph*, installed in 2014 and displaying statistics updatable to 2030 based on national and world rates of incarceration and policies on capital punishment (fig. 8). The east side of *The Big Graph* charts every nation's rate of incarceration, showing the United States with the highest. The south side presents the growth in US incarceration rates since 1900 and the marked increase since the 1970s, precipitated by new laws and longer prison sentences. The north side shows the racial breakdown of the US prison population in 1970 and today, pointing to the disparities in incarceration rates among different racial groups over time. Essentially, *The Big Graph* is a representation of the penal history and its outcomes, which the visitor has just absorbed.

Both the state prison and the public museum have a mission, broadly speaking, to inform individual and public thought in the service of citizenship and nation building.³⁸ As a penitentiary, the focus of Eastern State was on the penitentiary inmate. As a public museum, its focus has shifted to the viewing public, in which dialogue is no longer suppressed but now encouraged. As a penitentiary, Eastern State once relied on isolated contemplation to reform an inmate's thought and behavior before their release back into society. As a heritage site, Eastern State now promotes open dialogue on the realities of prison life and history so that societal thinking may be deepened and possibly reformed on justice in the criminal legal system.



FIG. 5. — Exhibition didactic titled “Mass Incarceration Isn’t Working,” part of the permanent exhibition *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, 2016–present. Photograph by Darryl Moran, 2016. Courtesy of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, PA.

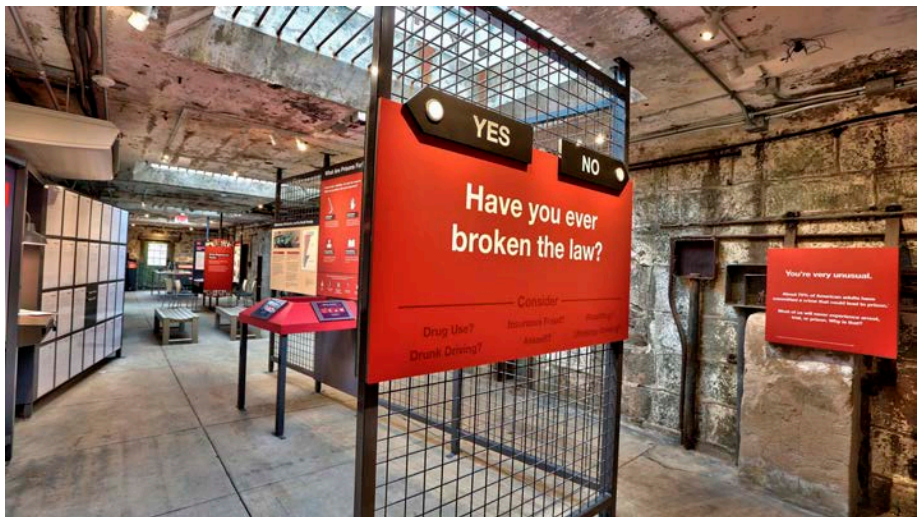


FIG. 6. — Exhibition didactic titled “Have you ever broken the law?,” part of the permanent exhibition *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, 2016–present. Photograph by Darryl Moran, 2016. Courtesy of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, PA.

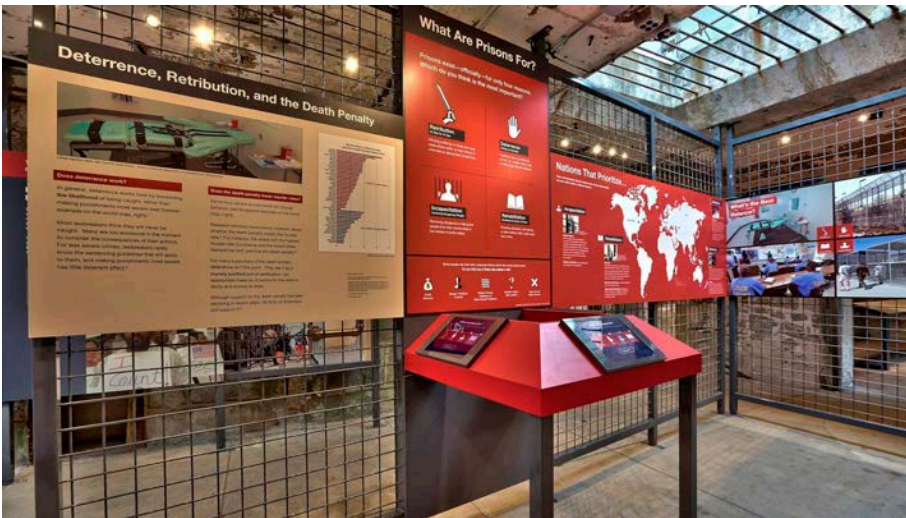


FIG. 7. — Exhibition didactic titled “What Are Prisons For?,” part of the permanent exhibition *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, 2016–present. Photograph by Interactive Mechanics, n.d. Courtesy of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, PA.



FIG. 8. — *The Big Graph* installed in the prison yard adjacent to cellblock 4, seen from the northeast, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, 2014–present. Powder-coated plate steel, 16 × 24 × 3 ft. Courtesy of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, PA.

The Conversational Frame

The viewing experience curated at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site prepares visitors for the public work they are asked to undertake when they arrive in the interpretation center. For example, in the exhibitions, fostering empathy is a first step toward informed and fair judgments on the issues arising from the site and its presentation. Empathy allows individuals to feel and understand what life is like for others, and this helps them to grasp the full picture of all those who are impacted by crime and punishment. Still, something more than empathy is required for participation in public affairs. It requires the informed and sympathetic viewer to be more than a bystander—to be instead a witness, someone who will report on what is observed, and who will say something about, in this case, the principles, rules, and practices of criminal justice.³⁹

Although the exhibition didactics do not communicate how the public ought to decide these affairs, they present mass incarceration as a troubling issue and carry on the conversation initiated by the reformers of the penitentiary movement on the need for prison reform. As Sara Jane Elk, past president of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, put it, rather than confirm settled viewpoints, *Prisons Today* urges dialogue, in the form of “civil and open interaction” across competing viewpoints.⁴⁰ Nor are the exhibition didactics rigged for certain outcomes; they merely lay the foundation for viewers to “think actively” and to arrive at their own informed and fair conclusions.⁴¹ For all that, the exhibition is not, strictly speaking, neutral. Eastern State balances impartiality and partiality by taking a stand on the issue of mass incarceration, identifying it as troubling, yet leaving it open to the public to decide what to make of it.

The Critical Frame

The temporary art installations at Eastern State are site-specific; they use the site itself to create art that invites reflection on what the site is about. This is distinct from other genres of art related to prisons and imprisonment. There is, by contrast, art raising awareness about issues related to incarceration created by artists working within the art world but not tied to a prison site, such as the mural *Free Zehra Doğan* (2018) on the Houston Bowery Wall in New York by street artist Banksy.⁴² There is also the genre of outsider prison art, created by prisoners but not always about prisons, and displayed within or beyond a prison site. *Capitalizing on Justice*, organized by the Urban Justice Center and exhibited in 2019 at the Gallatin Galleries at New York University, showcased work by artists incarcerated across the United States who used the limited materials available to them inside the prison sites to make their art.⁴³

The artists behind the installations at Eastern State, departing from these models, create site-specific pieces that reveal deeper truths about the historic prison. Although based in history and fact, the installations cannot be misconstrued as archival descriptions of the site. A video art installation by Luba Drozd titled *Institute of Corrections* (2016–17) makes use of actual instructional videos created by the

Pennsylvania Department of Corrections for its employees at correctional institutions.⁴⁴ The instructional videos cover a range of topics on the management of inmates, including the administrative tasks of admitting and releasing inmates and the handling of emergencies. Drozd reedits the footage to expose the subtext of the videos, namely “the system behind incarceration and the dialogue that goes on internally within the field of corrections itself.”⁴⁵ The reedited video is satirical and at times dark. At no point would a viewer confuse it for a real instructional video in use then or now. Compared to Eastern State’s informative but also creative and engaging audio guide, *The Voices of Eastern State*, which too incorporates historical material including testimonies from staff and past inmates as well as commentary from scholars who have studied the site, the art installation brings into the room uncomfortable truths through its artful transformation of the source material.

A model of how the art installations at Eastern State function to reveal underlying truths about the site is *Point—Counterpoint*, created in 2005 by architects Tricia Stuth and Ted Shelton, which formally intervenes with the penitentiary architecture.⁴⁶ The radial plan of Eastern State allowed staff in the central hub to see along the cellblock corridors. However, staff could not see inside each cell from the hub, and thus, inmates were not under constant surveillance as they might be in a panopticon. Conceived by English philosopher Jeremy Bentham in the late eighteenth century, the panopticon is an architectural plan for institutions with inmates, such as prisons, hospitals, or schools.⁴⁷ It is composed of a circular building with a watchtower at the center, from which a single person can observe all the inmates of the building without the individuals knowing whether or not they are being observed. Bentham hypothesized that the mere prospect of constant surveillance would lead inmates to self-regulate their behavior. While Eastern State is not a panopticon, strictly speaking, it was nonetheless a place of surveillance, both by guardians—recalling that the penitentiary system came about precisely to provide surveillance as a corrective to the unsupervised lockups that were thought to be moral pest houses—and by the inmates themselves, as they self-surveilled their actions and moral development as penitents. In *Point—Counterpoint*, the architects amplify and upend the surveillance features of Eastern State. The installation consists of four large mirrors placed at a forty-five-degree angle along the axis of cellblock ten (fig. 9). From the central hub, looking down the corridor of cellblock ten, the mirrors block the normally unobstructed view of the corridor. At the same time, the mirrors reflect the corridor into cells five, seven, twelve, and fourteen. The mirrors, then, allow the occupant of a cell, whose view was historically obstructed, to see along the corridor (fig. 10). As Stuth and Shelton sum it up: “Thus, the view of the guard is captured while the prisoners’ view is extended.”⁴⁸ The installation is an inversion of the lived realities in the prison. *Point—Counterpoint* does not describe how things really were at the site; rather, it reverses how they were, to reveal and question the surveillance dynamics built into the prison structure.

Generally speaking, the installations at Eastern State animate the site’s dark heritage without sensationalism. Consider, by contrast, the animating strategy at some

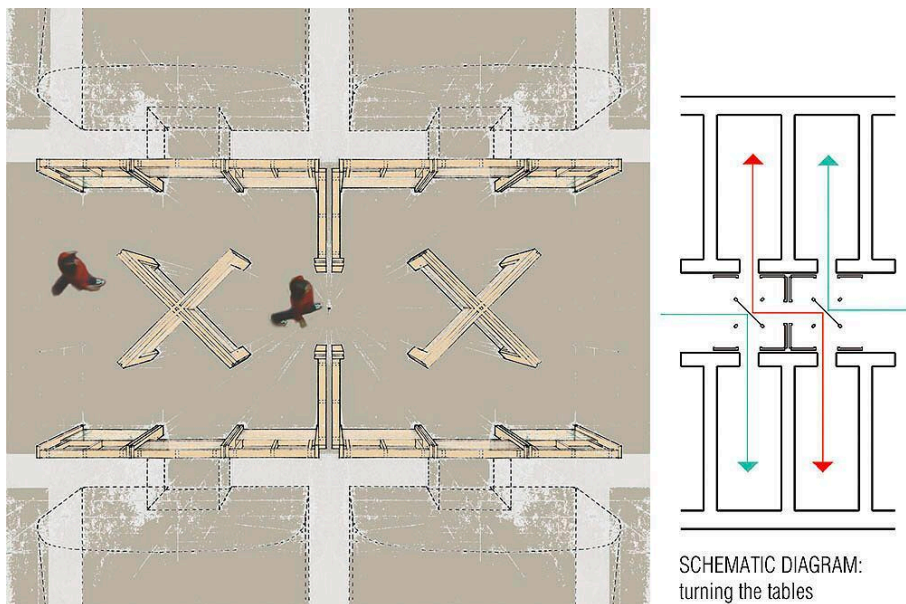


FIG. 9. — Ted Shelton (US American, b. 1969) and Tricia Stuth (US American, b. 1973). Installation plan, 2005, for *Point—Counterpoint* (2005). Courtesy of Ted Shelton and Tricia Stuth.

prison museums of staging mock trials and punishments. Criminology and criminal-justice scholars Kevin Walby and Justin Piché find that, instead of deepening the visitor’s grasp of crime and punishment, these mock events simply encourage visitors to photograph themselves at play during the event, trivializing and obfuscating the realities of prison life.⁴⁹ Art installations such as *Point—Counterpoint*, by contrast, do not distract from the site. In their site-specificity, they encourage visitors to look closely at the site in a forensic, rather than fictitious or imitative, way. In doing so, such installations reveal rather than obfuscate the realities of prison life.

Eastern State also hosts a mock event on Halloween, originally called Terror Behind the Walls, in which visitors could imagine themselves communing with uneasy prison ghosts. The event was discontinued in 2020 due to the pandemic and then reinstated in 2021 as Halloween Nights, running from the end of September to the beginning of November, featuring haunted houses, a flashlight tour, and beer gardens. The event is not part of any curatorial program or meant to be educational like the mock trials studied by Walby and Piché; it is an unapologetic use of the heritage site for entertainment. As German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche argued in a short treatise *The Use and Abuse of History for Life*, history should “serve life” and the present, rather than be pursued for its own sake.⁵⁰ We should feel free, therefore, to use heritage sites and artifacts in a way that aligns with contemporary interests. That said, Nietzsche thought of this service as ennobling life, a model example of which is the way that the art installations at Eastern State use the site to enlarge our understanding of the penitentiary and prison life. Halloween Nights, by contrast, is a glaringly voyeuristic event, at odds with the core curatorial programming. Be that as it may, the event fosters a



FIG. 10. — Ted Shelton (US American, b. 1969) and Tricia Stuth (US American, b. 1973). *View of Point—Counterpoint* (2005) from cell five, looking out to cellblock ten. Courtesy of Ted Shelton and Tricia Stuth. Photograph © Frank Laquinta / Halkin Photography.

visceral familiarity with the site. Granted, this familiarity is different from the attentive looking fostered by the curatorial programing as well as from the critical engagement that Taliaferro imagines is at the heart of an open museum, but in any case, the event is not presented as a curatorial program, and it is arguably valuable in its own way.

There is a difference between an open museum concerned with *res publica*—public life and affairs—and a publicly accessible space where people may gather for

various reasons, such as a museum, library, or shopping center. An open museum is not only a place where people may gather but particularly a place where people may gather as a public defined by a shared interest in and varying stances on a public issue. Not all museums are suited to be open museums in this sense. Even those referred to as museums for the public good can be places of entirely private contemplation and appreciation. As an example, public gardens, which may be accessible to the public and may attend to the interests and demands of their visitors, are not necessarily places where public affairs and duties are explored. Eastern State Penitentiary, given its inheritance, calls for this exploration. Indeed, the public is often conceived of as a body or sphere that checks the power of the state, not the least of which is state-sanctioned punishment. As political philosopher Jürgen Habermas envisioned it, the public sphere consists of people freely gathering to identify and deliberate public affairs precisely in order to influence political action.⁵¹ The particular genius of Eastern State Penitentiary is the way in which it brings material culture to bear on *res publica*. A direct encounter with the historic site suffuses and distinctively shapes the public conversation.

Thing Knowledge

The lack of consensus in heritage preservation on whether to prioritize the plan of a site or its materials rests on a conceptual distinction between the abstract *work* of art—an idea or plan with purpose and meaning—and the concrete art *object*—a specific set of materials given form at a particular place and time.⁵² The architectural plan of Eastern State Penitentiary can be distinguished from the materials used in its construction. While the penitentiary stone may be icy cold to touch, the radial plan as such cannot possess those physical qualities. Conversely, while the Gothic Revival entrance may be foreboding, the stone alone is not. The penitentiary as a work, then, possesses representational and expressive properties that its bare materials do not. An idealist would insist that it is the work that matters more than its materials. The materialist would disagree, stating that it is not simply the non-spatiotemporal work that we value but the concrete historical object(s). An abstract idea, it seems, is found in thought and only then instantiated in materials, whereas a concrete art object is produced with materials by one or more artists working in a given time and place.⁵³ By and large, conservators and curators lean toward materialism, as do their audiences, all drawn to the historical-material object. Even so, all are typically sympathetic to aspects of the idealist position. Admittedly, in the appreciation of heritage *objects*, viewers will also attend to the abstract features of the *work*. It is the penitentiary that they wish to see, not merely, in the worst-case scenario, an unstructured pile of rubble from which it was once constructed.

One reason for our captivation with the historical-material object is offered by English writer Jeanette Winterson, who explains her own love of a signed first edition of Virginia Woolf's essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929) as the psychometry of original editions.⁵⁴ Reading Woolf's purple-ink inscription, Winterson notes, "here she is and

here she was.”⁵⁵ It is the indexical presence of Woolf “in your hands, a book that was in their hands,” that gives the book “an extra power.”⁵⁶ Historical-material objects have indexical properties that abstract objects, such as penitentiary plans and literary works, do not. Audiences pick up on these indexical properties as they wander through the abandoned corridors and cells of Eastern State Penitentiary, sensing, for example, the oppressiveness of the prison, all of which deepen their sensitivity to the issues arising from prisons, such as the toll solitary confinement takes on a human.

For Winterson the attraction to art objects is visceral and emotional rather than strictly intellectual. To love a book as an object is to love it not for its biographical, archival, or even historical value but as, in Winterson’s words, a talisman or doorway, as a genie bottle, or as a living thing.⁵⁷ Heritage artifacts, then, have unique properties—indexical and visceral—that are not available to those who only read about these objects in books. This is not to diminish the value and pleasure of knowledge acquired from books, which will shape how a person sees and experiences a heritage artifact or site. The point is only that direct acquaintance with a heritage object is uniquely informative, and, in the case of Eastern State’s stabilized ruin, indispensable in that it renders the public conversation less abstract, balancing principles with lived realities.⁵⁸

While most scholars would agree that artifacts hold a wealth of empirical information to be uncovered by those who study these objects, or that they have unique properties (as Winterson argues), philosopher Davis Baird goes further to argue that artifacts may even hold knowledge.⁵⁹ However, knowledge is typically understood to be a mental object in the form of a belief held in the mind—specifically a *justified true belief*, defined as a belief that is justified with reason and evidence, and is also true—which artifacts patently do not have. Baird does not reject the traditional definition of knowledge but appends to it an additional kind of knowledge that can be embodied in physical objects. Whereas humans hold knowledge as a matter of justified true belief, artifacts hold “thing knowledge” as a matter of *true performance*.⁶⁰ Baird proposes that an artifact can be shown to be true or not in its functioning; for example, a “true wheel” is such when it “spins properly, dependably, regularly,” and, in this way, the well-balanced bicycle wheel successfully spinning on its axis is true in performing its rotations. Further, in “successfully accomplish[ing] a function” or in being true, the “artifact bears knowledge.”⁶¹

Baird is particularly interested in the knowledge that scientific instruments hold—although his argument is applicable to other kinds of artifacts with comparable functions. Not only are these artifacts instrumental to the creation of new knowledge in their users, they hold their own kind of thing knowledge “built into the reliable behavior of [the] artifact.”⁶² Baird’s novel materialist epistemology can be applied to the art installations at Eastern State. A prison is an instrument, if you will, with a function, whether the rehabilitation of criminals or the deterrence of crime or the exacting of retribution. The installations ask, What thing knowledge does Eastern State Penitentiary hold? The answer is found through testing the instrument. Just as the knowledge a wheel holds is found by spinning the wheel, the knowledge Eastern State

may hold is found by tinkering with and testing the workings of the site. As Baird summarizes, “If I want to understand or, more important, if I want to use or modify the knowledge an artifact bears, I am better off attending to the material thing itself.”⁶³

All this is perhaps not so novel to curators who have long focused on object-centered inquiry and knowledge acquisition. That said, philosopher Amie Thomasson cautions against viewing artifacts too narrowly as definitively functional objects, suggesting that we view them instead more broadly, as intentionally created objects with “some intended features,” including structural and sensory features, as well as how the object “is to be regarded” by audiences (receptive features), but “which may or may not include an intended function.”⁶⁴ Further, intended features are sometimes not enough to classify an artifact, and we also rely on public norms, or how an artifact will typically be treated irrespective of a creator’s intentions. All this allows for “finer-grained distinctions” in the classification of artifacts, enabling, for example, the grouping of all prisons into a kind even when they have different functions, or the grouping of decommissioned prisons like Eastern State, now “intended ‘for show,’” with their “working cousins.”⁶⁵ Thomasson adds that the receptive and normative features of artifacts highlight their public nature. A roadside sign, for example, that is recognized as a stop sign (receptive feature) and associated with established rules and expectations (normative features) illustrates how artifacts can embody social agreements and behavioral expectations beyond their physical properties and why they are of such interest to curators, historians, and social scientists. Artifacts are not “mere things with certain physical-functional capacities”; they are cultural, historical objects “infused with significance” for ways of human life.⁶⁶

The Open Museum

The depth of preparedness that a visit to Eastern State Penitentiary provides to the participant in the conversation on criminal justice is notable. The building and grounds memorialize the lived experiences of solitary confinement and provide material evidence for visitors to take into account in their judgments on issues of imprisonment and criminal justice. The audio guide frames and contextualizes the evidence. The art installations turn the evidence over, looking for truths about prison life and the separate system held by the building and grounds. This discovery process is then brought to bear on the rulings made in the interpretation center. Therefore, the conversation at Eastern State on criminal justice does not begin in the interpretation center. It starts by stepping onto the grounds and looking at the material remains of the penitentiary along a path through the site, finding its denouement in the interpretation center. Heritage sites, it seems, are integral to an open society. If the point of an open society is to commend critical reflection and dialogue on matters of value, then preparedness for such reflection and dialogue through direct encounters with heritage is indispensable.

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Notes

1. Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, mission statement, <https://www.easternstate.org/about-eastern-state>.
2. Eastern State, mission statement.
3. Charles Taliaferro, "The Open Museum and Its Enemies: An Essay in the Philosophy of Museums," *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements* 79 (2016): 39. See also Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* [1945], with a new introduction by Alan Ryan and an essay by E. H. Gombrich (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).
4. Charles Dickens, "Philadelphia, and Its Solitary Prison," in *American Notes for General Circulation* [1842] (London: Chapman & Hall, 1855), 68.
5. Svetlana Alpers, "The Museum as a Way of Seeing," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 27.
6. On the spectacle of prison architecture, see Michelle Brown, *The Culture of Punishment: Prison, Society and Spectacle* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).
7. Jeffrey Ian Ross, "Why and How Prison Museums/Tourism Contribute to the Normalization of the Carceral/Shadow Carceral State: The Primacy of Economic Realities," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Prison Tourism*, ed. Jacqueline Z. Wilson, Sarah Hodgkinson, Justin Piché, and Kevin Walby (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 960.
8. Philosopher Nelson Goodman made the argument that original materials hold valuable empirical information that is invariably lost in a replica. Nelson Goodman, "Art and Authenticity," chap. 3 in *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968). Viewers may not immediately perceive this information—for example, details about the artistic process or clues about the object's provenance—but it comes to light in the fullness of time, told through the original materials. Other scholars, however, are skeptical that what we actually value in a heritage object is the minutiae of the original materials as opposed to the original idea or meaning represented by the object, which can be evoked through a replica, in which case the replica is preferable to a deteriorated original. And so the disagreement goes.
9. Rem Koolhaas, "Preservation Is Overtaking Us," *Future Anterior* 1, no. 2 (2004): xiv, 1–3.
10. Koolhaas, "Preservation Is Overtaking Us," 1.
11. Koolhaas, "Preservation Is Overtaking Us," 1–2.
12. Robert Jan van Pelt in "Cash Crisis Threat to Auschwitz," debate, BBC News, 26 January 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7827534.stm>.
13. *Seeing Auschwitz*, New York and Paris, January–February 2020, <https://seeing-auschwitz.com/credits/>.
14. Ross, "Why and How Prison Museums/Tourism Contribute to the Normalization of the Carceral/Shadow Carceral State," 948.
15. Steven Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 18.
16. Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?*, 19.
17. On the fate of offensive monuments, see Sanford Levinson, *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998).
18. Annette Loeseke, "Transhistoricism: Using the Past to Critique the Present," in *The Contemporary Museum: Shaping Museums for the Global Now*, ed. Simon Knell (London: Routledge, 2018), 142.
19. See for example, Bruce W. Ferguson, "Exhibition Rhetorics: Material Speech and Utter Sense," in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996), 175–90.
20. Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?*, 7. See also Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Ivan Gaskell, Sara Schechner, Sarah Anne Carter, and Samantha van Gerbig, *Tangible Things: Making History through Objects* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
21. Alan Wallach, *Exhibiting Contradictions: Essays on the Art Museum in the United States* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998),

121, quoted in Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?*, 7.

22. Thomas M. Scanlon, "Punishment and the Rule of Law [1999]," in *The Difficulty of Tolerance: Essays in Political Philosophy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 223.

23. The original script for *Voices of Eastern State* was written by Sean Kelley in 2004. Kelley was program director and subsequently vice president and director of interpretation at Eastern State from 1995 to 2023. The script was narrated by actor Steve Buscemi and included oral histories from past wardens, guards, and prisoners as well as commentary from experts on the history of prison construction and administration. In 2019 the script was updated by Annie Anderson with new information regarding LGBTQ prisoners (see Peter Crimmins, "Eastern State Penitentiary Casts a Light on its LGBTQ History," *WHYY*, 11 May 2019, <https://why.org/articles/eastern-state-penitentiary-casts-a-light-on-its-lgbtq-history/>). Anderson was a researcher and subsequently a manager for research and public programming at Eastern State from 2011 to 2020. In 2021 the script was updated and revised by Kelley and rerecorded by Buscemi, with language more sensitive to the experience of the incarcerated, and with additional perspectives on the prison.

24. The practice ranges from prison awareness programs intended to deter those in at-risk populations from prison sentences to programs for entertainment such as the Angola Prison Rodeo in Louisiana and prison reality-television programs. For a survey of these practices, see Jeffrey Ian Ross, "Varieties of Prison Voyeurism: An Analytic/Interpretive Framework," *The Prison Journal* 95 (2015): 405–9. For the perspective of the objectified prisoner, see Craig W. J. Minogue, "Human Rights and Life as an Attraction in a Correctional Theme Park," *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons* 12 (2003): 44–57.

25. See, for example, Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*, rev. ed. (New York: Good Books, 2015).

26. Philosopher Erin Kelly argues that it is the prevalence of retributive thinking in contemporary criminal justice, and a diminished interest in rehabilitation, that have led to the current state of mass incarceration in parts of the world. Erin Kelly, "The Retributive Sentiments," in *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy and Science of Punishment*, ed. Farah Focquaert, Elizabeth Shaw, and Bruce N. Waller (New York: Routledge, 2020), 102. See also Erin Kelly, *The Limits of Blame: Rethinking Punishment and*

Responsibility (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

27. Jonathan Jacobs, "Resentment, Punitiveness, and Forgiveness: An Exploration of the Moral Psychology of Punishment," in *The Routledge Handbook of Criminal Justice Ethics*, ed. Jonathan Jacobs and Jonathan Jackson (London: Routledge, 2017), 73.

28. Jacobs, "Resentment, Punitiveness, and Forgiveness," 65. See also Scanlon, "Punishment and the Rule of Law," 234.

29. Norman B. Johnston, *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 7–16.

30. Richard Vaux, "The Pennsylvania Prison System," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 21 (1884): 651.

31. Gustave de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and Its Application in France*, trans. Francis Lieber (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1833), 21.

32. Thomas B. McElwee, *A Concise History of the Eastern State Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, Together with a Detailed Statement of the Proceedings of the Committee, Appointed by the Legislature Dec 6, 1834* (Philadelphia: Neall and Massey, 1835), cited in *Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Structures Report*, vol. 1, commissioned by the Eastern State Penitentiary Task Force and the City of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Marianna Thomas Architects, 1994), 74–75, <https://www.easternstate.org/sites/easternstate/files/inline-files/history-vol1.pdf>

33. Beaumont and Tocqueville, *On the Penitentiary System in the United States and Its Application in France*, 57–58.

34. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Peter Bradley, trans. Henry Reeves (New York: Knopf & Doubleday Publishing Group, 1994).

35. Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, esp. vol. 2, section 2, chaps. 2–8.

36. For a survey of the issues of mass incarceration, particularly as they arise in the democratic state, see Albert Dzur, Ian Loader and Richard Sparks, eds., *Democratic Theory and Mass Incarceration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

37. Nathan Griffiths (reporting and interactive), *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, virtual tour, The Associated Press, 6 May 2016, <https://interactives.ap.org/2016/prisons-today/>.

38. Sociologist Michael Welch notes that these institutions are often located within the same vicinity of a city plan. Michael Welch, *Escape to Prison: Penal Tourism and the Pull of Punishment* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 7–9. For example, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site is located about five blocks from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. On the citizen-building mission of the public museum, see also Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995); and David Carrier, *Museum Skepticism: A History of the Display of Art in Public Galleries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

39. Brown, *The Culture of Punishment*, 21.

40. Sara Jane Elk, "Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania," *Revue Histoire Pénitentiaire* 11 (2016), republished in *Criminocorpus*, 24 March 2017, <https://criminocorpus.hypotheses.org/26013>.

41. Jeremy Waldron, "It's All for Your Own Good," *New York Review of Books*, 9 October 2014, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2014/10/09/cass-sunstein-its-all-your-own-good/>. For a summary of visitor outcomes see Sean Kelley, "Beyond Neutrality," *History News* 72, no. 2 (2017): 23–27.

42. Andrew R. Chow, "New Banksy Mural in New York Protests Turkish Artist's Imprisonment," *New York Times*, 15 March 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/15/arts/design/banksy-mural-new-york-zehra-dogan.html>.

43. "Capitalizing on Justice: An Art Exhibit Featuring Incarcerated Artists," NYU Gallatin Galleries, 2019, <https://gallatin.nyu.edu/utilities/events/2019/03/capitalizing-on-justice-an-art-exhibit-featuring-incarcerated-a.html>.

44. "Luba Drozd, *Institute of Corrections*," Eastern State Penitentiary website, <https://www.easternstate.org/explore/artist-installations/luba-drozd-institute-corrections>.

45. Artist Statement, *Institute of Corrections*, website of Luba Drozd, <http://www.lubadrozd.com/instituteofcorrections>.

46. For images of the installation, see Tricia Stuth and Ted Shelton, "Point—Counterpoint: A Conversation with Haviland," *Journal of Architectural Education* 59 (2006), <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1531-314X.2006.00051.x>.

47. Jeremy Bentham, "Letter 1: The Idea of the Inspection Principle [1787]," in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, vol. 4, *Panopticon, Constitution, Colonies, Codification*, ed. John Bowring (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843), 40. A handful of

panopticons were built in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but not always in their pure form. The panopticon is better known as a model of institutional power and social control, particularly following Michel Foucault's analysis in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1975).

48. Stuth and Shelton, "Point—Counterpoint," 38.

49. Kevin Walby and Justin Piché, "Staged Authenticity in Penal History Sites Across Canada," *Tourist Studies* 15 (2015): 242.

50. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History* [1873], 2nd ed., trans. Adrian Collins (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957), 3. Nietzsche identified three approaches to history: the monumental, which looks to great persons and deeds in the past as either shining examples or cautionary tales for the present; the antiquarian, which preserves and reveres the stories and materials of the past and their continuity with the present; and the critical, which critiques past traditions in service of present interests (Nietzsche, *Use and Abuse*, 12, and sections 2 and 3). At Eastern State, the monumental approach can be found in the presentation of celebrity biographies; the antiquarian approach is found in preserving the material-historical identity of the site as well as in the descriptive narrative framing the site; and the critical approach is found in the art installations and the interactive exhibition in the interpretation center.

51. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 176.

52. Peter Lamarque, *Work and Object: Explorations in the Metaphysics of Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

53. For a fuller treatment of the distinction between abstract ideas and concrete materials in the ontology of artworks, see Amie Thomasson, "The Ontology of Art," in *The Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics*, ed. Peter Kivy (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 78–92.

54. Jeanette Winterson, "The Psychometry of Books," in *Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy and Effrontery* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), 119–32.

55. Winterson, "The Psychometry of Books," 131.

56. Winterson, "The Psychometry of Books," 132, 131. Psychologists George E. Newman and Paul Bloom would describe Winterson's attraction to first editions as symptomatic of the psychology

of contagion, the belief that subtle qualities can be transferred to an object by physical contact. The authors contend that this belief explains people's preference for original artworks delivered from the hand of the artist over replicas or forgeries. See George E. Newman and Paul Bloom, "Art and Authenticity: The Importance of Originals in Judgments of Value," *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 141 (2011): 558–69.

57. Winterson, "The Psychometry of Books," 119–20.

58. Parenthetically, the argument is for direct acquaintance with the heritage object as a heritage work, and not, say, as a haunted house or beer garden.

59. Davis Baird, *Thing Knowledge: A Philosophy of Scientific Instruments* (Berkeley:

University of California Press, 2004). For Goodman's argument on empirical information and objects, see this essay, note 8.

60. Baird, "Thing Knowledge," chap. 6 in *Thing Knowledge*.

61. Baird, *Thing Knowledge*, 122.

62. Baird, *Thing Knowledge*, 12.

63. Baird, *Thing Knowledge*, 148.

64. Amie L. Thomasson, "Public Artifacts, Intentions, and Norms," in *Artefact Kinds: Ontology and the Human-Made World*, ed. Maarten Franssen et al. (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International, 2014), 58, 60.

65. Thomasson, "Public Artifacts, Intentions, and Norms," 61.

66. Thomasson, "Public Artifacts, Intentions, and Norms," 73, 59.