Prison Notes: An Introductory Study of Inmate Marginalia

Cody Hunter

Thesis Prepared for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

December 2015

APPROVED:

Gabriel Cervantes, Thesis Advisor
Deborah Armintor, Committee Member
Kyle Jensen, Committee Member
Robert Upchurch, English Department Chair
Hunter, Cody. *Prison Notes: An Introductory Study of Inmate Marginalia*. Master of Arts (English Literature), December 2015, 90 pp., 2 tables, 11 figures, references, 45 titles.

This thesis introduces the study of inmate marginalia as a method for understanding inmates’ uses of texts in prison libraries and for understanding the motivations for these uses. Marginalia are the notes, drawings, underlining, and other markings left by readers in the texts with which they interact. I use the examples of the Talmudic projects to set a precedent for the integration of marginal discourses into the central discourse of society. Next, I discuss the arguments surrounding the use of texts in prison libraries, including an outline for an ideal study of inmate marginalia. Finally, I discuss the findings of my on-site research at four prison libraries in Washington State. After scanning evidence of marginalia from forty-eight texts, a relatively small sample, I divided the marginalia by gender of facility, genre of text, address of the marginalia, and type of marginalia and found statistically significant correlations (p < 0.05) between gender and genre, gender and address, gender and type, and genre and type. However, while these correlations are statistically weak and require further investigation, the statistically significant correlations indicate the potential for integrating inmate marginalia studies into the scholarly discussions regarding inmates’ interactions with texts in prison.
I cannot possibly express my gratitude to the United States prison library staff. Specifically, I thank Diane Walden for having faith in my project and for suggesting that I e-mail Laura Sherbo. The help I received from Diane and Laura is the reason that Chapter 4 of this thesis exists in its current form. Additionally, I thank Bob Fendler, Jose Mendoza, Anna Nash, and Jessica Aws for all of their help and for hosting my on-site studies. I would also like to thank Erin Boyington and Ladelle Williams for their encouragement and participation.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginalia, Prisons, and Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating the Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. WHO DEFINES WHAT MARGINS?: PRISON INMATES, THE TALMUD, AND ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. INMATE MARGINALIA: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE OF INMATES’ INTERACTIONS WITH READING MATERIALS IN PRISON LIBRARIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Theoretical Basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ideal Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. THE FINDINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Closer Look at Two Texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BIBLIOGRAPHY | 85 |
# LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table/Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Gender vs. Genre Percentages</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Gender vs. Romance/Sexual Emphasis Texts Percentages</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Sample Talmud Page</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Gender vs. Genre Distributions</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>Gender vs. Underlining, etc</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>Gender vs. Personal Notes</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>Genre vs. Underlining, etc</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>Gender vs. Address to Others</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7</td>
<td>Gender vs. Address to Author/Text</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8</td>
<td><em>Sisters</em> Declaration</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9</td>
<td><em>Sisters</em> Declaration pt. 2</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10</td>
<td><em>Dark Thirst</em> and Racial Notes</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11</td>
<td><em>Dark Thirst</em> and Sexual Markings</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Judah

I began this project shortly after a friend of mine, we’ll call him Judah, was released from federal prison. I met Judah in the second drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility I attended in 2007. My first rehab was an intensive outpatient program into which my parents registered me for both sessions, which it turns out, were exactly the same, only varying in clientele. Through the monotony, I began to understand why my parents dumped me off, day after day, at that run down office complex on the outskirts of Sacramento. As I chain smoked and ate my lunch alone on the back steps during my allotted half-hour break, I first bitterly thought about how my parents were simply trying to keep me out of the house for as long as possible because they didn’t want to deal with me. I assumed that they wanted me to be someone else’s problem for a while. However, as I cycled through the days, I wondered if their reasoning hadn’t been so superficial.

Earlier that year, I rejected all of my hobbies and commitments and dropped out of college in a moment that became the first culmination of my rapidly escalating addiction to methamphetamine. I cannot emphasize enough the rapidity of this change. Up until the quarter I left school: I was on the Dean’s list; I redshirted for the women’s Division 1 soccer team (eventually moving to intramural after not making the cut); I played trumpet in the Pep Band; I sang lead vocals in a newly formed metal band; I worked as the Public Relations officer for the campus Biodiesel Club; and I held down a volunteer position at the college radio station. I was just shy of straight-As, was highly involved in on-campus activities, and even strongly considered rushing Tau Beta Sigma, the marching band sorority, my sophomore year. From fall
2005 until winter break 2006, my life followed a strict schedule into which the incorporation of what little free time I had had to be planned well in advance. However, December 30th, 2006 marked my first use of methamphetamine and the day that deviation would begin to overtake routine and responsibility. Around April, I had a complete breakdown, caught on my hands and knees searching for something that wasn’t there on the floor of the college radio station floor after setting the automatic DJ to run almost an hour earlier. Sweating profusely and facing “the guy I always thought was cute,” as he politely asked why I was still there with an innocent, albeit concerned, expression, I shook with the impact of my feet hitting the first layer of my personal rock bottom. My mother appeared in the doorway shortly thereafter, she had been waiting downstairs in the car until I finished my final radio broadcast and had just woken up from a nap, and she scuttled me downstairs as I whined something about apologizing to the boy and still needing to copy CDs, without making eye contact or a forceful argument.

After moving back home with my parents, I was jobless and out of school with no discernable hobbies besides watching TV and being intoxicated. My average morning went something like this: I wake up between noon and three pm; I go to the kitchen and make myself a large White Russian; before heading out the front door I grab my bong and bag of pot; and finally I head to the hammock in the front yard to drink, smoke, lounge, and call around to make plans for the night. Most evenings a friend would stop by, sometimes with drugs, and we’d spend our nights getting intoxicated, writing poetry, and often rambling endlessly about nonsense on my trampoline in the yard. I had a routine, but I lacked discipline and that was the purpose of my all-day adventures in intensive outpatient care. My parents were reasserting their control through the meticulous mechanisms of discipline. Michel Foucault explains that this methodology of control:
Implies an uninterrupted, constant coercion, supervising the processes of the activity rather than its result and it is exercised according to a codification that partitions as closely as possible time, space, movement. These methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called “disciplines.” (137)

A third party, the staff at the rehab facility, carried out my parents’ control over me during the day and by night, my parents were the direct figures of authority. However, I did not transition back to subjection to the mechanisms of parental control and into a docile, utilizable body, but instead the transition I made was to begin a war of details.

Every detail that they used to maintain their disciplinary control over my “time, space, [and] movement,” whether it was to keep track of my cell phone and bank records, to get me to sign a release waiver for my discussions with my counselor, or to regularly check my pupils and urine for signs of drug use, once discovered, took only a few careful maneuvers to manipulate. I was able to create a facsimile of the process of recovery by tidying up each and every detail that would lead to the confirmation of my continued substance abuse. I won many battles and maintained a strong opposition, but in June 2007, my parents changed the theatre. This theatre, my second rehabilitation facility, imposed a much more rigorous, yet still manipulable, set of disciplinary mechanisms.

The second rehab facility, where I met Judah, was a residential facility where meetings, meal times, phone times, medication times, and recreational times were scheduled to the minute. After a somewhat individualized, or at least fluctuating, period of detox, we were moved into bunks of four with the implicit agreement to keep an eye on one another. We had regular
meetings with the facility’s medical director and functioned under the ever-present threat of random urine analyses. In an environment that lauds its nurturing physical, mental, and spiritual rehabilitative approaches, discipline and fear of reproach dictated my life while I resided at the rehabilitation facility.

While many of the residents at the facility were either court-ordered or dragged unwillingly there by parents, spouses, etc. there were a few like Judah who admitted themselves for one reason or another. Judah’s reason was a girl who was dropped off at the facility by her family. He figured that if they got clean together that maybe they could resolve their issues and fix their crumbling relationship. He was wrong and, with sobriety, they grew apart and he slowly began scheming again, making plans for what he would do when he was free again. However, he maintained the façade in the face of the staff and never caused a problem. He was a model resident in the eyes of the facility. Judah followed the program enough to create the appearance of progress, in other words, as I had with my parents, he manipulated the details monitored by the facility’s disciplinary control in order to create the illusion of docile-utilizable body while maintaining a clandestine operation of deviation and battle for control. With a clean record and a positive evaluation, Judah was released, with recommendations, to a sober living environment (SLE), where he stayed sober for no more than two weeks. He left the SLE and got a dingy hotel room in San Jose where three other former facility residents met him with an eight-ball (an eighth of an ounce) of methamphetamine. After a debaucherous week or so, and after the men had exhausted all the funds that they could get their hands upon, they dispersed to wherever it was they were still able to call home, and Judah returned to his grandparents’ house in a suburb of Sacramento a few weeks after I’d “graduated the program.” Having both, at least to an extent, subverted the mechanisms of disciplinary control and reunited, Judah and I spent
the majority of the rest of the summer together getting into trouble until, partially out of
desperation due to my refusal to stay sober, my parents packed up our lives and we moved to

Throughout our relationship, there was a consistent dynamic: I just wanted to get high,
but Judah was a businessperson. He kept me out of his business, either out of courtesy or
concern that I was a liability, so I never knew how deep he got and I didn’t want to, despite a
lingering curiosity. Not long after my family moved, I lost touch with Judah and he had fallen
out of contact with all of our mutual friends. I was no longer home, no longer able execute any
actions that might help me find him, so I resolved to try my best to move on in my new
surroundings, while holding on to the hope that he wasn’t dead. A couple of years later, I
received a text from a mutual friend that told me to Google Judah’s name. Shaking and
expecting the worst, I hung up the phone and opened my laptop. After hitting enter, I sat back
stunned at the headlines from the local and major northern California papers. Judah had risen to
second-in-command in a pharmaceutical fraud operation that had caught the attention of the
DEA. He had been arrested the year before. Half horrified and half relieved, I read the articles,
thankful that, for whatever reason, Judah had lost contact with me and had left me out of his
business schemes and that, at least, he was still alive. I realized then how close I had come to
being yet another nonviolent drug offender disciplined by the mechanisms of control wielded by
the United States penal system.

Over the next couple of years, while Judah was incarcerated, we regained tenuous contact
via letters, e-mail, and telephone calls. I was sober from methamphetamine, but still using drugs
and alcohol recreationally, while Judah had found religion and philosophy during his period of
sober incarceration. He spent most of his time reading the Bible, the Quran, Heidegger, Kant,
etc. and working as a library clerk and religious counselor to the other inmates. To this day, I cannot tell you whether his newfound interests were an authentic attempt at rehabilitation or, simply, a more elaborate manipulation than I’d witnessed in the rehabilitation facility years before. This ambiguity is not new, and, in fact, it haunts the studies of incarceration. Through all of the surveys, statistics, and observations collected since the inception of the prison system, none of them have been able to pin down the motivations of inmates. I had finally cleaned up my act enough to be admitted to graduate school when Judah was finally released from prison and out on parole after almost five years between county jails and a federal prison. I was still dwelling on the ambiguity of his religious and philosophical awakening when I enrolled in a scholarly writing course. In the class, we were entirely topically unrestricted and I used this opportunity to explore the ambiguity of Judah’s motivation that had haunted me since he revealed his newfound religious and philosophical convictions years before. I had recently learned about the field of marginalia studies, a division of reader-response studies, and I felt that there could be a way that I could merge these two interests. What better way to initiate a new method for developing an understanding of the motivations of the inmates during their terms of incarceration than to read the, more or less, uncensored notes that they leave in the texts with which they interact?

Marginalia, Prisons, and Power

I bought a used copy of Jack Black’s 1926 memoir, *You Can’t Win*, to replace a copy I’d given to a friend. *You Can’t Win* covers Black’s life as a career criminal and his many terms of incarceration. After his final release from prison, Black wrote essays and gave lectures advocating the continuation of the reformatory progress that he had witnessed in the American and Canadian prison systems.
When I received the book in the mail, I noticed a small handwritten note that read “p. 228” on the second page, below the paragraph describing the edition’s publisher, Nabat Books. The paragraph declares Nabat’s mission of “reprinting forgotten memoirs by various misfits, outsiders, and rebels,” along with an invigorating tirade for a re-envisioning of societal values as a whole. The publisher exclaims, from the perspective of the year 2000:

[T]his era of triumphal capitalism enshrines the most dreary human pathologies like greed and self-interest as good and natural; [Nabat proposes] that the ‘winners’ version of reality and history is deeply lame and soul-rotting stuff… Fortunately there is a mighty underground river of testimony from the disaffected, a large cache of hidden history, of public secrets overlooked by the oppressive conventional wisdom that Nabat books aims to tap into. (Black 3)

I flipped eagerly to page 228, excited for the mystery that was unfolding. A paragraph was identified by a handwritten bracket to its left. In this paragraph, Black contrasts the world of the 1920’s against the big cities in the earliest years of the century:

I’m not finding fault with these brave days of jungle music, synthetic liquor, and dimple-kneed maids, and anybody that thinks the world is going to the bowwows because of them ought to think back to San Francisco or any other big city of twenty years ago – when train conductors steered suckers against the bunko men; when coppers located ‘work’ for burglars and stalled for them while they worked… These things may exist now, but if they do, I don’t know where. I knew where they were then, and with plenty of money and leisure I did them all. (228)

Black’s message was that things were looking up in America’s big cities, at least so far as he could tell. The stark contrast between Black’s optimism and Nabat’s disgust at the turn of the
twenty-first century, which the reader before me had noticed while I had never before, was intriguing. Did the “greed and self-interest,” demonstrated in the examples from the past provided by Black, really decrease by the 1920s, or did it simply change forms by becoming more intricate and/or discrete? Or, as Nabat describes, did “greed and self-interest” become the norm? The previous reader left no explanatory footnote, no hint to help me understand his or her interpretation, and leaving me with well-intentioned inferences and the knowledge that these two passages were significant enough to be marked in ink for either the reader, or for future readers. I again flipped through the pages for more notes and found nothing except a single sentence on the back of the last blank page of the book. In the top left, in small, almost cursive handwriting reads, “He’s got a steamin highlighter and an ice-cold pen.” Is this a reference to Black’s work as an astute and steely critic of the criminal justice system? Or is it a lyric from a nerd-core song the annotator liked or was working on? Was he or she trying to direct the reading of future owners of the book, like the direction to turn to page 228? If so, toward what reading was he or she attempting to direct me? Whether the note pertains to the text or not (though I believe it does) I have gained some insight into how at least one reader interacted with the text through this anonymous marginalia, even though the evidence is minimal. It is important here to provide a background of marginalia studies and how this field will add to the work that has been and will be undertaken by prison scholars.

The study of marginalia has received mixed reviews by scholars for centuries. The idea that taking notes in books, though relatively accepted before 1820, has become overwhelmed by the notion that the practice is unacceptable, disrespectful, and even a violent violation (Jackson 74). This view is still held by many, but there are some scholars who have maintained interest in the notes left in books by readers. Though the focus of these scholars has often centered on the
notes left by established authors or prominent social figures, there is a precedence set for the study of marginalia left by anonymous or non-prominent readers. H.J. Jackson explains:

[A] case could be made for annotated books being all the more valuable when their owners are not eminent figures: a [Horatio] Nelson or [Graham] Greene wanting to tell his own version and correct the record could have commanded other means of doing it, but [the average reader] probably could not. And if we are serious about recovering the views of disenfranchised groups like servants and women and prisoners, we should be looking at books as well as at letters and diaries. (249)

Demonstrating the significance of recovering the histories of unknown populations, Jackson also highlights the significance of the means to communicate with capacity for these recoveries. Prominent figures naturally have outlets through which they can readily communicate with large numbers of people, while logically the resources for the study of non-prominent figures are relatively private forms of communication. However, it must be recognized that non-prominent inmates may also be presented with the opportunities afforded to prominent figures. Writers like Jack Abbot and George Jackson who became prominent literary figures in prison are afforded to this form of communication. Further, works like *Fourth City* bring together essays authored by non-prominent inmates who describe their experiences within the prison system. The works by these authors are written for public consumption, versus the private resources recommended by Jackson for understanding the history and experiences of inmates and other disenfranchised populations. I will discuss the issues of public and private communication regarding inmate marginalia in detail in Chapter 3. While there has yet to be a surge of marginalia studies focusing on disenfranchised groups, Janice Cavell, Mats Dahlström, and T.P. Connor have
individually conducted studies on the marginalia of less than eminent, or in Dahlström’s case anonymous, annotators.

Janice Cavell focuses on the marginalia of a WWI veteran, Dick McQuade, in the regimental history by Captain S. G. Bennett, entitled *The 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles, 1914-1919*. Cavell provides a comprehensive examination of McQuade’s marginal notes in Bennett’s work, which documented the story of McQuade’s particular regiment, and provides a history of McQuade’s military service. Through a comparison of the three accounts, the one provided by Bennett, the one in the margins, and McQuade’s actual service records (accompanied by letters from McQuade to loved ones during the war), Cavell draws conclusions regarding McQuade’s use of Bennett’s work and even McQuade’s potential motivations for marking the text through a psychoanalytic approach. Cavell explains that McQuade’s reading of his own regimental history by Bennett, which Cavell expects to be a common experience, “stands at one extreme of the shifting ‘dialectic between imposition and appropriation’” (216). As such, Cavell presents a possible reading of marginalia with an emphasis on psychoanalysis, which provides a potential approach for the study of inmate marginalia. Mats Dahlström’s article discusses “an art exhibition in Stockholm by Swedish artist Kajsa Dahlberg, entitled *A Room of One’s Own/A Thousand Libraries*. The exhibition included a printed edition of a quite peculiar book the artist had composed” (115). The exhibition Dahlström describes is a compilation composed of the marginalia that Dahlberg found in library copies of Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own*. Dahlberg inscribed all the marginalia she found in the library copies onto a single copy of the text, displaying the varied readings of the text alongside one another in order to compose a new version of the text. Though the investigation of the marginalia is secondary to Dahlberg, Dahlström highlights the rarity of studies that do investigate library book marginalia. Finally,
T.P. Connor’s study comes closest to answering Jackson’s call for the disenfranchised. Connor provides an in-depth examination of the life and historical context of John Squier, vicar of St Leonard’s Shoreditch, and subsequently investigates Squier’s marginalia from his personal library containing books that he annotated during his period of incarceration from 1642-1646. Squier was rounded up during the English Civil War with other “recalcitrant clergy and royalist sympathisers,” as a result of his “malignant” sermons (160). Connor’s examination is directed at Squier’s interpretation of and involvement in the war. However, though Squier did experience a period of incarceration, he “was not an important prisoner, and he had means; after a bleak start he was able to avoid the worst parts of the prison, living ‘to his very great Charge’ in… relative comfort” (161). Though not eminent, Squier is not representative the disenfranchised population whose marginalia has yet to be studied specifically, because, like Nelson and Greene, though to a lesser extent, Squier had access to the means by which he could disseminate his opinions through mainstream outlets. Regardless of Squier’s status, T.P. Connor introduces the archival approach to the study of inmate marginalia, which is an approach that I initially pursued. However, Connor’s article remains the only study of inmate marginalia and with the massive population of inmates incarcerated in the United States it is crucial to utilize all available methods that can aid in developing a better understanding of the prison system and the population it houses.

While stating the statistics regarding the explosion of prison populations may seem redundant by 2015, with the renewed scholarship in the area like Michelle Alexander’s prominent *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness,* I believe that these numbers cannot be stressed enough. The new generation of inmates has grown cataclysmically since Jack Black’s stints in the U.S. prison system. In 1940, the prison population reached 165,585 between state and federal institutions. By 2012 the population was
predicted to reach 1,571,013, a slight decline from 2006. The Department of Justice (DOJ) reported that “one in every 31 U.S. adults was in a prison or jail or on probation or parole at the end of” 2006. While the prison population has exploded, the progress of the educational and vocational programs within the institutions has not been able to keep up. World War II halted progress in the 1940s and prisons “[became] War support factories” (Gehring and Wright 6). Over the next four decades, educational and vocational programs expanded, though like many facets of life during the Reagan Eighties, correctional education was influenced by “[c]onservative trend[s]… under Federal influence and in most states… continuation of trends from the previous period” (ibid). The 1990s heralded a renewed interest in rehabilitation and the education of inmates as a means to lower recidivism rates. While I will discuss the controversy over the stated purpose of rehabilitation in Chapter 3, this ideological shift in the purpose of prisons brought forth a reinvigoration of scholarship pertaining to inmates, correctional facilities, prison libraries, educational programs, etc. These studies largely conclude with the same motivational ambiguity that I experienced in my attempts to understand Judah’s behavior and in my attempts to interpret the purpose of the marginalia in my copy of You Can’t Win. However, unlike the case of Judah into which I am limited to blind speculations, I am able to make educated guesses regarding the motivations behind the annotator in my copy of You Can’t Win. In other words, while I am unable to interpret Judah’s motivations based on what he tells me and, to an extent, his actions that I am able to observe, marginalia presents a unique insight into how and why readers interact with texts. William H. Sherman describes this unique insight, stating, “[i]nstead of seeing the study of marginalia as a branch of the history of reading, it might therefore be more appropriate to emphasize their use… in exploring the place of books in the lives of readers” (146). Further, Sherman explains that marginalia has the potential to reveal as
much about the readers’ lives as it reveals about the readers’ textual interactions. Thus, the study of inmate marginalia has the potential to reveal information about the lives of a massive population of incarcerated peoples as well as their interactions with texts in prison libraries. However, crucial to this study was an understanding of the inherent power dynamics that complicate the understanding the motivations of the inmates when interacting with texts, and I will return to *You Can’t Win* to develop this understanding.

While Black’s work is not widely known, it had an impact on William S. Burroughs, who wrote the Foreword for the 1988 edition. In the Foreword Burroughs explains:

I first read *You Can’t Win* in 1926, in an edition bound in red cardboard. Stultified and confined by middle-class St. Louis mores, I was fascinated by this glimpse of an underworld of seedy rooming houses, pool parlors, cat houses and opium dens, of bull pens and cat burglars and hobo jungles. I learned about the Johnson Family of good bums and thieves, with a code of conduct that made more sense to me than the arbitrary hypocritical rules that were taken for granted as being ‘right’ by my peers. (Black 11)

Burroughs goes on to explain that, years later, he could still quote from the book stating, “when you can remember a passage of prose after fifty years, it has to be good” (ibid). Burroughs’ fascination with *You Can’t Win* is reminiscent of Michel Foucault’s description of his experience reading, “a record of internment written at the very beginning of the eighteenth century,” in his essay, “Lives of Infamous Men” (157). Foucault explains that he could not decide whether he affected most by the “by the beauty of the Classical style, draped in a few sentences around characters that were plainly wretched, or by the excesses, the blend of dark stubbornness and rascality, of these lives whose disarray and relentless energy one senses beneath the stone-smooth words” (158). Foucault describes similar experiences of fascination and/or admiration to
those expressed by Burroughs, and while Burroughs only implies his position of power over Jack Black, as a member of the middle-class, Foucault emphasizes this dynamic. Foucault explains that the lives of those captured in legal documents, like the record of internment, only surface into the public discourse because of their contacts with power. Similarly, Jack Black’s memoir not only revolves around his encounters with power, but also came about because of such an encounter with Fremont Older who provided him with lodging and work, to whom the book is in part dedicated, and Judge Dunne who also helped to give him a fresh start with a light sentence. Jack Black states, “[w]hatever measure of reformation I have won is directly due to Fremont Older and Judge Dunne of the Superior Court” (261). Burroughs’ Foreword to Black’s memoir is yet another collision with power that brings further light to the work. However, as Foucault explains, while Burroughs could be affected by the work, he cannot know Black’s life outside of Black’s collisions with power and outside of his position of power in relation to Black.

Regarding the lives of those represented in the legal documents Foucault explored, he explains, “it is doubtless impossible to ever grasp them again in themselves, as they might have been ‘in a free state’; they can no longer be separated out from the declamations, the tactical biases, the obligatory lies that power games and power relations presuppose” (161). Thus, it is crucial to understand that, though I may be able to discern trends in inmate interactions with texts, I will not be able to understand these people’s lives beyond their collisions with power and, further, that my observations are shaped by presuppositions and constitute a further power collision. Additionally, there is an inherent conflict between my critiques of disciplinary techniques and my push toward understanding inmate motivations when interacting with texts in order to supplement the current educational studies taking place regarding the prison setting.
While the first portion of my Introduction demonstrates rebellions against disciplinary techniques and the manipulability of these techniques, I later reinforce the integration of inmate marginalia as a supplement to the disciplinary techniques of prison education. These two contradictory attitudes leave me with an ethical paradox that I am, at this point, unable to fully reconcile. The phrase “ethical paradox” requires unpacking. The ethical dimension is defined by my fundamental disagreement with many of the techniques of disciplinary powers of control and, more broadly, the potentially damaging implications of the inherently hierarchized systems of disciplinary power, like exploitation and oppression. This ethical position is the foundation of the paradox that my project presents. While I discuss the issues with disciplinary techniques and the perceived and real power structures that control the quotidian, I do not know the means or methods by which to resolve these issues. Thus, I shifted my attention to better understanding the issues of rebellion and manipulation through the disciplinary techniques of the prison education and library systems. While it is impossible, as Foucault explains, to observe the inmates on their own terms, external to the collisions with power that led to their incarceration, the study of inmate marginalia has the potential further illuminate these issues in order to better understand the collisions between inmates and power. This understanding can benefit the disciplinary techniques of the prison education and library systems, which leads me to my ethical paradox. My first instinct to reconcile this paradox is the reasoning that while these systems are branches of the central disciplinary control of the prison system at large, they provide the inmates with the best possible opportunities for inmates to develop an understanding of the power systems with which they collide. However, it would be naïve to accept this reasoning without remembering Foucault qualification, regarding literature specifically, that the “singular position of literature is only the effect of a certain system [dispositif] of power that traverses the
economy of discourses and strategies of truth in the West” (174). While the prison education and library systems are arguably more complex than effects of a certain system of power, instead functioning as extensions of this central system, the prison education and library systems are impossible to dissociate from the disciplinary power mechanized by the prison system. Further, Foucault explains that power would be “light” and “easy to dismantle no doubt, if all it did was to observe, spy, detect, prohibit, and punish; but it incites, provokes, produces” (172). The collisions with power maintain power as such; they are not merely consequences of the techniques of disciplinary power, but are inherent to their definition. Thus, the shape and extent of the prison system’s power is defined by and dependent upon instances of resistance. Thus, the functioning of the prison education and library systems may employ light power in their often-cited purposes of reducing recidivism rates, an argument I will address in Chapter 3 the maintenance of the power of the prison system itself is inextricable from the need for retaliations against this power. It is difficult then to assume that the prison system would intentionally provide the inmates with the means by which to “dismantle” the system itself. After all of this, I am still unable to reconcile the ethical paradox of attempting to dismantle and simultaneously reinforcing the control of the prison system. At their most basic level, inmate marginalia transgress the library policy against marking books, defining the extent of the power of the prison systems in this instance. In light of this fact, it is necessary to understand that these marginalia, like Foucault’s example of literature, are effects of the prison’s power system and are dissociable from the techniques of this system. However, Foucault’s qualifications do not discount the study of inmate marginalia. Keeping in mind Sherman’s claim that marginalia provides information regarding both the readers’ lives as well as their interactions with texts, I argue that we can better understand these factors while developing a more nuanced
understanding of the collisions between inmates and the power of the prison system, which, in turn define the parameters of one another.

Initiating the Study

Initiating the study of inmate marginalia was a daunting task. Apart from T.P. Connor’s article, there was no precedent set for the study of inmate marginalia specifically, and absolutely no framework developed for a larger-scale contemporary study. However, from previous studies of marginalia, I observed two general methods of approach: archival research and library book research. I began researching archives that contained the personal libraries of previously incarcerated writers while I worked through the logistics of conducting on-site prison library research, the details of which I cover in Chapter 3. From the archival research, I was planning to develop one or two case studies, so I began to research which writers had done prison time and in which archives their personal libraries were held. I started with Jack Black and found that his personal collection had been left with the Fremont Older estate, whose collection was held at UC Berkeley library. Contacting the library, I found that they had no books from Black, but only letters in correspondence with Older. Hitting a dead end, I decided to look up the Nelson Algren collection. Algren, author of *The Man with the Golden Arm*, spent a short period of time in jail, for a stolen typewriter. Leslie Fiedler, “contemptuously dubbed him ‘the bard of the stumblebum,’” because of his emphasis on the downtrodden and socially dubious members of society’s underground (“Nelson…”). I found that the collection is held in the rare books and manuscripts department at the Ohio State University Library; however, the library staff informed me that the University did not retain the complete collection, that it had been catalogued in the eighties, and that the process would be arduous. Mildly frustrated, and somehow realizing only at that moment that my research would likely incorporate travel, I focused my attention on
applying for travelling grants and figuring out how exactly to conduct my research in prison libraries.

Through my research on the practicalities of conducting this research and the debates surrounding prison libraries, I found Diane Walden. Walden is the General Library Services Coordinator and Institutional Library Development Coordinator for the State of Colorado through her involvement with the Prisoners’ Right to Read interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. I e-mailed her with the proposal to conduct my inmate marginalia study within the Colorado state prison system. From Diane I learned that the Colorado prison libraries are uniquely structured. Instead of a conventional library equipped with accessible bookshelves, the library patrons have access to binders from which they can choose what they would like to read and put in a request to the librarian who retrieves the material. The library building itself contains desks at which the inmates can read and study. Thus, the study of inmate marginalia relies on understanding the policies regarding inmates’ access to texts in prison, which I discuss further in Chapter 3. I asked Walden if the texts were often returned with marginalia and she said that marginalia are common, but that the prison library staff usually remove the marginalia, or “repair” the texts, biweekly. I would have to work with the prison librarians directly in order to gain access to the texts before they are repaired, while minimally affecting the libraries’ functions. Finally, Diane e-mailed me the Colorado DOC research proposal information, initiating my education in DOC bureaucracy.

The primary issue I had with the Colorado DOC research proposal was with the status of my need for Institutional Review Board approval. A research project requires IRB approval if it uses human subjects. Thus, the determining terms are “research” and “human subject.” The University of North Texas IRB defines “research” as “systematic investigation, including
research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge,” and “human subject” as “a living individual about whom an Investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual or (2) identifiable private information.”

Obviously, my project fell into the category of research, but less obvious was the use of human subjects. The way my project stood at the time, I planned to systematically investigate the marginalia left in texts by inmates, to acquire the collection and borrowing records, and to administer a survey to the prison librarians regarding library policy and borrowing trends, revealing no identifiable, private information. Thus, my research, though it involved intervention with the prison librarian, was not about any individual at the facility, but instead I was collecting data about reading trends and the library facility itself. While it seemed my project was exempt from the IRB process, the CDOC requires that all student research proposals must be approved by the university’s IRB before the research proposal will even be considered. In order to qualify for IRB approval, I was required to take the Social and Behavioral Research course through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Program (CITI). The course begins with the Belmont Report, published in the late 1970s, which is rooted in the Nuremberg Code that was “drafted as a set of standards for judging physicians and scientists who had conducted biomedical experiments on concentration camp prisoners.” It is interesting to note that the abuse of incarcerated persons initiated these standards, which subsequently became a general set of principles applying to research conducted on any human subject. This abuse is a manifestation of the dangerous implications of the disciplinary powers designed to control every quotidian aspect of these populations’ lives. The further peculiarity of the Nuremberg Code and subsequent Belmont Report is the shift from society united as a whole
against a prisoner and/or the prison population rallying for punishment, to societal support of an incarcerated population (Foucault 90). However, instead of diminishing or drastically revising the capacity of disciplinary power that enabled this abuse, the societal support of these populations manifested in further disciplinary regulations integrated into the system of control with the goal of preventing future abuse of these populations. Regardless, the main thrust of the Belmont Report and the CITI course was that research should be ethically conducted and should cause minimal risk to the individuals being researched. After completing the course, I submitted my proposal, the CITI certificate, and the prison librarian survey to the IRB for minimal review, as my research did not technically use human subjects in accordance with the IRB definitions. However, I was informed by the IRB office that I must remove the survey portion of my study in order to qualify for minimal review approval. Reluctantly, I obliged and my research was approved through the IRB. CDOC approval was my last hurdle.

The CDOC rejected my proposal. The letter I received from the Office of Planning and Analysis (OPA) stated, “[a]ccording to departmental policy, we do not leave books on our shelves with writing in them. Whenever possible, the book is repaired and returned to the shelf. Repair of the book consists of erasing the pencil marks or removing and replacing pages.” It was clear that I’d hit another dead end and that there was no potential for strategic revisions. Interpreting the OPA decision, it was clear that marginalia was exclusively viewed as damage to texts and not valuable research material. It was also clear that my next proposal must emphasize the significance of marginalia as data as opposed to mere destruction of prison property. At a loss as to which DOC to approach next, I contacted Doran Larson, Professor of English at Hamilton College and editor of Fourth City: Essays from the Prison in America published in
2014, who also teaches creative writing courses at the Attica Correctional Facility. He suggested the Oregon DOC, so I got back to work.

Instead of contacting the prison librarians first, this time I went straight to the ODOC website and attempted to look up their research division. I found nothing. Of note is the remarkably poor quality of many of the DOC webpages, with the exception of the Washington State DOC. Many are in desperate need of updated information (as some of the prison librarians listed on the pages are retired or, in some cases, dead) and they are incredibly difficult to navigate even when they include a search bar. Frustrated, I called the ODOC office manager who directed me to Sarah Lazzari, Chair of the ODOC Research Committee. Sarah forwarded me the proposal, informing me that the ODOC also requires IRB approval, but that I would not have to refile for the ODOC specifically. I decided to apply to Washington State as well in the hopes that I may be able conduct research at both DOCs without too many additional travel expenses. I found the WA DOC research proposal application immediately, though the application was more intensive than those of the ODOC and CDOC. While still working through the WA DOC application, I submitted the ODOC application to Sarah and crossed my fingers.

Again, my research proposal was rejected, however, this time it was not the result of DOC policies regarding text destruction and repair. The letter stated that the Research Committee was “unsure as to how” my study would “benefit the ODOC specifically,” concluding that the inconvenience caused by my use of the DOC resources would “outweigh its potential benefits.” Thus, before submitting the WA DOC proposal application, I would have to emphasize the benefits of my study with a realistic understanding of the costs for the WA DOC specifically. After the ODOC rejection, I decided to contact Diane Walden again to see if she had any further suggestions of DOCs to approach, since I was becoming wary of the process and
decided not to rely exclusively on my WA DOC application. However, Diane recommended that I contact Laura Sherbo at the WA DOC, stating that the Washington State prison libraries are unique because they are run by the Washington State Library system as opposed to the WA DOC. Additionally, Diane cited Laura as one of her heroes. Laura would quickly become a hero of mine as well.

I received the results of my WA DOC application the same day I began working with Laura. Instead of receiving a formal letter, Mike Evans, WA DOC Senior Research Manager, informed me via e-mail that my research proposal did not need approval by the research committee since I would have “no interaction with offenders” and because I “only need access to library materials that offenders use.” Mike informed me that all I needed to do was to contact the facilities at which I wanted to conduct my study and get permission from the respective superintendents. While researching the contact information for the prison superintendents and trying to nail down which prisons would be best for my study and the most economical for travel purposes, I heard back from Laura.

I decided to relay the information I had received from Mike to Laura before approaching the superintendents directly. Grateful for my hesitation, I heard back from Laura the next day explaining that she could arrange my prison visits and that there was no need to contact any other WA DOC staff, since she supervises the prison libraries and library staff. I e-mailed her a list of the four prison facilities that I’d chosen for my research: Airway Heights Corrections Center (AHCC), Coyote Ridge Corrections Center (CRCC), Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW), and the Monroe Corrections Complex (MCC). After investigating the WA DOC library system website, I chose these facilities because they house the largest number of inmates and have the largest library collections in the system, which I assessed, would provide the
highest potential for observing marginalia. Unfortunately, Laura informed me that MCC was understaffed, so she arranged for me to visit the Washington Corrections Center (WCC), not to be confused for WCCW, instead. I then contacted the librarians at each facility for policy information and to clarify the details on where we’d meet and how I’d gain access to the facilities. At each facility, I was instructed to dress in conservative business casual attire and I was to meet the prison librarian at the main entrance to the prison. Additionally, I requested approval for my research materials, which included two pencils, a notepad, and a handheld scanner. The scanner had no wireless capabilities and that recorded images when pressed firmly against a flat surface.\textsuperscript{11} All of the facilities aside from WCC approved the scanner, but all of the facilities approved my notepad and pencils. In under a month, I was in my car and on my way to Washington.

The following chapters form the theoretical basis for my study along with the culmination of the data I acquired while studying onsite at AHCC, CRCC, WCCW, and WCC. Chapter 2 discusses the integration of inmate marginalia into the core arguments regarding how inmates interact with texts in prison through the precedent set by the Talmudic projects. The Talmudic projects function as a precedent in the sense that they embody physical examples of the incorporation of marginal discourses into the central discourse that manifests, in this case, as an effect of the disciplinary power of Rabbinical scholars utilized to control all possible aspects of Jewish life. Chapter 3 introduces the argument regarding inmates’ access to and use of texts in prison. Additionally, I present the study of marginalia as, ideally, a valuable tool that will lend further precision to these arguments. Finally, in Chapter 4 I discuss the statistical results of my study, followed by an examination of several examples of marginalia, which are specifically helpful for interpreting a set of the statistical results.
CHAPTER 2
WHO DEFINES WHAT MARGINS?: PRISON INMATES, THE TALMUD, AND
ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES

The purpose of this section is to establish the study of inmate marginalia as essential to the understanding of the inmate population on its own terms. There is no precedence for this claim, specifically, however, the Talmud, “[t]he body of Jewish civil and ceremonial traditionary law” (“Talmud”), presents the case of integrating marginal discourses into the central text. I will discuss the details of the Talmudic projects at length later in this section, but in order to make a connection between the Talmud and inmate marginalia, I will first explain the parallel that I am drawing between the United States inmate population and the Jewish peoples.

Exile is a central theme in Jewish cultural identity formation. Israel J. Yuval explains, “[t]he common assumption is that the Jews were uprooted from their homeland because of an intentional policy of victorious Rome,” after their destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE (18). Michel Foucault discusses the history of policies of exile, positing that, “[i]f it is true that the leper gave rise to rituals of exclusion, which to a certain extent provided the model for and general for of the great confinement, then the plague gave rise to disciplinary projects” (Discipline 198). The use of disease rhetoric and the transition from policies of mass exclusion to individuated discipline are reminiscent of the shift that can be observed in Jewish history, from the mass exile in 70 CE to the identification, confinement, and mass-extermination of the Jewish peoples during the Holocaust. Andreas Musolff discusses Hitler’s use of disease rhetoric, explaining that in Mein Kampf Hitler constructs “the German nation as a (human) body that had to be cured from a deadly disease caused by Jewish parasites” (Musolff 21). With the use of disease rhetoric to justify the use of concentration camps, the medical experimentation and

24
observations Nazi doctors and scientists, and the bar codes assigned to each Jewish person in

custody of the Nazi power, it is easy to see the transition toward a more disciplined mode of
control over a marginalized group than the general expatriation of 70 CE. At this point, it may
seem that I have wandered off topic in my attempt to draw a connection between the United
States inmate population and the Jewish peoples, since the 70 CE exile and the Holocaust did not
result from individuals’ actions, but were instead based on racial, cultural, and religious
identifications. While, in general, differences in and causes of suffering between the two
populations are staggeringly skewed, the mechanisms that enabled these two events in Jewish
history, crucial to Jewish cultural identity formation, are linked to the evolution of the prison
system.

While Hitler’s plan was to annihilate the population of Jewish people, whom he rabidly
marginalized, the great confinement, resulting from the policy of exile, and the consequential
prison system heralded the mission of assimilating the marginalized groups (back) into the center
of generally accepted society. While the aim of the prison system has been tenuously, and at
times firmly, linked to the ideas of repentance and rehabilitation, the goal of prison, at its base, is
to construct beings to function efficiently according to the policies established by a centralized
power. Hitler constructed an image of the Jewish peoples as incapable of efficient work, instead
painting them as a force with the potential to inhibit, if not completely halt, the work of the
German people and thus calls for their excision and annihilation. Giorgio Agamben provides a
political explanation for the continued existence of Nazism and fascism, and by extension, the
success of Hitler’s disease rhetoric. Agamben explains that Nazism and fascism “transformed
the decision on bare life into the supreme political principle,” and that the continued existence of
these systems of power result from the implicit contradictions in the fact that “[t]oday politics
knows no value (and, consequently, no nonvalue) other than life” (13). Agamben defines “bare life,” as “the life of homo sacer (sacred man), who may be killed and yet not sacrificed” (ibid). Hitler’s disease rhetoric embodies the supreme assertion of political control over bare lives of the Jewish people and functions to construct a public view of the “nonvalue” of these lives and thus, establishes that these people can be killed and not sacrificed. Further, Agamben utilizes the rhetoric of crime and punishment, as well as national/cultural identity and biological rhetoric, to define the term exile and its parameters, explaining that “the life of the exile,” shares an indistinct border with “the life of homo sacer” (65). The definition of exile as punishment for a crime connects the criminal to the foreign and the biological and, thus, to the bare life than can be killed without being sacrificed. While the current state of the U.S. prison system is incomparable to the horrors of the Holocaust, I believe it is fair to argue that inmates are exiled, at least temporarily, from society and that the value of their lives is defined by the disciplinary systems of control with the power to make these definitions. At the very least, inmate populations are physically displaced, often tucked into facilities on the edge of small/miniscule towns. Further, the inmates experience expatriation even after their release experiencing extreme difficulties re-entering society and, in the case of those convicted of felonies, the inability to participate in the political decisions governing the United States and, thus, the disciplinary systems that define the value of their lives.13

While prison inmates, regardless of conviction, are subjected to similar experiences of exile in prison, the variations in their experiences are the result of their hierarchization and individuation. Within the prison system, inmates are hierarchized by offense, behavior, class, etc. and are individuated by identification number, case, and history. These mechanisms of control, though wielded with drastically different outcomes in mind (i.e. assimilation vs
annihilation), fall in line too clearly to ignore the connection. With the shifts from exile to confinement to individuated discipline, with a combination of all three ever-present, the Jewish experiences reflect the punitive/disciplinary trends toward the contemporary prison system in the United States. The interactions between centralized and marginal discourses of Jewish Rabbinical scholars in the Talmud is a widely recognized practice, though the Talmudic projects still rely on an exclusivity that I will describe later in this chapter. However, the marginalia of the inmates have yet to be examined and taken into account in the formulation of the central discourse of the disciplinary powers of the prison system. The issue that I attempt to address in this chapter is if and how the inmates collisions with power are present in the margins of the texts with which they interact in prison libraries. In this section, I argue that the Talmud sets the precedent for incorporating inmate marginalia into a dialogue with the social center, while recognizing, in the spirit of dialogue, that marginalia have the potential to reveal details of the inmates’ lives, but predominately function as evidence of collisions between inmates and power.

I will first introduce the discourses used to discuss inmate populations and how these discourses reveal the mechanisms of power that define these populations as outside the centralized population of civilized society. Next, I will introduce the Talmudic projects and their subsequent study, in terms of spatial definitions, identity definitions, and minority
vs. majority opinion representations in the central text, followed by a discussion of the role of communication in the wake of spiritual/spatial exile. From an understanding of the intrinsic need for communication for the establishment of self- and/or group identity and value, I will incorporate the study of marginalia, which I extend to the need for the study of inmate marginalia in order to understand how this group communicates during collisions with power. In short, the incorporative techniques of the Talmudic projects have made progress toward understanding how the center is defines and is defined by its margins. However, I argue that, rather than integrating the marginalized discourses into the definitions of the center, we must understand the communication of the marginalized through their collisions with the disciplinary system of control with the power to define them.

John Stuart Batchelder and J. Marvin Pippert’s conducted a study of inmate preferences regarding participation in work and/or education programs, with an emphasis on the potential benefits of access to college-level courses in prison.¹⁴ Batchelder and Pippert introduce the stakes of their study, explaining:

Inmate idleness is considered to be the main problem for administrators of prisons because of its negative effects on both prisoners and their keepers. It is destructive for the inmates because no progress is made toward rehabilitation; it is destructive for their keepers because it provides no contribution toward reducing the expense of running the facility. (269)

Decades since Foucault’s historiographies of institutional confinement, the discussion of prisons is still taking place through the conceptions of idleness, reform, and the economies of function. Batchelder and Pippert identify the lack of productivity, or idleness, by the inmates’ lack of reformation and by the cost/benefit analysis of the inmates’ lodging within the institution.
Though the contemporary shift from physical to technical labor is evidenced by contemporary scholars trending emphasis on education versus manual labor programs, these theories continue to maintain Foucault’s “political technology of the body,” through which “a body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body” (*The Foucault Reader* 173). Thus, while the understanding of “productive” has shifted from the demand for physical labor, for the purposes of “nation building” and work force supplementation in the wake of the abolition of slavery, the emphasis on education in contemporary study provides a partial solution for the continued need for productive bodies, both inside and outside the institutions. Further, looking forward to future research, Batchelder and Pippert conclude their study, stating that “a screening instrument could be developed to determine a system for identifying those who stand to gain from the limited slots in these programs and those who are wasting their time and the taxpayer’s money” (279). In order to understand the implications of Batchelder and Pippert’s vision for the future, it is necessary to understand that their “system,” determined by a “screening instrument,” literally and actively subjects bodies, and minds, to “productive” disciplines. Foucault explains:

> If economic exploitation separates the force and the product of labor, let us say that disciplinary coercion establishes in the body the constricting link between an increased aptitude and an increased domination. (*The Foucault Reader* 182).

Disciplinary power forges a connection between the body and mind, through the association of physical “work” with aptitude (i.e. intelligence and education), and solidifies the disciplinary reading of Batchelder and Pippert’s conclusion through a “political anatomy of detail,” that establishes that the body and mind must be defined and put to work (ibid 183). Thus, rather than searching for a solution that would benefit inmates, or more accurately, “those who stand to
gain” from a variety of limited-access institutional programs, the true emphasis of Batchelder and Pippert’s study is motivated by “the taxpayer’s money.” As such, their search is for a more efficient disciplinary approach for inmate control. However, the naturalized desire to define and productively use of the politicized body does not recognize the construction of the body through these definitions and proposed productivity.

The moment after which Foucault declares, “[d]iscipline is a political anatomy of detail,” he explains, in Marshal de Saxe’s words, that it is necessary to understand “stone-cutting,” in order to construct the “foundation,” or basis, from which any methodology is “built” (*The Foucault Reader* 183). The shift from the discourse of natural anatomy to structural language brings with it the ideological shift from economic to moral indoctrination, which is the subtext of Batchelder and Pippert’s naturalized economic rationalization of the body’s function. Foucault explains that the inherently moral conception of the soul:

> [I]s born… out of methods of punishment, supervision, and constraint. This real, noncorporal soul is not a substance; it is the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the reference of a certain type of knowledge, the machinery by which the power relations give rise to a possible corpus of knowledge, and knowledge extends and reinforces the effects of this power.” (*The Foucault Reader* 177).

Thus, the “noncorporal” understanding of the morally constructed soul as separate from the substantiality of the physical body, and is maintained by the functional body of the “machinery” of power, illustrating the need to understand the machinery by which the social body regulates the souls of those relegated to its exterior as the collective and noncorporal soul of society.

The disciplinary techniques of power that reinforce the notion of the systems of control as stable and unified bodies that are extricable from the noncorporal soul that it has constructed as
exterior to body and demonstrable of the morality of the body, function to mechanize the notion of an organic and definite boundary between the body and moralized soul. One of the primary functional issues with this disciplinary technique of power is that the social body believes “that it controls the margin of its volume and that it thinks its other… Its other: that which limits it, and from which it derives its essence, its definition, its production” (Derrida x). Illustrating the fiction of interiority versus exteriority of power, Jacques Derrida, in his essay “Tympan,” reinforces the need to denaturalize understanding the indefatigability of the assertion of the boundary between power and its “other.” Utilizing biological rhetoric, Derrida uses the anatomy of the ear to explain the discourse between power and its marginalized, which pose as an extension of the previously defined function of the social body and its noncorporeal soul. Derrida explains:

We know that the membrane of the tympanum, a thin and transparent partition separating the auditory canal from the middle ear (the cavity), is stretched obliquely… from above to below, from outside to inside, and from the back to the front. Therefore it is not perpendicular to the axis of the canal. One of the effects of this obliqueness is to increase the surface of impression and hence the capacity of vibration. (xiv)

From this metaphor, I argue that the tympanum, or the boundary between the social body and its exterior, is rendered opaque by the disciplinary techniques of power as the means by which it defines its other and attempts to minimize the risk that it may be dismantled by this other. Implicit in this definition is not the distance between two separable entities, the social body and its other, but the degree of the slant connecting the two. The mechanized power of the social body attempts to control the degree of the slant in order to minimize the impact of the vibration of the exterior on the social body of the interior, as well as the transparency of the connection
between the two. Following the logical steps of the ear, and its connection to the throat, Derrida considers the construction of phonetic and written language, through which he began the essay (i.e. discourse). My interest lies with written language, particularly the role of the margin to the text on the page, as a designedly blank space, lacking any impurity caused by its own presence. Derrida asks, “[w]here has the body of the text gone when the margin is no longer a secondary virginity but an inexhaustible reserve, the stereographic activity of an entirely other ear?” (xxiii). Though Derrida’s “entirely other ear” may never be fully realized, I believe that an examination of the Talmudic projects, and their consequent study, further elaborate the collision between the text on the page and its margins (i.e. between the center and the defined whole) and the role of the margin in its definition of the center.

Though much of the scholarly discussion on the Talmudic projects focuses on the content of the texts’ dialogues, the projects are impossible to discuss without understanding the significance of spatial distinctions. Gerd Korman discusses geographic distinctions in terms of the Jewish diaspora and the printings of the Talmud after the Holocaust. Korman explains that Jewish displacement after the Holocaust resulted in both the desire to leave the trauma of Europe behind and to form a Jewish state through which to reconstruct Jewish culture and identity (273). A key element of this reconstruction, necessary for the establishment of a Jewish state, was the publication of the Talmud. The Talmud is:

In the wide sense, [t]he body of Jewish civil and ceremonial traditionary law, consisting of the Mishnah… or binding precepts of the elders, additional to and developed from the Pentateuch, and the later Gemara… or commentary upon these, forming a complement, explanatory, illustrative, and discursive, to the Mishnah. (“Talmud”)
Korman details the large-scale Talmud publication projects initiated after WWII, stating, “[i]n post-war Europe complete sets [of the Talmud] were hard to find because in the previous ten years the Talmud had been hunted as of yore” relating the Nazis’ seizures and destructions of the texts to the historical burning of Talmudic texts by Christians (265). As Korman explains, the development of the Jewish state of Israel and the Talmudic publication projects were the primary methods used to reconstruct the Jewish peoples’ culture and identity after the Holocaust. Though Korman’s study focuses on the Holocaust, the themes of exile and the construction of spiritual and legal texts are common throughout historical studies of the creation of the Talmudic texts.

Aryeh Cohen directly links experiences of exile to physical and spiritual space and to the creation of the Talmud through close readings of the text. Cohen claims that the Talmud’s creation reflects the experiences of “doubt and absence,” created by exile, which he argues are inextricable from the text (33). Cohen explains that the absence from a physical Jewish space raised self-doubt in Rabbinical scholars, over their connection to God and their ability to speak to a decentered Jewish people, in the wake of the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., experiences of exile (32). Out of these experiences, Cohen argues that works like the Talmud “can be seen within an attempt to retell the basic story of the community, the narrative of origins, so that there is a coherent line of authority and a consistent sense of cause and effect in the world” (38). In other words, the attempt to create a semblance of community, tradition, and order out of absence and doubt marks the Talmudic tradition.

Judah D. Galinsky also makes the connection between exile and the Talmudic scholars, explaining that “personal exile and displacement” shape the religious and legal texts of the Jewish tradition, “since many of the well-known medieval… Talmudic works were authored by
individuals who had left their homes and countries to resettle elsewhere” (82). Thus, the connection between exile and the (re)construction of textual understandings of legal and religious order can be reasonably understood as the physical construction of a textual space, within which Judaic identity is shaped16 in times during which the Jewish people were displaced from a centralized physical and spiritual location.

Additionally, Gerard M. Phillips introduces his discussion of the ideological mechanisms of the Talmudic Academies, and the formation of the Babylonian Talmud, with an understanding of the displacement of the Jewish people. Phillips explains, “[t]he Talmudic Academies trace their origins back before the time of Ezra, but their real importance in Judaism began with the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.” (36). He argues that, in the wake of the destruction of the temple, the displaced Jewish scholars again focused their attention more closely on religious and ethical studies. Phillips states that “[t]he primary function of the Talmudic Academies was to discover halachah or the understanding of God’s desired path for men to take “for all of life’s problems and to expound it to the community” (36). The remainder of Phillips’ essay concerns the necessary assumption of “majority rule” in the determination of the discourse within the Talmud, but with the recognition of the “dignity of the individual man,” though still limited to the individual devoted to God (40). Thus, the only marginalized voices incorporated into the central discourse of the text adhere to the disciplinary power that designs the body of the text in the first place. However, Phillips highlights the significance of the minority opinion represented within the Talmudic discourses, explaining, “[m]inority views were recorded in the Talmud because the rabbis held that man was fallible, and later generations might decide that the minority view was actually the correct one and reverse the decision” (38). However, it is essential to keep in mind that the minority views represented in the Talmud are
still those of male rabbinical scholars. Though this is significant, my focus is on the Talmudic projects’ recognition of the potential value of the incorporation of marginal views into the body of the text as the essential feature that distinguishes the Jewish history of exile and the Talmudic projects as crucial to understanding the spatial and textual reconstruction of culture and identity after colliding with power. However, like physical space for the reconstruction of Jewish culture and identity created by the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state, the physical structure of the Talmudic text is fluid and requires further understanding.

Robert Gibbs, Devorah Jacobson, and James Diamond directly addresses the physical structure of the Talmud by conducting a close reading of the sixteenth chapter of the Shabbat tractate. Gibbs, Jacobson, and Diamond direct their essay toward an understanding of the sixteenth tractate Shabbat in the Babylonian Talmud, which actively discusses the empty space surrounding the text, and its relation to the center (21). The authors discuss the margin of the text as a “live metaphor,” through which:

[T]he presence of text, of meaning, in the center of the page is an image of the advantages of meaning and of power in the center of a society. And the margin’s emptiness is an image of the impotence of the marginalized, and of a society’s ability to ignore them. (ibid)

While Gerard M. Phillips discusses the inclusive aspects of the Talmud, he does not account for the “empty margin” surrounding the accepted opinions of the central text, regardless of the text’s representations of majority and minority discourses. Additionally, as I mentioned earlier, all of the opinions presented in the Talmud represent the discourses of male rabbinical scholars. While Gibbs, Jacobson, and Diamond do not address gender, the authors directly address the Talmud’s
empty margin in relation to the sixteenth chapter of the Shabbat tractate, which leads them to the conclusion that the empty space represents Christianity.

The sixteenth chapter of the Shabbat tractate demonstrates a conversation pertaining to the holiness of the Torah, its margins, and the holiness of the margins on their own terms. Though the conversation of the chapter’s Gemara centers its discussion on the Torah, the introductory Mishnah states that “[a]ll holy writings may be saved from a fire on the Sabbath… both those that are publicly read from and those that are not publicly read from. Even though they are written in all languages” (Gibbs, et al. 22). Thus, the Mishnah introduces the extension of the definition of “holy” beyond the Torah, and beyond Hebrew texts, while the conversation of the Gemara brings into question the holiness of the margins of these texts, emphasizing the Torah “[i]n order not to distract from the sermon/study” (ibid). The conversation begins with a question posed to the sages, and reiterated by person “A,” in the Gemara, “[a]re the margins… of the Torah scroll saved from a fire [on the Sabbath] or are they not saved from a fire” (ibid)? Gibbs et al. define the textuality of the margin stating that the “margin frames the text. Where the margin begins, the text stops… It makes the reader aware that the text is not everything” (ibid 25). The reader’s awareness that the text does not fill the whole page, is finite, and is thus incomplete, functions as a challenge to the immutability of a holy text. This challenge is furthered by the discussion of a degraded text, through which the definition of the margin continues to blur. Person B answers A, stating plainly that “[i]f in a worn out Torah scroll one can gather 85 letters… it is saved; if not, it is not saved” though the letters need not be sequential and, as such, meaningful, only gatherable. Person A poses another question, regarding the disintegration of the holy text, “[c]an one [not] conclude [it should be saved] from the margin itself” (ibid 22)? Gibbs et al. explain that at this point in the Gemara, “the text is harassed,
threatened. But it alone confers holiness. A margin without a text is only an empty scroll,” but the authors pose the question of “whether or not the text can be holy without the margin. Further, if margins are essential to a text’s holiness, must not holiness also reside in the necessary margin” (ibid 26)? In order to address the question of the margin’s holiness through its relation to the text, the Gemara shifts narrators and introduces the role of the heretic.

When the Gemara shifts narrators, the discourse introduces heretics in order to explain the role of the margin and its relationship to the text. The new narrators, persons C and D, attempt to finally resolve the question of whether or not the margin must be saved from the fire, explaining:

C1 Come and hear: The margins and the scrolls of heretics are not saved from a fire, but are burned in their place—they and the occurrences of the Divine Names in them.

D1 Doesn’t this mean the margins of the Torah scroll?!

C2 No, [it refers to] the margins of the scrolls of the heretics.

D2 Since the scrolls of heretics themselves are not saved, why say also the margins?

C3 It means that the scrolls of the heretics are like margins… (ibid 22)

The introduction of heretics makes Gibbs et al.’s reading of the margin, as representative of Christianity, feasible. Aside from the common Judaic definition of Christianity as heretical, Gibbs et al. confirm the role of Christianity as the margin through a Hebrew pun on evangelicalism within the Gemara\(^\text{17}\) and through the Gospels’ inclusion of at least “85 letters” of the Hebrew Scriptures. Reading Christianity as the margin of the text, while bearing in mind that the margin reminds the reader of the world outside of the text and the interdependence between the three, Gibbs et al. explain “Christianity, as margin, serves as a ‘buffer’ between holy Judaism and profane paganism. Christianity is not identical with paganism. It makes a positive limitation
of the empty space around a scroll. Thus Christianity has a holiness which paganism does not” (ibid 30). Gibbs et al. extend the definition of the margin as heretical to an understanding of the holiness of the Christian margin because of its interconnection with Judaism. Thus, the authors highlight the collision between the central text and its margins, through which they function to define one another. Gibbs et al. finally extend the definition of the margin further, beyond the religious discussion in the Gemara, to the “awareness of the constant move” to define an “Other” that can, in turn, be marginalized for social or political gains. The authors explain:

What is in the margins is not simply outside; rather it serves to isolate the text (Judaism) and exclude that which is truly outside (the pagans). We see how marginalizing is neither indifference nor outright exclusion. It is an appropriation, an instrumental use, of the other. (ibid 32)

In other words, the sixteenth chapter of the Shabbat tractate demonstrates the mechanism of marginalization, through the discourse of the Gemara, and its work to define the margin in terms of the text and its discussion of the margin as a space that also functions to define the center, highlights the collisions between the center and the margins. Though the Gemara and Gibbs et al. demonstrate the mechanisms of marginalization, the category of “truly outside” is not confronted and the definition of paganism remains beyond definition in both works. By the presence of the empty margins of the holy texts and of the Gibbs et al. essay itself, the reader is aware “that the text is not everything,” and is left to wonder how “pagan” is defined, and how it can exist as “truly outside” the text, while Christianity can still retain a definition of holiness.

From the definition provided by Gibbs et al., that the margin of the text functions as a buffer between the text and the undefinable surrounding world, how do we handle a text in which not only the text, but the page itself begins to wear away? How do we understand the encroachment
of the undefinable outside on the definable world of the interdependent text and its margin? It is in this realm where we must confront the definition of “pagan,” as that which goes beyond definition of the Judaic chapter, and the finite parameters of its accepted boundary of Christianity, in order to understand how the mechanisms of marginalization truly functions, and how the incommunicability, between the text and what’s outside, is constructed.

Gibbs et al. dismiss the pagans as beyond the knowable heretics, and as spatially and incommunicably distanced from the central text, and are undefined by the authors beyond the name “pagan” and their status as “truly outside,” the Jewish and gentile/heretical world. Gibbs et al. thereby render those defined as pagan as incommunicable to any space on the page, be it in the central text or the margin. Primo Levi confronts the notion of “incommunicability” in the context of the Holocaust. Levi explains, “I never liked the term incommunicability... first of all because it is a linguistic horror, and secondly for more personal reasons” (88). Though Gibbs et al. do not directly address the incommunicability between the pagans and page of the Talmud, their definition of paganism as “truly outside” and thus incommunicable requires further investigation in order to understand the potentially devastating implications of this definition.

Primo Levi, a Jewish Italian survivor of Auschwitz, explains the wide range of languages spoken within the camps and the danger of being deemed an incommunicable individual or group. Levi explains that:

It had been driven into the young Nazis’ heads that in the world there existed only one civilization, the German; all others, present or past, were acceptable only insofar as they contained some German elements. Thus, whoever did not understand or speak German was a barbarian by definition; if he insisted on expressing himself in his own language—
indeed, his nonlanguage—he must be beaten into silence and put back in his place… because he was not a *Mensch*, not a human being. (92)

The dehumanization of those deemed incommunicable is clearly the result of the central disciplinary techniques of the centralize Nazi power, defining its margins as those who “contained some German elements,” against the barbarians which dwell entirely outside of the center’s realm of definition beyond nomenclature. However, the disciplinary techniques of power utilized by the centralized Nazi party are not limited to the definitions of German *enough* and of “barbarians,” but also the enforcement of those positions. Levi demonstrates the complexity of this punitive mechanism, beyond the simplicity of beatings, to an in-depth understanding of how these defined “others” were put in “place.” Levi explains that Auschwitz’s “rudimentary ethic stipulated that a blow must in some way be justified, so as to facilitate the establishment of the transgression-punishment-repentance parabola,” however, Levi also relays the experiences of those who were unable to speak enough German to understand the mechanism, stating that the “ceremonial was useless… [Those who didn’t speak German] looked around them with bewildered eyes, like trapped animals and that is what they had in fact become” (Levi 96). Thus, Levi demonstrates that the disciplinary techniques of power, inflicted by the center on its defined exterior, function regardless of whether or not the individual or groups understand the processes and desired outcomes of the mechanisms. The margins submit and can be integrated back into the center, while those outside of the parameters of the page, who revert to defense mechanisms or rebel, can be suppressed by the central power. Levi further demonstrates the implications of incommunicability, beyond the individual, indicating its influence on larger populations. Levi explains,
[W]hoever has experienced exile, in any of its many forms, knows how much one suffers when [communication] is severed… in countries and epochs in which communication is impeded, soon all other liberties wither; discussion dies by inanition, ignorance of the opinion of others becomes rampant, imposed opinions triumph… Intolerance is inclined to censor, and censorship promotes ignorance of the arguments of others and thus intolerance itself: a rigid, vicious circle that is hard to break. (104)

Thus, we have circled back to the connection between spatial exile and the need to communicate in order to establish one’s individual and/or group identity. From the original construction of the Talmud, to the experience of individuals in the concentration camps, to the reprinting of the Talmud in the wake of the Holocaust, the construction of a stable and spatially locatable identity is reliant on the ability to communicate. However, communication in itself is not the key to aiding in the resolution of these crises, but it is communication that is reliant on being recognized as communicable by the powers that define and enforce the disciplinary controls to which the individuals and populations are subject. In order to slow the “vicious circle” of censorship impose on and ignorance of those outside of the acceptable margin, I will examine how those who lie “truly outside” the center and its margin “threaten” the boundaries defined by the center and thus the disciplinary techniques that maintain the central power’s control.

The margin of the text does not always remain empty, but is itself threatened by the world outside of the defined page. H.J. Jackson explains that marginalia, or the markings readers leave in the blank spaces of texts, “are untidy” and that:

Books are no longer designed to incorporate them… the handwritten note stands in glaring contrast to the printed text, and there is no note so neatly written as to be
unobtrusive. Therefore the value of the notes has somehow to outweigh the intrusion.

(Jackson 235)

As is apparent in the Gibbs, Jacobson, and Diamond essay, Levi’s description of those defined as *incommunicable* by the Nazis, and the discontinuation of the large-scale Talmudic projects working to incorporate the minority into the center, we can observe the contemporary trend discussed by Jackson. Jackson demonstrates that the holiness of the center, enforced by its defining margin, and once vivified by the opinions of those who intrude upon the margin from outside the defined system, has instead been revivified by the exclusion of these voices. Jackson presents a reason for this shift away from integration to demarcation claiming, “[a]uthority itself is at stake” (240). By Jackson’s reasoning, the discontinuation of the incorporation of outside opinions is for the sake of reifying the integrity of the authorial center by whose design the mechanisms of power and definition function, and lacking the absence, from physical space of authority, and doubt as elaborated by Cohen. However, as Phillips and Gibbs et al. demonstrate, the centrality of the text is defined as *authorial* through its relation to that which remains outside, either as an acceptable border, or something beyond the center’s definitions. Jackson emphasizes the significance of marginal contributions, explaining that the marginalia “are not perfectly transparent, they do not give us direct access to the complex motions of the reader’s mind, but they do provide glimpses and from the glimpses we may begin to build up a reasonably reliable reconstruction of the process itself” (257). Thus, Jackson explains that marginalia, while not entirely clear, provide insights into how those outside of the text respond to it, and how and why the reader generates these responses. Edgar Allan Poe furthers the idea of personal expression through marginalia in a collection titled *Marginalia* that assembles various essays and notes. In the first essay, originally published in the *Democratic Review* in November,
1844, Poe explains that in marginalia, “we talk only to ourselves; we therefore talk freshly—boldly—originally—with abandonment—without conceit” (2). With the originality of the discourse of the margin, as explained by Poe, the authority described by Jackson, is clearly threatened by the self-definition of those outside of the defined margin. Poe further explains, “As for the multitudinous opinion expressed in the subjoined farrago,”18 describing Marginalia:

As for my present assent to all, or dissent from any portion of it—as to the possibility of my having, in some instances, altered my mind—or as to the impossibility of my not having altered it often—these points upon which I say nothing, because upon these there can be nothing cleverly said. It may be as well to observe, however, that just as the goodness of your true pun is in the direct ratio of its intolerability, so is nonsense the essential sense of the Marginal Note. (Poe 4)

Poe’s describes Marginalia as a collection and marginalia as a practice as dependent upon his reading of the text, emphasizing his motivations behind the notes, while also emphasizing the possibility that all of the notes are essentially nonsensical. Poe’s Marginalia reflects the stated purpose of the Talmud, as a fluid artifact intended to be reinterpreted over the years during which it is studied. However, the opinions in the Talmud are limited to predominately male discourse and the text, the marginalia, and the blank spaces are fixed. Jackson and Poe, on the other hand, open the margin to all opinions, which have the potential to shift the definition of the center and thereby destabilize the disciplinary techniques of power of the system controlling the parameters of the text. However, Jackson explains her doubts that, “the cast-of-thousands approach would [likely not] work for this subject… Ideally, as it seems to me, the work would be done piecemeal in response to the desires and discoveries of the book users” (259). Jackson emphasizes the experiences and motivations of the readers as the ideal basis for the study of
marginalia. These marginalia are the communicated manifestations of the collisions between readers and the central power of the text on the page within the confines of the defined margin. Remembering Batchelder, J. Pippert, and other scholars of prison education studies, it is crucial to understand how the social center defines and positions the prison population as marginal or beyond the defined marginal space, (e.g. the cases of inmates deemed beyond rehabilitation) and the how the marginalized groups communicate during their collisions with power. While the first half of this understanding can be developed by researching the effects of the disciplinary techniques of the prison system, e.g. scholarly articles and policy statements, the second half can be developed through the continuous observation and interpretation of the inmates’ collisions with power in the margins of the texts with which they interact. Thus, rather than an indiscriminate, “cast-of-thousands approach,” narrowing the study to inmate marginalia is a step toward the piecemeal approach proposed by Jackson. The study of inmate marginalia reveals instances of inmate communication that result from collisions with the disciplinary techniques of the prison system, and has the potential to initiate the destabilization of the majority discourse that informs the disciplinary techniques of power and, at this point, is the only discourse with the capacity to define its margins.

In conclusion, though the Talmudic projects present the viability of incorporating minority opinions into the discourse of the majority, the project has yet to see its own fulfillment, especially considering the exclusion of the views of women and non-scholars. Even while Gibbs, Jacobson, and Diamond define the interdependence of the margin and the text, the authors still recognize an ultimate “other” to the text, which is beyond definition. However, Jackson and Poe discuss the significance of the intrusions that occupy the space external to texts’ the defined margins and how these communications reveal information regarding how and why readers
interact with texts. Following Primo Levi’s explanation that people and communities that have experienced exile, “in any of its many forms,” need to communicate, which requires that they be understood by the center that controls the disciplinary techniques that define and maintain the exile of these people and communities. Thus, by understanding the inmate population as an exiled people, within and beyond clear definition, we can introduce a vital discourse into the conversations pertaining to inmate populations. Inmate marginalia will lend valuable insights into how and why inmates communicate when they collide with the disciplinary techniques of the prison system’s power. I believe that this evidence will provide the basis for understanding how marginalized and exiled prison inmates communicate through collisions with the disciplinary techniques of power designed by the central control of the prison system, and how these communications have the ability to destabilize the system through the introduction of a voice connected to “an entirely [other-ized] ear.”
CHAPTER 3

INMATE MARGINALIA: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE OF INMATES’ INTERACTIONS WITH READING MATERIALS IN PRISON LIBRARIES

The Theoretical Basis

To a large extent, the field of marginalia studies is occupied with what we can learn about identified, acclaimed authors in their role as readers. What about the marginalia of ‘ordinary’ readers? There is in fact such a subsection of marginalia studies, albeit small.¹⁰

-Mats Dahlström

I propose a study that examines a group that Dahlström may not have had in mind in his specification of the ‘ordinary’ reader. I believe that it is valuable to investigate how prison inmates interact with texts by studying their marginalia, which will add to the already expansive scholarship on prison education.²¹ In order to accomplish this goal, I will first outline the current scholarship pertaining to marginalia, particularly studies dealing with the marginalia left by non-famous and/or anonymous readers. Next, it will be initially essential to explain the purpose of prison libraries. Pivotal to the conversation about prison libraries is the “right to read” debate, which I will discuss in the following paragraph. I will finally examine studies pertaining to the current state of prison education and the prominent methods used to conduct these studies. The study of inmate marginalia²² aid in developing an understanding of how books are used in prison libraries and how these textual interactions may further enhance the study of the educational and vocational programs offered to the inmates.

Marginalia have made their way into manuscripts and books since the seventeenth century. From editors, authors, and readers marking up manuscripts in the seventeenth century...
to annotations in the mass-market paperbacks of today, marginalia have held a presence within the literature in circulation and within private collections. Jackson provides a comprehensive examination of the history and form of marginalia as well as the attitudes towards them and the progress of their study. Jackson explains that the form of marginalia has changed little since the seventeenth century, while the reception of margin notes has shifted from tolerated to a form of desecration (74). The American Library Association has no officially stated policy on readers taking notes in library books, except regarding the vandalism and theft of rare books and those in the special collections. As Jackson demonstrates, the stance against marginalia is based on the policy of individual libraries. Jackson provides several examples of books clearly labeled against the practice, ranging from severe to snarky (236). The practical motivator for preventing readers from writing in books boils down primarily to the potential for the added notes to hinder future readers’ readings. However, the need to restrict readers’ interactions with texts takes on higher stakes when dealing with the books circulating in prison libraries.

In Joseph Bouchard and Amanda Winnicki’s study mentioned earlier, the authors provide a preventative approach to the reduction of crime committed within prison libraries. While I don’t endorse the dehumanizing language used by the authors, at times, when comparing the inmates’ behaviors to electrical currents and squirrels, the essay is crucial to understanding how books may be misused in prison libraries and the recourses that librarians may take in order to enforce prison library policies. Bouchard and Winnicki are primarily focused on objects that may be smuggled between the covers, in the book jacket, behind the books, and codes that may be formed by arranging the books themselves on the bookshelves. However, they also briefly mention the use of marginal notes to convey messages to other inmates (52). The authors provide an example in which “[t]he librarian found a note that instructed another prisoner to
‘load the book with squares.’ That means, the prisoner hoped that his cohort would smuggle some tobacco to him” (53). Of course, there are clear safety and disciplinary reasons for preventing inmates from writing in prison library texts. However, what can be learned through my study is how the inmates are actually interacting with the texts, rather than imposing generalized and restrictive mechanisms.

While policies may be in place designed to prevent inmates from adding marginalia to the books, Bouchard and Winnicki explain that “[s]taff are expected to search [the] books. Due to the amazing number of books, some librarians will only have time to search the books with pocket parts, and those destined for known or likely smugglers” (53). Thus margin notes may slip through the cracks due to the sheer inability of the librarian to examine each page of the returned books before they are re-shelved, which lends possibility to witnessing inmate interactions within texts through marginalia. Regardless of whether the marginalia is or is not observed by the prison library staff, the circulated books undergo a period of repair, during which marginalia may be observed before being removed from the texts. Thus, I argue that the study of inmate marginalia is not only significant in its insight into the ways in which inmates interact with texts, but easily achieved while working within the processes of the prison institutions.

Inmates’ interactions with texts have been a source of scholarship wherein the primary focus has been on autobiographies and other works produced by inmates who became or already were literary figures and/or political prisoners. This research can offer the following insights: though not all autobiographies, personal letters, etc. clearly reference the books read by the author they often, even if only thematically or by subtle reference, give insights into which texts the author interacted with and how the texts were interpreted. However, Jackson demonstrates
the issues with autobiographies that can be resolved by studying marginalia. Jackson explains, “autobiographies, written from a retrospective viewpoint, have a vested interest in presenting a positive and consistent image of the subject. At least marginalia represent the actual responses of actual readers, and presumably they are no more compromised than autobiographies” (253). While Jackson presents her issues with relying on autobiographies to track textual interactions, she concedes that “[t]he physical nature of the book and the history of the circulation of books ensure that there always is a third party tacitly present at the writing of marginalia” (95). Thus, any posturing by the author of the autobiography, may potentially occur within the margins as well, though due to the spontaneous and often unedited nature of marginalia, the study of these notes will lend insights that are unavailable when studying autobiographies and other written materials.

The inclusion of marginalia studies into already established techniques including autobiographical studies, surveys, and statistical analysis, will provide a better perspective of how the inmates use and interpret texts. However, it deserves mention that the ambiguity of marginalia referred to by Jackson is only furthered by William H. Sherman. Sherman discusses the increasing interest in marginalia, which is functioning in opposition to the most recently prevailing view that any markings in books lower their value. With this slow shift in trends, Sherman elaborates upon the uses of marginalia in contemporary studies. Beyond the understanding that marginalia lend valuable insight into reader-response studies of texts, he explains that “marginalia do not simply provide evidence of reading: the evidence they provide is rarely simple, raising as many questions about reading as they answer and, moreover, often testifying to uses that take us well beyond what is normally understood as ‘reading’” (146). Sherman then introduces the question of how people interact with texts in ways that may be
unexpected, stating “[a]fter all, a significant proportion of the notes in books have more to do with the life of the reader than the content of the text” (147). He concludes the essay with a warning about the inherent ambiguity in marginalia, regardless of whether or not its “language” has been learned, stating that, as with any reader-response study, the interpretations of the marginalia are not restricted to a fixed meaning, but are fluid and subject to as many interpretations as there are readers.  

Sherman’s examination of the value and possibilities for marginalia studies is crucial to the investigation of prison marginalia, explaining that not all the notes will be directly associated to the text. Similar to Jackson’s examination of the margin notes left by readers struggling with literacy, Sherman extends the idea of extra textual interaction with texts to the population of readers as a whole. The text may function to send the inmate’s mind to an event in his own life that may or may not be tied to the content of the work, but that he feels compelled to note at a particular moment. This glimpse into the relatively private thoughts of inmates through marginalia, once interpreted, has the potential to lend insight into how inmates interact with texts in ways that may never come to light with other methods of study. In order for this study to be possible, it is crucial to understand the history of prison libraries and the policies defining inmates’ access to texts in prison.

A 1974 survey conducted by Melvin T. Axilbund, reports that eighty-three percent of state prisons had a library. As recent as 2007, the National Center for Education Statistics state that “[m]any prisons have a library that is available to inmates,” and that “75 percent of inmates reported that they used the prison library at least once or twice a year” (Greenburg, Danleavy, Kutner, and White 62). Though this statistic seems promising, Fred R. Hartz explains, “[h]istorically, prison libraries and training for correctional librarianship have, with few notable

50
exceptions, been largely ignored by librarians, library schools, and professional library organizations” (258). The primary argument posed by Hartz is that before any reform can take place within the prison libraries and education systems, the training of and incentive for prison librarians needs drastic improvement. Joseph Bouchard and Amanda Winnicki explain that “[l]ibrary staff who do not employ serious contraband control are more likely to be hurt, fired, disciplined, professionally embarrassed, or killed than are vigilant, proactive, contraband-seeking staff,” which strikingly demonstrates the need for adequate training for prison librarians and other prison library staff (Bouchard 51).

Though the safety of the prison staff is a pressing issue, Richard M. Barone presents the most pertinent issue to my study in terms of the discussion of prison libraries. Barone states, “[t]here have been plenty of articles—too many, it seems sometimes—that describe prison libraries, say they are useful as rehabilitative tools, and stop there” (294). Simply labeling prison libraries as “rehabilitative tools” diminishes their value to the institution if the rehabilitation results do not meet the expectations of the administration. Barone instead argues that prison libraries are important, not for their contribution toward the rehabilitation of the inmate, but because the inmate has the “right to read.” Barone briefly mentions the case of Sostre v. Otis, through which Martin Sostre challenged the Wallkill Correctional facility’s policies of censoring texts ordered by the inmates, i.e. magazine subscriptions and books, and was tried in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York in 1971. Barone explains, “the court decided that an inmate’s right to read the literature of his choice is no less significant than the right to be free from arbitrary and unwarranted punishment” (296). Through this decision the court established a committee to prevent excessive censorship while ensuring that the materials mailed to the inmates “not be obscene and not tend to excite activities posing a threat to prison
discipline” (Sostre v. Otis). This case demonstrates an instance in which the marginal voice of an inmate is incorporated into the disciplinary techniques of the power of the prison system, while being actively blocked from destabilizing the system. Though this court case was settled and Barone made this argument over forty years ago, the inmates’ right to read is still a contested concept.

In 2010 the American Library Association (ALA) adopted the policy of the “Prisoners’ Right to Read” as the standard that disallows the censorship of materials from prison libraries, unless the materials directly threaten the safety of the institution’s staff and inmates. Though the issue seems like it should be cut and dried, not all institutions adhere to ALA standards and the Supreme Court has been sending mixed messages through cases regarding the inmates’ rights to intellectual freedom. Colin Dayan discusses these topics in-depth, pointing out the many incongruities in policy application in correctional institutions. Dayan’s study discusses the case of Beard v. Banks, in which Ronald Banks argued that the censorship policies of Pennsylvania Department of Corrections prohibiting inmate access to certain forms of texts and personal effects violate the inmates’ First Amendment Rights. On June 28th, 2006, ruled against Banks and maintaining the position “that prisoners in the highest-security unit of Pennsylvania’s State Correctional Institution in Pittsburgh do not have a First Amendment right to newspapers, magazines, and personal photographs” (25). The court’s justification for the ruling was to prevent the inmates from making the reading materials into weapons and because the deprivation of these items “serves the goal of rehabilitation,” arguments that Dayan dismiss for faulty reasoning. Dayan compares this court decision to the case of Hamdan v. Rumsfeld, which occurred the following day, regarding prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay. In this case the Supreme Court “recognized that international law requires a ‘regularly constituted court
affording all the judicial guarantees that are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples,’ and forbids treatment of prisoners that is ‘inhumane,’ ‘humiliating,’ ‘degrading’” (25). Thus, the decision of the Supreme Court in the decision of Hamdan v. Rumsfeld aligns with Barone’s outcry against “arbitrary and unwarranted punishment,” through the prohibition of reading materials. However, the Beard v. Banks ruling of the day before contradicts these stated principles and represents the beginning of the litany of contradictions outlined by Dayan. Dayan’s investigation does not take into account the policy suggested by the ALA, but instead focuses on the prison libraries’ adherence, or lack thereof, to the standards set by the First Amendment, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and previous court cases (25).

Suzanna Conrad’s study, “Collection Development and Circulation Policies in Prison Libraries: An Exploratory Survey of Librarians in US Correctional Institutions” similarly begins with a court case that calls into question offenses against the inmate’s right to read. Conrad discusses the case of Steven Hayes who, convicted of multiple violent crimes in 2007, had his library reading list from a prior incarceration submitted as evidence in his trial. The violent content of his preferred reading material sparked a debate as to whether or not inmates should be allowed access to “true crime books and works of fiction depicting murder and graphic violence, with no restrictions based on the readers’ criminal history” (408). However, any limitation of the inmates’ access to these works, especially because of their criminal history defies the ALA’s “Library Bill of Rights,” sections I, II, and V, which state respectively, “[b]ooks and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation,” and “[l]ibraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues.
Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval,” and “[a] person’s right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.” These standards are designed to eliminate any bias in the collection and circulation policies of all libraries, including those within prisons. However, as has already been established, not all libraries adhere to ALA policies despite the controversies that have occurred; many in her study do comply with the ALA, though often without an officially written and agreed upon policy within the library, which does not promote stability. Though the right to read is still contested, Conrad claims that “taking away specific literature and questionable reading material has never been proven to discourage criminal activity” (423).

Further, Conrad and others demonstrate that even if an institution restricts violent reading materials in prison libraries, inmates with access to television, or other media outlets will still have access to violent material. Additionally, the ALA “support[s]… California Penal Code Section 2061(c), [which] asserts that ‘prisoners have the right: to purchase, receive, read, and permit other inmates to read any and all legal materials, newspapers, periodicals, and books accepted for distribution by the United States Post Office” (411). USPS restrictions on reading materials are primarily limited to attempts at fraud and/or solicitation; however, the agency also prohibits the mailing of lewd and/or obscene materials and those that incite violence (“601…”). Thus, while obscene materials and those intended to incite violence are not protected by the First Amendment are reasonably restricted within prisons, it is arguable that censorship beyond these qualifications is a violation of the inmates rights as established by the Sostre v. Otis decision as well as the First Amendment and policies supported by the ALA and ACLU.

Like Conrad, Linda Bayley, Leni Greenfield, and Flynn Nogueira I agree that “censorship as a policy is unacceptable,” and that, “controversial items should be considered
individually” (Conrad 414). As the Hayes case presented by Suzanna Conrad makes evident, the right to read is linked directly to the inmates’ right to privacy regarding his/her reading choices. Though keeping library records is not strictly against the ALA’s “Policy of Confidentiality of Library Records,” the sharing of these records, especially with the police and other persons who may use the information to prosecute the inmates, is a violation of the right to confidentiality of every library user. Thus, the presentation of Hayes’ library records at his trial was a direct violation of the ALA policy, though in cases like these the librarian is placed in a troublesome position, as stated by Conrad, “[a] contradiction and challenge for prison librarians is serving the patrons’ interests while still respecting the institution’s need to control security and the impulse to control or monitor prisoners’ reading materials” (ibid). Both the right to read and the right to privacy are essential to inmates and must be adhered to by both the library staff and prison officials. In order to understand the implications of the prison library, beyond the right to read, it is crucial to examine the educational choices made by inmates and how the studies of prison education are generally conducted.

Though correlations between the education that the inmates receive while incarcerated and recidivism rates are still debated, many scholars conclude that education is essential to the inmates’ successful reintegration into society. John Stuart Batchelder and J. Marvin Pippert present a study that examines the educational and vocational choices of inmates while institutionalized. The study makes the distinctions between violent and nonviolent offenders, age differences, and gender. Their study turns up significant information regarding the ways in which inmates choose to spend their time, whether in education programs, in vocational training, or simply remaining idle. Nearly fifty-percent of the prison population in the study chose to remain idle, about which one official stated, “[i]n many cases, the only skills they acquire is how
to be a better criminal. In their idleness, these prisoners find ways to get into trouble” (278). Though the study presents valuable statistics regarding inmate participation in educational and vocational programs, the study concludes that some inmates prefer work, others prefer education, while still others prefer neither. In short, without stating it explicitly, the authors conclude that inmates make similar life choices to members of society outside of the prison system. However, limited in part by budget cuts to institutional programs, Batchelder and Pippert’s study concludes by addressing the inability to conclusively determine inmate’s motivations for participating in or abstaining from disciplinary programs. The authors conclude further that the inconclusively regarding inmate motivations presents an unfair financial burden to the taxpayers, explaining that the inability to minimize inmate idleness reduces the efficiency of the prison system and, in turn, the way taxpayer dollars are invested within the system. Other prison scholars have tackled the issue of inmate motivations, but have largely met the same inclusivity described by Batchelder and Pippert.

T.A. Ryan and Kimberly A. McCabe focus on a variety of factors while examining the differences between the impacts of mandatory vs. voluntary involvement in correctional education programs, which directly addresses the issue of motivation presented by Batchelder and Pippert. Ryan and McCabe divide the groups studied by sex, race, age, education level, and IQ, and measure the progress of these groups in academic programs based on whether they had been forced to take the classes or whether they had signed up voluntarily. The study concludes that “[t]he differences between the generally accepted assumption that inmates learn only if they want to attend prison education and the findings… that inmates learn just as well in mandatory programs as in voluntary programs,” means that more research into inmate motivation studies is essential (Ryan and McCabe 459). Though the commonly held belief is that voluntary
participation in educational programs is most effective, the study, though admittedly inconclusive, recognizes the possibility that mandatory education programs are equally effective. Ryan and McCabe finish the essay on the note that of the ninety percent of inmates who are “released to walk the streets again,” the more who are able to receive an education in prison are better “equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to become law-abiding, productive members of society” (460). Thus, while the distinction between the need for voluntary vs. mandatory education is an unresolved issue, it is relatively undisputed among the prison scholars mentioned in this project that the disciplinary technique of prison education benefits the inmate and society, which is the central tenant of, special education scholar, James S. Vacca argument regarding prison education.

James S. Vacca agrees with the many scholars who believe that prisoners who receive vocational or educational opportunities within prison are much less likely to return to the facility. Vacca presents an outline for his proposal of an educational plan that will help inmates integrate more successfully into society upon their release. However, throughout Vacca’s outline the term “prisoner” is interchangeable with the term “student.” Though in the prison education system inmates are to be considered students, they may have specific needs that aren’t applicable to the traditional definition of a student. Vacca tries to avoid this issue in the first guideline that states, “Prison literacy programs should be inmate learner centered and designed to meet the needs of the prison culture,” followed by bullet points intended to clarify how this guideline is to be applied. These bullet points explain, “[t]he programs must recognize the different learning styles of inmates/ [t]he programs need to recognize the cultural diversity of inmates/ [t]he programs must meet the individual needs of inmates who have a wide range of literacy ability levels” (303). The adjustments recommended by these points are adjustments that all educational
systems must make in accordance with their community, without particulars on how to make these adjustments to specifically accommodate prison learners. While specific educational programs are not the focus of my paper, I propose that the study of inmate marginalia will provide more conclusive evidence the motivations for inmates’ interactions with and participation in disciplinary programs in prisons.

The Ideal Scenario

I argue that marginalia can lend insight to studies regarding inmate motivations for interacting with texts in prison libraries. In order to understand the need for the integration of the study of inmate marginalia into the understanding of how these groups respond to prison libraries and educational programs, it is first necessary to understand the inherent flaws in the statistical- and survey-based analysis upon which current studies rely.

Though many scholars, including those mentioned in this essay, use surveys and statistics to measure the effectiveness of prison education and the productivity of inmates, I agree with H.J. Jackson in her endorsement of marginalia studies for examining how readers interact with texts.38 Jackson explains “[s]urveys are liable to be haphazard, and the conditions of the survey compromise its results... [f]inally, the ‘actual ordinary reader’ derived from the averaging out of such sources can be guaranteed not to correspond to any actual ordinary reader whatever: Statistical Man is a robot” (253). I do not agree that scholars should be dismissive of statistical data acquired by scholars and researchers, but I do believe that the study of marginalia is a crucial inclusion that will only help to strengthen the research that has been and will be conducted. Additionally, I extend Jackson’s study of the “actual ordinary reader” to “actual ordinary” prison inmates. Though the idea of an “actual ordinary” inmate is contradictory in terms, the use simply functions to distinguish this study from those that have been conducted
with emphasis on inmates who were political prisoners or became prominent literary figures. A wide spectrum of marginalia could reflect a population that varies by economic background, criminal history, sexuality, literacy level, languages spoken, written, and read, race, and age (the range beginning at eighteen, with the exceptions of the children who have been charged as adults). Additionally, the institutions from which this marginalia emerges can vary by type, whether federal, state, or private and security level as well as by geographic location. An ideal study will include male, female, juvenile, and adult institutions, all at the state-level, in order to reduce some of the inherent variables.

Another reason previous studies may be flawed in their results is touched upon by Jackson and explained by Richard M. Barone. Barone explains the inmate’s process of “institutional adjustment,” in which the inmate recognizes what is expected of him in order to be viewed by the administration as progressing, and if possible, to shorten his sentence (295). Addresses the idea of adjustment in marginalia specifically, Jackson states that marginalia are “both personal and potentially public” (100). Thus, I must assume that some tampering will likely occur, as the inmates may be addressing the notes in the books toward the prison librarians who are required to search the books for contraband upon their return to the library. It is possible that the inmates may be addressing the librarian or other prison administrators who come into contact with the book, in order to show their behavioral or educational improvement for some gain (a shortened sentence, more privileges, or a transfer to a lower security facility), without genuinely expressing their thoughts and textual interactions in the margins. Regardless, these addresses are textual interactions that present a clearer understanding of inmates’ motivations for interacting with texts in prison libraries.
Further, the breakdown of the inmate populations and facilities will have an impact on the pool of marginalia available and is crucial to take into consideration. Literacy and the native and learned languages of the inmates as well as the textual access policies within the facilities are significant, as these factors will most drastically impact the availability of marginalia. Though it may seem likely that illiterate inmates and those who struggle with literacy will not be able to be included in this study, Jackson provides an example of such marginalia, which does exist though she states that it is uncommon. Jackson explains:

Before they can read, children may scribble—pretending to write—or draw pictures in books that come their way, but as soon as they can read and write, they write their names, often over and over again in one book… One of the rare cases I have been fortunate enough to find of a barely literate, but on the evidence, adult reader shows similar features… All the notes are in pencil and by the same unformed hand. One or two notes in the body of the text… indicate that the owner understood its contents, but practically all the writing is on the front and back flyleaves and endpapers and has nothing to do with the [text]. There is the standard ownership claim… And then there are miscellaneous memoranda: a list of prices of household goods… some scribbles; some figures; a bit of verse mildly risqué for early America; and a declaration of love… that seemingly could not be suppressed. These are readers with little experience of books who have not yet learned the customary use of different areas for annotation, and whose very irregularity proves the rule. For the library reader such volumes are a lucky dip—you never know what may turn up. (20)

Jackson’s study thus provides not only evidence of readers using marginalia to learn how to write but also guidelines for possible identifications of marginalia left by these readers who are
struggling with literacy. While Jackson warns that this form of marginalia is unlikely to be found, the range of literacy levels represented by the prison population increases the probability of encountering this type of marginalia. However, the most recent study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics states, in the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy survey, that 84% of inmates have at least a basic level of prose literacy. This marginalia will represent at least a small sample of how learners struggling with literacy or language difficulties interact with texts while incarcerated. The marginalia left behind by readers for whom English is a second language can be reasonably interpreted similarly to the readers described by Jackson, and the notes in the inmates’ primary languages can be translated. However, for this study to be successful, it is important to remember that not all the marginalia found within the prisons’ books will have been generated by inmates.

Prison libraries receive their texts through librarian purchases, community donations, public library exchange programs, and interlibrary loan programs. Thus, not all of the marginalia that is encountered within the books in prison will have been created by inmates. The inmates’ readings may be affected by these marginalia and the inmates may in turn interact with the marginalia that was recorded outside of the prison in the form of conversation or argument (the inmates’ may have the same reactions to inmate generated marginalia with which they come into contact). Because of this, it must be acknowledged that distinguishing who left what marginalia may be difficult, and in some cases impossible, without inscribed claims of previous ownership. However, this does not discredit the notes that can be determined to have been produced by inmates within these texts. Regardless, the inmates are exposed to these marginalia and any impact they have on the inmates is worth investigation. With all these qualifications it is important to acknowledge a fact that may seem obvious. Not all inmates will interact with
prison library texts through marginalia, though that does not discount what can be learned from the marginalia that is present in the texts. Despite the potential pitfalls inherent in marginalia studies, inmate marginalia has the potential to lend previously unavailable insights into how and why inmates interact with the texts made available by the disciplinary techniques of the prison system through the prison library.

The study of inmate marginalia requires working closely with prison librarians. The first step is to understand the policies per institution regarding collection development, access to reading materials, and the repair and disposal of texts. Next, it may be possible to gain access to the list of books available within the prison library and any works that have been explicitly censored or banned from the institutions. With the cooperation of the librarians, this information will provide a view of which books the inmates have access to and which books are in highest demand. Frequently borrowed books may provide more encounters with inmate marginalia. Additionally, if the librarian maintains the borrowing records of the inmates, these records have the potential to reveal correlations between types of inmates and their interactions with texts. While the sharing of library borrowing records is a violation of ALA policy, inmate identities are not necessary for making these correlations. Thus, any names or specific identifying markers of inmates whose marginalia is collected during this study can be omitted from the project, without negatively effecting the research, so that the use of the borrowing records will not result in any punitive measures against the inmates and will respect their right to privacy. This trajectory of the study need only examine the details relating to the inmates’ backgrounds, characteristics, and offenses in relation to the texts with which they choose to interact. The marginalia found in the prison libraries will be difficult to associate with inmates in general, taking into account collection development policies and the potential presence of marginalia created by previous
readers outside of prison, and will be even more difficult to associate with specific inmates, but
inferences can be made from the borrowing records. According to Bouchard and Winnicki,
“[t]he filing system [of prison library records] will… serve as a repository for institutional
handwriting samples” (60). Through a thorough examination of these records, it may be
possible, in some cases, to associate particular margin notes with particular inmates in order to
further the examinations of any correlation between the types of inmates and how they interact
with the texts directly, though any personal identifications of the inmates should not be revealed
in the final project.

Ideally, as is the case with the Washington State prison library system, access to the
prison libraries simply requires approval from the prison library system and branch librarians,
instead of requiring DOC approval. However, to my knowledge, Washington State is a unique
case, and all other state prison libraries are managed by the corresponding DOC. Further
research should be conducted outside of the Washington State system, and this will require
further research into the status of prison library systems throughout the nation. Though the
prison librarian directory linked to the ALA website is somewhat out-of-date, prison librarians
are excellent resources and are often willing to help and to provide information regarding
policies, staffing, and functioning of prison libraries. Additionally, because of the need for DOC
approval, scholars must familiarize themselves with the research policies and application
procedures per DOC that regulate on-site research, regardless of the prison librarians’
willingness to help. This study should also be extended to federal and private prisons, jails, and
juvenile detention facilities. Further, upon gaining access to these facilities, it would be ideal to
be able to draw correlations from the borrowing records at each facility studied in order to derive
more convulsive correlations between inmates and the texts with which they most commonly
interact. From these correlations, can potentially draw conclusions regarding inmate motivations for interacting with the texts made available by the disciplinary technique of prison libraries. This trajectory of investigation of inmate marginalia has the potential to answer to the question iterated by Suzanna Conrad, Colin Dayan, and Michelle Dalton, and can potentially describe potential correlations between the types of texts with which inmates interact and the crimes of which they are convicted, both before and after their textual interactions. The answers to these questions implications on the issues of library book censorship, inmate privacy, and the attitude of deterrence taken towards marginalia. Additionally, understanding the motivations behind inmate textual interactions will help to supplement the missing dimensions of the prison education studies discussed in previous section (i.e. Batchelder and Pippert, Vacca, etc.). Ideally, further study in the field of inmate marginalia will allow scholars to draw the conclusions, lacking in survey-based and statistical analyses, regarding how and why inmates interact with texts made available through the disciplinary technique of prison libraries.
CHAPTER 4
THE FINDINGS

The Prisons

While my study did not follow the ideal scenario that I mapped in Chapter 3, valuable conclusions can still be derived from the evidence I collected and, further, this study can be utilized as a starting point for further studies in the field. Inmate marginalia is vital to understanding inmate motivations for interacting with texts in prison libraries. The study of marginalia is a crucial inclusion to the methods that are already being utilized, especially if it is in fact true that “educated inmates are” indeed “less likely to return to prison” (Vacca).

When I walked up to the main entrance of the first prison in which I was working, Airway Heights Corrections Center (AHCC) just outside of Spokane, Washington, I was nervous. I was afraid that there had been some mistake and that they wouldn’t let me in, or worse, I irrationally feared that they would just keep me there for some reason. I was afraid I wouldn’t find any marginalia, and, I was afraid of the barbed wire. The reams of spiked metal that looped around the tops of tall chain-linked fences and the guard towers with dark windows presented towering reminders of a centralized power that maintained the disciplinary mechanisms of the United States prison system.

I met librarian Bob Fendler at the main entrance, surrendered my driver’s license to the guard working the front desk, signed in, and collected my volunteer ID badge. The guard checked my research tools and guided me through the metal detector. Finally, Bob walked me through the winding complex, explaining the procedures at ID checkpoints, leading to the prison library facility. It was a large room full of short bookshelves. There were a few tables near the front entrance and to the left of the room was the checkout counter and a small, glassed-in office.
Over the office was large lettering reading, “Welcome to your branch of The Washington State Library,” and underneath, “Where Change Takes Place.” Other inspirational posters and words lined the walls, like the poster with a superhero holding a book next to the words, “Escape the Ordinary,” advertising the voluntary summer reading program offered by the Washington State Library System. Under the poster were reading logs in which inmates could keep track of all of the books that they had read over the summer. I followed Bob into his office where he handed me a stack of books that had been returned over the last several weeks with marginalia present. While these texts are often set aside for repair, he used a sticky note to indicate that these texts were to be reserved for my study. Grabbing the books and leaving his office, I sat down at one of the low, round tables with a mug full of water and set to work. I scanned every mark I found with my handheld scanner as five inmate library workers walked in to start their shift. They were friendly and helpful, stacking up a pile of books at the opposite end of my table as they found marginalia while carrying out their daily duties. They were polite, but I kept the talking down to a minimum. Jose Mendoza, Library Associate at Coyote Ridge Corrections Center (CRCC), my second stop that day, had me fill out the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) acknowledgement form. The brochure accompanying the PREA form details the history of and potential for sexual misconduct between staff members and inmates. The convenient “Red Flags” section outlines a list of suspicious behaviors that will arise suspicion amongst prison staff members. Within this section, behaviors like, “[s]pending a lot of time with a particular offender,” or “[t]aking up an offender’s cause or grievance,” or even, “[b]elieving an offender is indispensable” are cited as warning signs for inappropriate behavior (State… 1). I scanned and took notes for close to four hours before one of the inmates warned me, in low whisper, that I should leave before the inmates had access to the facility. He said that fifty guys would pile in
there and that it could get a little chaotic at times. I smiled and kept working, keeping his advice in mind. I was a little concerned, but I had to leave before that time regardless if I was going to make it to CRCC in time. This was unfortunate, as another inmate informed me right before I was leaving that the Segregation Division at the facility would be ripe with marginalia, stating, “all those guys do is read.” This is an area that I could not explore during my current study, but I recommend an examination of the books used by inmates in the Segregation Division as a valuable resource for future study.

The procedures for entering CCRC and the layout of the library facility were similar to those at AHCC. However, in this instance, Jose Mendoza would not allow me to stay in the prison library when the inmates were allowed access. He warned me that an inmate might just follow me around, or behave in a generally creepy manner. A librarian I spoke with later told me that Jose was just paranoid, but the setup of the facility mirrored Jose’s sentiment. Unlike AHCC, CRCC was adorned with two layers of chain-link fencing, with thicker bunches of barbed wire on top. I never found out if the inmate population at the facility was as nefarious as facility’s design and Jose’s warning suggested, but instead quietly scanned all of the documents I could, at one of the tables in the main library area, before the inmates were granted access to the facility. By the time I left, a line had formed in front of the library doors, not a threatening mob; just a line of people waiting to get into the library, with maybe one or two who appeared curious as to why a strange girl was walking out of the library with a large armed guard. I am not saying that Jose’s caution is unwarranted, but instead simply describing the circumstances that I observed. The next facility I visited was the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW), where the barbed wire and fencing were less menacing than either AHCC or CRCC. Other than the slight decrease in security at WCCW, all of the prisons that I visited, and their
libraries, functioned similarly. The differences and similarities, however, which are most pertinent to my study, are those I found in the marginalia that I collected.

After spending between two to four hours at each facility, I collected marginalia from forty-eight texts and recorded the genre and facility gender of sixty-six books total, which had marginalia present, but that I was unable to collect. Because of the small sample size, my statistical analysis should not, by any means, be considered conclusive. Instead, the purpose of this study is to introduce potential correlations for future study. Here I would like to get into the nitty gritty of the data I collected over my four days of study.

Statistical Results

Because the sample size is small, I decided to test all of my evidence as a whole, as opposed to breaking it down per facility. I broke down my evidence according to five categories: facility gender, text genre, the address of the marginalia, and the type of marginalia. Though facility gender is clear cut, genre, address, and type of marginalia require further specification. Using the Library of Congress Classification Outline for Language and Literature, I divided the texts into eight genre classifications: American literature; psychology; textbooks; religions, mythology, rationalisms; literature (general); finance; law in general; and philosophy (general). Next, I broke the category of address, i.e. the direction of the marginalia, into four subcategories: address to self; address to other inmate; address to author/text; and unknown. I also broke the category of type down into eleven different subcategories: underlining, highlighting, checkmarks, stars, etc.; gang markings; non-gang affiliated drawings; racial references; sexual references; jokes; textual manipulations (i.e. re-rendering of the written words or with the physical form of the text); math equations; poetry; stains left by unknown substances; and non-racial/sexual declarations or revelations of personal information. I tested the
independence of these categories by gender and genre, address and type, gender and address, gender and type, genre and address, and genre and type. The small size of my sample likely influenced my results, but I did find some correlations worth reporting, which lend some insight into how inmates interact with texts in prison libraries.

Beginning with an examination of gender vs. genre, the results were statistically significant with a p-value of 0.046, which provides moderate evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis that the two categories are independent. However, the correlation is almost negligibly weak ($\Phi = 0.046$) and this correlation requires further investigation. However, Fig. 2 demonstrates the distribution of gender vs. genre of the texts that I was able to observe in the prison libraries that contained marginalia. In future studies, it will be beneficial to study the breakdown of texts that contain marginalia against all of the books held in the prison libraries, however, from the data that I was able to collect during my study, the books without marginalia are unavailable for analysis. Thus, the breakdown in Fig. 2 does not represent a distribution of how inmates interact with the books in the facility overall, but instead represents the distribution of the marginalia that I was able to
collect in terms of gender vs. genre. From Fig. 2, we can observe that males interacted with a large variety of texts, while females most commonly interacted with American literature. This raises the question of collection policies between male and female institutions, which requires further examination. Text availability affects marginalia studies in general, but if the collection policies differ between male and female institutions, the results will be drastically skewed. Thus, further research into inmate marginalia must include an examination of any differences, if they exist, in the collection policies of the facilities based on gender.

Table 1 demonstrates that the marginalia I observed in male facilities was most common in American literature, followed closely by the collective genre of religions, mythology, and rationalism. The marginalia I observed in the female facility was predominately present in American literature texts. Overall, forty-seven percent of the marginalia I observed during my

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>American Literature</th>
<th>Psychology</th>
<th>Textbooks</th>
<th>Religions, Mythology, Rationalism (General)</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Law in General</th>
<th>Philosophy (General)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Count</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Genre</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Count</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Genre</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Count</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Genre</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Gender vs. Genre Percentages
study was present in American literature texts. Further, within the classification of American literature, a large portion (50\%) of the marginalia that I observed in the female prisons were in texts that could be further classified as romance fiction. While I observed marginalia in romance fiction texts in the male prisons, the percentage of these texts (9.1\%) among the fiction texts that I observed was substantially lower than in the female facilities. Again, this breakdown leads to the question of whether or not collection policies differ between facilities, which requires further examination.

Moving on to address vs. type, there are correlations, but because of the small sample size and the large number of categories, the results of these comparisons are somewhat tenuous. However, thirty-four (70.8\%) of the forty-eight books from which I was able to collect marginalia contained underlining, etc. As such, underlining, etc. was the only type of marginalia that presented any correlations with the direction of address of the marginalia. There is a statistically significant correlation between the presence of underlining, etc. and self-addresses, with a p-value of 0.001, but the correlation is almost negligibly weak (Φ=0.001). Thus, while there is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis that the presence of underlining, etc. and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Romance/Sexual Emphasis</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Genre</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Genre</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Genre</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Gender vs. Romance/Sexual Emphasis Texts Percentages.
self-addresses are independent, the weakness of the Φ-value indicates that further study is required. Additionally, the correlation between underlining, etc. and addresses to the author and/or text is also statistically significant with a p-value of 0.003, but again the correlation is very weak (Φ=0.003), leading us to the same conclusion as with the correlation between underlining, etc. and self-address. Finally, there is an additional correlation between underlining, etc. and unknown addresses with a p-value of 0.013 indicating only moderate evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis that the two categories are independent, though the correlation is stronger than those observed in the previous cases (Φ=0.013). These results require further study that has the potential to reinforce or further nuance the current understanding of the motivations behind marginalia categorized as underlining, etc.

H.J. Jackson defines this type of marginalia as “signs of attention,” explicitly and implicitly explaining that the notes are often made for personal reference and/or function as addresses to the author and/or text directly, and that “[l]ike other systems of notation this one is tried and true, easy to use, readily understood, but crude and unrefined” (28). Thus, the statistical significance between “signs of attention” marginalia and addresses to the self, author, and/or text is to be expected. Additionally Jackson explains, “[w]riting notes in response to a text appears to be a habit acquired at school” (21). Thus, the underlining, etc. marginalia may be trained behaviors that the inmates learned in prison or outside education programs, though the somewhat tenuous correlations that I observed require further study. While the majority of the marginalia I found was classified as underlining, etc. my sample size is too small to draw any hard and fast conclusions. However, this trend has implications for the arguments regarding inmate access to prison libraries. If, as Jackson argues, these marginalia are often habits formed in school, is the view of this type of marginalia as damage to the book unfair? Additionally, if
inmates are using texts in predominately academic ways, should we reevaluate decisions regarding inmates’ access to texts, i.e. the Right to Read? Further, do these marginalia interfere with the future readings of the text? These questions must be examined further. While Jackson claims that these marginalia predominately function as personal notes about the text or direct interactions with the text, through a method that can be learned through the education system (ibid), the statistical significance between underlining, etc. and unknown address. This discrepancy may be a result of my small sample size, but regardless, it presents evidence that this avenue of study requires further research. In order to further understand the presence of underlining, etc. in the texts that I observed, I will discuss the presence of underlining, etc. in terms of gender and genre in the following paragraphs.

Two statistically significant correlations are present when I compare gender vs. type of marginalia. First, gender and underlining, etc. have a statistically significant correlation with a p-value of 0.02, and moderate evidence to reject the null hypothesis that gender and underlining, etc. are statistically independent, but the correlation is very weak (Φ=0.003). While the breakdown of instances of underlining, etc. in the texts in the female facility was split exactly down the middle, twenty-three (88.5%) of
the twenty-six texts I sampled in the male facilities contained underlining, etc. Secondly, there is a statistically significant correlation between gender and non-racial/sexual declarations and/or personal information. This type of marginalia primarily includes personal information that is non-sexual and non-gang related in nature (i.e. opinions on/personal reactions to the text, non-sexual/racial/gang-related addresses to other inmates, etc.). Comparing gender with non-racial/sexual declarations and/or personal information resulted in a p-value of 0.041, which indicates moderate evidence to reject the null hypothesis, though the correlation is very weak (Φ= 0.02). Though the weakness of the correlation indicates the need for further study, Fig. 4 demonstrates a larger presence of non-racial/sexual declarations and/or personal information within the female prison, than in the male prisons. Next, I examine genre vs. type of marginalia in order to draw further connections regarding the marginalia I observed in prison library books by genre.

There is a statistically significant correlation between genre and underlining, etc. The p-value of 0.008 provides strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis that genre and underlining, etc. are independent. However, the Φ score of 0.008 demonstrates no significant strength to this
correlation. Regardless, Figure 5 demonstrates some interesting trends. While underlining, etc. was not present in over half of the American literature texts, underlining, etc. comprised all of the marginalia that I observed in the psychology and religions, mythology, rationalism texts. These results, in light of the previous correlations drawn between gender and genre, lead to further implications of the correlations, though weak, between genre and underlining, etc., which require further study. In an attempt to further understand the discrepancies between type of marginalia and address, as discussed earlier, and the issues with determining the influence of gender on the issues presented by the study of underlining, etc. vs. genre, I examine the statistical significance between gender and address.

There are two statistically significant associations between gender and address. First, gender and addresses to others have a
statistically significant correlation with a p-value of 0.04, though the association is very weak ($\Phi=0.04$). The presence of inmate marginalia addressing others, demonstrates close to an inverse relationship between the male and female facilities. From my research, addresses to others are more prevalent in female facilities, while addresses to others were less common in texts that I observed in male facilities. The second correlation that I observed was between gender and addresses to the author/text. The correlation between these two variables resulted in a statistically significant correlation with a p-value of 0.001, though the strength of the correlation is almost negligible ($\Phi=0.001$). Fig. 7 demonstrates an almost inverse relation between male and female addresses to others through the marginalia that I observed in prison libraries. From these results, more male inmates used their marginalia to address others than female inmates. All of the statistical analyses described above require further study; however, I believe that several of these discrepancies can be better understood.

My study demonstrates that male inmate marginalia most often address others, while male marginalia are also primarily underlining, etc., directly contradicting Jackson’s definition of the purpose for these types of marginalia as notes to the self or interaction with the author/text. On the other hand, my data demonstrates that female inmates are more likely to record personal
declarations in the texts. Regardless, the statistically significant associations that I observed require further research. I encourage further study in the field of inmate marginalia as a valuable tool for gaining insights into how and why inmates interact with texts in prison libraries, especially when extended to the library collections, at large. However, here I would like to take the opportunity to investigate two samples of marginalia. These samples represent both the male and female facilities, in order to examine female inmate personal disclosures as well as the inconsistency between male inmate addresses to others and their correlation with underlining, etc.

A Closer Look at Two Texts

At WCCW, Danielle Steele novels tend to function as a means of communications between inmate couples as well as affirmations of said couples’ love. These marginalia are clearly addressed to both the self and the third party, as many of them are clear communications between the women and personal declarations of relationship information. Three couples are clearly represented, and one Steele novel appears to be dedicated to a single math problem and a nondescript scribble, probably trying to get the pen to work, scribble. Danielle Steele’s *Sisters* appears to be dedicated to a single couple’s hopes for 2019 when they, presumably, will both be out of prison. The marginalia are scribbled out, as is apparent in Figure 8 and 9, but it is unclear by whom these notes are obscured.43

Figure 8 *Sisters* Declaration
However, what is most interesting is the quote, visible amongst the scribbles, stating, “I could never ask for a better woman in my life/ You make prison worth it!”

For this inmate, the experience of prison is defined by her relationship with the inmate to whom her marginalia are addressed. These declarations are not explicitly sexual and are non-racial declarations involving personal information, directed toward another reader. Similarly, in four of the five Danielle Steele novels I observed marginalia of this type, from the simple declarations of love, often found carved in trees and scribbled on bathroom stalls, to promises of a future outside of prison.

While these trends are common within the Danielle Steele texts, potentially indicating an established form of communication in the remainder of the romance/sexual emphasis texts.
The primary romance/sexual emphasis text that received marginalia in the male institutions was *Dark Thirst*, though the textual interactions are not the loving declarations found in the *Sisters* (see Figure 10). Beyond the racial battles in *Dark Thirst*, there are underlining, etc. marginalia indicating the scenes with explicit sexuality, as demonstrated in Figure 11. This practice was not uncommon in the books I observed in the male facility, though these types of marks were not present in the books that I observed in the female facility. Thus, this use of “signs of attention,” are not likely academic in their pursuits, but instead demonstrate that some of these
markings indicate sections of the text in which the inmate was interested and which he has made easier to locate during future use. The incorporation of sexually motivated underlining in romance/sexual emphasis novels influences the statistics regarding underlining and this genre of text. Female inmate interactions with romance/sexual emphasis texts and their correlation with addresses to others through their marginalia are represented by the example of *Sisters* provided above. While my study demonstrates that female inmates primarily use romance/sexual emphasis novels, like those by Danielle Steel, to communicate with one another, this result requires further study. Additionally, male inmates’ use of underlining, etc. requires further study to determine whether the use of this method, throughout the texts in prison libraries, is primarily scholastic or for the pursuit of less academic interests.

In conclusion, there are statistically significant correlations between gender, genre, direction of address, and type of marginalia, but these results are tenuous and require further study. While surveys and statistical analyses have provided a foundation for studying inmates’ interactions with the programs controlled by the disciplinary powers of the prison system; inmate marginalia will provide a supplementary method for better understanding how and why inmates interact with texts in prison libraries and potentially, by extension, their motivations for participating in prison education programs. Thus, incorporating this method, scholars must continue to break beyond the barbed wire and chain-linked fencing in order to develop a better understanding of the collisions between inmates and the disciplinary powers of the prison system by which they are defined.

Notes:

1 In fact, as the women’s soccer head coach of the informed us that the team had gained a less than desirable reputation on campus, due to photographs found on multiple Facebook pages of
the players drinking, smoking, and participating in lewd behavior at parties during the league’s off-season. I had been to one of these parties during the final quarter of my freshman year, and it was no more raucous than any frat party I’d attended previously. Regardless, after the head coach’s announcement, no member of the women’s soccer organization was allowed to be witnessed, photographed, etc. at a party where alcohol is being consumed or where lascivious acts are taking place. Thus, our free time, already diminished, had become even more strictly regulated.


9 Also accepted by the University of North Texas is the Protecting Human Research Participants course offered by the National Institute of Health’s Office of Extramural Research.


11 Anna Nash at WCCW informed me that the only reason my scanner was approved was that it could only record an image when pressed firmly against a flat surface.

12 Israel J. Yuval’s article discusses the historical inaccuracy of the theme of exile in Jewish history and culture formation, particularly in its tie to the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. However, the historical validity of the theme is not my concern here, as the theme has maintained a strong foothold in shaping Jewish cultural identity.

13 Judah’s multiple experiences of incarceration provide an example of the inmates’ experience of exile. Transfers between facilities have taken him all around the country, from Southern
California to Oklahoma City, and from Atlanta to South Carolina. He receives no visitors, and while he can receive phone calls and e-mails from family and friends, these services don’t come without fees, regulations, and/or surveillance. While not inherently a pure exile, of being completely cut off from one’s former life, class limitations can make this exile a more or less complete experience.

14 For overviews on the history of education programs in prison, see Steurer; Gehring; for a study advocating prison education, see Vacca; and for further studies discussing inmate preferences and education, see Ryan, McCabe; Allred, Harrison, O’Connell.

15 For additional history, see Strack 1-14.

16 For additional information on the construction of Rabbinical Judaism as the norm, see Strack 1-22.

17 See Gibbs et al. 28.

18 Farrago is defined by the OED as, “A confused group; a medley, mixture, hotchpotch.” For more, see “farrago, n.”

19 See Batchelder 277-8.

20 Dahlström’s article discusses “an art exhibition in Stockholm by Swedish artist Kajsa Dahlberg, entitled A Room of One’s Own/A Thousand Libraries. The exhibition included a printed edition of a quite peculiar book the artist had composed” (115). The exhibition Dahlström describes is a compilation composed of the marginalia that Dahlberg found in library copies of Virginia Woolf’s A Room of One’s Own. Dahlberg inscribed all the marginalia she found in the library copies onto a single copy of the text, displaying the varied readings of the text alongside one another in order to compose a new version of the text. Though the investigation of the marginalia is secondary to Dahlberg, Dahlström highlights the rarity of studies that do investigate library book marginalia. For more information on “ordinary” readers writing in books, see Dahlström and Cavell, 199-219.

21 Marginalia are defined as “Notes, commentary, and similar material written or printed in the margin of a book or manuscript. Also (in extended use): notes, comments, etc., that are incidental or additional to the main topic.” See “marginalia.”

22 T.P. Connor provides an example of inmate marginalia studies in his in-depth examination of the historical context of John Squier’s life. He investigates the margin notes left by Squier in the remnants of his personal library, housed at Eton College, during his term of incarceration from 1642-1646. John Squier was the vicar of St Leonard’s Shoreditch and was rounded up during the English Civil War with other “recalcitrant clergy and royalist sympathisers,” as a result of his “malignant” sermons. Connor’s examination is directed at Squier’s interpretation of and involvement in the English Civil War. See Connor.

Examples of investigations along this line of study include the bodies of scholarship pertaining to *Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson*, Jack Abbott’s *In the Belly of the Beast: Letters from Prison*, and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.


Many scholars discuss instances where censorship in prison libraries has occurred in varying extremes. For examples see Bramely; Mark; and Spector.

Michelle Dalton reviews Conrad’s “Collection…” and provides further insights into the collection development and circulation practices in prison libraries. She highlights the general lack of circulation policies for prison libraries specifically, but also takes note of Conrad’s small sample size. Dalton emphasizes the lack of scholarly attention received by prison libraries within the field of library studies and also emphasizes the balance between disciplinary censorship and violations of inmates’ privacy. See Dalton 248-50.

For more information on the prohibition of mailing obscene materials or those intended to incite violence or lawlessness, see *Miller v. California* and *Brandenburg v. Ohio*.

For more information about the underground book trades in prisons during the 1970’s that bypass prison censorship policies, and their impact on the inmates, see Bernstein, 310-24.


The Office of Justice Programs, states that “[r]ecidivism is measured by criminal acts that resulted in the rearrest, reconviction, or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the prisoner's release.” See “Recidivism.” *Bureau of Justice Statistics*, last modified February 25, 2014.

Despite the obvious fluidity of the defined inmate versus the defined member of outside society, Batchelder and Pippert tend to maintain a false dichotomy of the “positive” society members and “negative” inmates, while asserting broad generalizations that are not represented in their statistical analysis, but primarily upon the word of the Warden and staff at a single prison institution. See Batchelder and Pippert 277-9.
38 See Jackson.

39 See Bouchard and Winnicki, “You found,” 51.

40 See Greenberg, Dunleavy, Kutner, and White 13.

41 Suzanna Conrad, among other scholars, describe the process of collection development by librarians and facilities. Conrad, “Collection.” For more information on Community donation procedures, see “Prison Libraries;” for more on public library exchange programs, see Klick; McCook; and for information on Interlibrary Loan services to incarcerated persons, see Asher.

42 I was not allowed to use my portable scanner at WCC, but that was not due to policy, but instead to the paperwork getting lost in the scuffle.

43 It looks like the same blue pen, but I really cannot possibly make that connection without further information.

44 For more information on homosexuality within female prisons, see Castle, Fishbein, Forsyth, Hensley, and Severance.

45 The page including all three inmates’ declarations of love include what are presumably their real names, so I will not be including the scan in my study.
Bibliography


Spector, Herman K. *The Library Program of the State Department of Correction* (Sacramento: Department of Correction, 1959).


