

The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

College of Education

**HERE AND BACK AGAIN: COMMUNITY REENTRY FROM A
RURAL COUNTY JAIL AS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

A Dissertation in

Adult Education

by

Jeremiah C. Gee

© 2015 Jeremiah C. Gee

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2015

The dissertation of Jeremiah C. Gee was reviewed and approved* by the following:

Melody Thompson
Associate Professor of Education
Dissertation Advisor
Chair of Committee

Gary W. Kuhne
Associate Professor of Education

Esther S. Prins
Associate Professor of Education

Kai Schafft
Associate Professor of Education

Davin Carr-Chellman
Assistant Professor of Education

David L. Passmore
Director of Graduate Studies
Distinguished Professor of Education (Workforce Education and Development)

*Signatures are on file in the Graduate School.

ABSTRACT

When people leave county-level jails, they reenter the community without having had the same opportunity for educational programs that they would have had if they were incarcerated in a state or federal prison. At the county level, little is known about community reentry. This study sought to find out what rural community reentry is like from the perspective of those who experience it, investigate learning's relationship to community reentry, and examine power relationships that affect the reentry experience. Through interviews with young men ages 18-24, a phenomenological approach to this case study of one rural county jail's participants yielded descriptions of community reentry that were interpreted using a conceptual framework based on Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach to correctional education and a theoretical framework based on Dewey's (1938/1997) experiential learning theory, Foucault's (1977/2005) description of how people can be subjugated by a panoptic power arrangement, and Mezirow's (1991, 1995) theory of transformational education.

Several themes were identified to describe the community reentry experience. Individuals described learning as navigating the space between the reality that *jail doesn't teach you anything* and society's expectation that they *learn a lesson* that has not been fully articulated. The factors influencing reentry as an educational experience included how long and how many times one had been in jail, which the participants connected with *learning by losing* and *becoming mature*. Experiences with probation and parole officers, described as "being on paper," defined the power relations of community reentry. These critical and interpretive themes were juxtaposed against two descriptive themes that depicted reentry as an up-down cycle of "getting your feet underneath you" and then "slipping up."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	<i>vii</i>
LIST OF FIGURES.....	<i>viii</i>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	<i>ix</i>
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Research Problem	1
Coming to the Question	3
Purpose Statement	5
Research Questions.....	7
Significance of the Research	7
Developing a Conceptual Framework.....	9
Developing a Theoretical Framework	10
Study Design	12
Outline of the Dissertation	13
Chapter 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	16
Identification of Concepts and Definitions.....	17
Historical Shifts in Perspective.....	23
Subjugation	23
Social Control	24
Panopticism	25
Punishment.....	26
Discipline	27
Historical Development of Correctional Education.....	30
Initial Correctional Education Efforts.....	30
Correctional Education as Literacy Education	32
Gehring's Integral Approach.....	36
Overview	37
The Subjective Quadrant.....	40
The Objective Quadrant	43
The Social Quadrant.....	49
The Cultural Quadrant.....	54
Theories Informing the Research	59
Critical Adult Education	60
Symbolic Interactionism.....	65
Experiential Education	66
Continuity	69
Interaction	70
Transformation Theory of Adult Learning	73

Chapter Two Summary	78
Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	79
Phenomenological Considerations.....	80
Researcher Choices about Presuppositions	80
Critical Phenomenology	82
Site Selection and Description	84
Participant Characteristics.....	84
Recruitment and Eligibility	86
Phenomenological Bracketing	88
Data Gathering	90
Interview Protocol.....	92
Preliminary meetings	92
Reentry interviews	94
Memoing.....	96
Data Analysis	97
Holistic Review	99
Horizontalization.....	99
Identifying Units of Meaning.....	100
Identifying Significant Statements.....	100
Clustering Thematic Elements.....	102
Participant Checks.....	103
Refining Findings	105
Creating Descriptions.....	106
Chapter 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS.....	108
Researcher Identity.....	108
Continuing Interest in the Phenomenon	110
Participant Profiles.....	110
Alex.....	111
Don	112
Ricky	113
Sid	115
Sean.....	116
Dean	117
Will	118
Themes and Analysis	119
Description of Transcendental Reduction	119
Theme 1: Getting My Feet Underneath Me.....	121
Sub-theme 1a: The basics	122

Sub-theme 1b: Starting over.....	128
Theme 2: Slipping Up.....	132
Sub-theme 2a: Becoming complacent.....	133
Sub-theme 2b: Things “fall apart”	136
Analysis of Transcendental Reduction.....	139
Educative and miseducative experiences.....	140
Applying Gehring’s approach.....	142
Limitations of the reduction.....	144
Hermeneutic Reduction	145
Theme 3: This Will Teach You	147
Theme 4: Jail Doesn’t Teach You Anything.....	150
Theme 5: Jail is What You Make It	152
Sub-theme 5a: Learning by losing.....	153
Sub-theme 5b: Becoming mature	154
Critical Reduction	157
Theme 6: Being on Paper.....	158
Sub-theme 6a: One-way communication	159
Sub-theme 6b: Breaking the rules.....	162
Sub-theme 6c: Living under surveillance.....	166
Chapter 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	171
Lived Experience of Young Men Who Reentered a Rural Community.....	172
Description of Rural Community Reentry	175
Limitations.....	178
Recommendation	179
REFERENCES	182
Appendix A: Invitational Flyer.....	195
Appendix B: Invitational Letter	196
Appendix C: Bracketing Manifest.....	197
Appendix D: Interview Materials.....	200
Appendix E: Informed Consent.....	206
Appendix F: Memo Template	210

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Services Offered in US County Jails	22
Table 2. Overview of Theoretical Framework	64

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The four quadrants of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach	37
Figure 2. Comprehensive Model of Correctional Education.....	39
Figure 3. The subjective quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach	41
Figure 4. The objective quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach	44
Figure 5. The social quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach	50
Figure 6. The cultural quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach.....	54
Figure 7. Diagram of the transcendental reduction.....	121
Figure 8. Diagram of the hermeneutic reduction	147
Figure 9. Diagram of the critical reduction	158
Figure 10. Diagram of themes describing the reentry experience	173

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am truly grateful to have been encouraged throughout my education to reach the point where I am writing an acknowledgement page for a PhD dissertation. Teachers who have encouraged me include Dr. Carol Awasu and Dr. Denise Hirschlein of Nyack College Manhattan Center; Dr. Celeste Burns, Dr. Kathleen Carico, Dr. Jannis Floyd, Dr. Barb Smith, and Dr. Nanci Werner-Burke of Mansfield University; and Dr. Melody Thompson of Penn State, my advisor, the chair of my committee, and the best editor I have ever been fortunate enough to meet. My writing is greatly improved thanks to Melody's careful and thoughtful reviews. I would also like to thank my doctoral committee because they have been both flexible and helpful throughout my time at Penn State: Dr. Esther Prins, Dr. Gary Kuhne, and Dr. Kai Schafft. You all have been a boon to my growth as a scholar.

I am deeply grateful to the warden of the county jail where I conducted research. Everyone at the institution was helpful and supportive, and I sincerely appreciate your opening your doors to me and providing the access and time needed to conduct thorough and thoughtful research. Also, several former and current peers and supervisors have made it possible for me to be able to complete this research study by always reassuring me. Thanks goes out to Dr. Thom Gehring at the University of California San Bernardino, Dr. Sandra Lakey and Dr. Clifford Coppersmith at Pennsylvania College of Technology, and to Dr. J.P. Burke at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania for your friendship and support.

Finally, I appreciate my parents. Nothing I do would be possible or have meaning without sustenance from my parents, and for them I am forever grateful. Thank you for your love and for believing all this time that I am capable of accomplishing what I set out to do. It would not happen without you. I love you both beyond measure.

For you, Brett.

I know you would have been proud.

“It’s not about you teaching me anything; it’s about me learning.”

—Alex

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Currently in the United States, 2.3 million adults—greater than one in 100—are in jail or prison (Pew Center on the States, 2008, p. 3). This 1:100 ratio increases to 1:33 when including the number of people also under supervision on probation or parole (Pew, p.3). Three-quarters of incarcerated people are in county jails as compared to state and federal prisons (Solomon, Osborne, LoBuglio, Mellow, & Mukamal, 2008). After county jail, people generally go to one of three places: they are transferred to a prison, they are released to a half-way house, or they leave the jail and go back to the “outside” community (Solomon, et al., 2008, p.3).

Statement of the Research Problem

This study focuses on those who leave jail and go back to the community, a process called *reentry* (also known as *community reentry*). The social issue referred to as mass incarceration in the United States is complicated by the fact that, after reentry, people frequently go back to jail or prison, or *recidivate*. About 75% of people in jails nationwide have been sentenced to either jail or probation at least once before (Solomon, et al., 2008, p. 14). Recidivism rates continue to rise despite efforts to implement research-based education programs inside state and federal prisons (Pew, 2008, p. 15). Education associated with correctional facilities is known as *correctional education* (CE), and CE is generally uncommon in small county jails (Ruddell & Mays, 2007; Solomon, et al., 2008).

At the micro-level of this study, I focus on reentry from one rural county jail as a learning experience, seeking to understand what reentry is like, what learning is apparent, and within what sort of power structure. This study looks at how participants described learning in the context of the rural community reentry experience, which I refer to

alternatively as *community reentry* or simply *reentry*. A local problem that I have noticed during my years of teaching inside one local, rural jail is that there are few opportunities for rural jails to address recidivism locally through CE reentry programs. Local practitioners do not know the answers to basic questions such as: *What is reentry like? Are different types of learning described by people who leave county jail?* In short, the problem is a lack of adequate information regarding community reentry as a learning experience. The lack of information is addressed in this study along with identifying the power relationships that define reentry and affect an individual's learning opportunities. I highlight the fact that we know little about the potential learning opportunities affecting the reentry experience or what kind of influence the reentering individuals have over their own experiences. In this study, I also highlight the rural and urban differences that are found in the literature (see Ruddell & Mays, 2007; Solomon, et al., 2008) and in the participants' lived experiences in terms of how these differences affect rural community reentry as a learning experience.

The specific problem addressed by this study is that inadequate information about reentry from rural county jails reduces the ability to design learning opportunities that benefit people upon reentry. This problem is connected to a broader social issue: Jails are a point of early contact for people in the criminal justice system, and jails have the opportunity to collaborate at the local level with more people in regard to community planning for reentry (Solomon et al., 2008, p. 21). However, addressing the social issue of mass incarceration by developing programs focused on supporting individuals during jail reentry seldom happens because jails lack the support and information needed to implement and sustain reentry-focused CE programs (Solomon, et al., 2008, p. 21). Small

jails have fewer resources, so they have no research bureaus like larger facilities, but they have a similar array of problems as larger correctional facilities (Solomon, et al., 2008, p. 9). Rural jails as representing a distinct population are underrepresented in criminal justice and adult education literature (Ruddell and Mays, 2007, Gee, 2008), and programs and research in correctional education face both challenges and potential benefits because of their small-town nature (Solomon, et al., p. 10).

Coming to the Question

My interest in CE grew to the point where now I am interested in CE as a mechanism for addressing social injustice. A lot of questions come to mind when I think about reentry: *Who decides who gets locked-up in the first place, and why, and are these are moral decisions? Is it true that society succeeds in putting "bad" people behind bars? Is that even possible? Are there "good" people who do "bad" things, and if so, does that make them "bad" people? Is there anybody beyond hope of rehabilitation?* The answers to these questions shape the criminal justice system, and they helped shape my views on criminal justice. I came to view incarceration as something that cannot be understood unless it is experienced.

At the same time as I wrestled with this perspective, I listened to Supreme Court Justice Scalia attempt to set the record straight on the US perspective toward incarceration and criminal justice. In March, 2012, the Supreme Court heard *Miller v. Alabama*, and they decided that a life without parole sentence for a 14 year-old who had been convicted of homicide was cruel and unusual punishment and therefore unconstitutional. This affected roughly 2000 juveniles' sentences. Although the Supreme Court ruled the punishment unconstitutional, Justice Scalia argued strongly that the punishment is constitutional

because reasoning against life sentences for minors on the basis of a rehabilitation-based theory of criminal justice was, even for a 14 year-old, a moot point:

MR. STEVENSON: Well, I think one of the problems, Your Honor, with -- with trying to make these judgments is that -- that even psychologists say that we can't make good long-term judgments about the rehabilitation and transitory character of these young people. That's the reason why in *Graham* this Court didn't permit that kind of discretion. We know that --

JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, I thought that modern penology has abandoned that rehabilitation thing, and they -- they no longer call prisons reformatories or whatever, and punishment is the -- is the criterion now. Deserved punishment for crime.

MR. STEVENSON: Well --

JUSTICE SCALIA: Now, if that's the criterion, is everything that you say irrelevant?

MR. STEVENSON: I --

JUSTICE SCALIA: Let's assume I don't believe in rehabilitation, as I think sentencing authorities nowadays do not. Both at the Federal and the State levels, it's been made clear. (Miller, 2012, p. 21-22)

When I come to the question of community reentry in rural communities, I must necessarily engage the question of rehabilitation, a main concept encountered during research in CE. When I heard Justice Scalia, I noticed he did not mention local county jails in his assumption. The U.S. criminal justice system seems dismissive of, or at least unaware of, opportunities at the local level for helping people who are leaving county jail to reenter society as members of the community who engage in legal, positive ways.

I began to realize that people like Justice Scalia *needed to meet people* like those I knew who had left county jail and were certainly capable of whatever Justice Scalia had in mind when he said "rehabilitation." Rehabilitation, however it may be defined, involves the ontological question of whether or not people can change, and I view *change* as the business of education, which may or may not take place as a person makes meaning of his or her experiences. Justice Scalia appeared to leave no room for change at all. However, I decided that a conceptual framework for approaching CE should consider the potential for

change in the context of the structure and the systems of society. I also decided that a theoretical framework for approaching the paucity of understanding about community reentry would need to allow for the possibility of change within the context a defined institutionalized power structure. Change might be possible, depending on the experience.

Purpose Statement

Creswell (2003) suggests that a purpose statement relate “one idea to be explored or understood” (p. 88); in this study, that idea is community reentry as a learning experience. This study may complicate the common perception that individuals “should have learned something” by experiencing reentry. I focused on the transition from small jails to rural communities, representing a large, but unexplored segment of the jail population. My research questions required descriptive answers about the phenomenon of reentry from the perspective of people who had left a small county jail and then transitioned back into their rural community, as well as interpretive actions on my part as a researcher.

My purpose was affected by the contacts that I had made over the years of interacting with my local rural county jail as a teacher, a volunteer, and a researcher. I determined to participate with people who had returned to jail rather than trying to find those who had not returned to jail and were still in the broader community. In exploring this idea, then, my purpose was more specifically to interpret descriptions of lived experiences of people who had reentered and then recidivated to study the relationship between learning and reentry.

My “objectives and... intent” (Creswell, 2003, p.8) included exploring the experience of rural reentry so that the participants’ descriptions may someday be used to help guide a

future needs assessment for CE reentry programs specific to rural reentry. As noted by Solomon and colleagues (2008), “Information about reentry from jails is newly emerging... few evaluations and no proven models currently exist” (p. 30).

The purpose of this study was to examine one rural county jail and explore the factors related to reentry as a learning experience in that community. I am interested in the degree of exposure that participants had to what Gehring (2012) called “the best adult education traditions” like those of Dewey, Freire, and Mezirow (p. 435). My critical interest in the phenomenon is an exploration of the power-knowledge structure in which the participant sees their lived experiences as being embedded. I mainly rely on Foucault to interpret the power relationships encountered in this study.

My substantive interest in reentry was to gain a description of learning as experienced by participants. In particular, my objective in this study was to pay attention to the factors that influence how a phenomenon changes a person’s ‘awareness of one’s awareness’—summarized as “perspective transformation” by Mezirow (1981), which he defined as learning where “the emphasis is on helping the learner identify real problems involving reified power relationships rooted in institutionalised [sic] ideologies which one has internalised [sic] in one’s psychological history” (p.11).

I was interested in knowing how power and knowledge relationships affected opportunities for people in jail to participate in designing and implementing the type of CE reentry programs that Gehring (2012) describes as the most mature approach to CE. The theoretical framework that guides this study uses writings from Foucault, Mezirow, and Dewey to identify and discuss the power relationships related to reentry education opportunities. My interests are reflected in the research questions that guide this study.

Research Questions

By describing the rural reentry experience via the words of people who have recidivated, and by interpreting these descriptions as an educator, this study contributes to an understanding of what the reentry phenomenon means as a learning experience. Collaborating directly with the individuals who are primarily affected by the phenomenon guided my investigation into the questions below:

- What are the lived experiences of reentry for young adult men who reenter a rural community after being held at their local county jail?
 - *Sub-Question:* What meaning do the participants make of their lived experiences?
- What types of learning are apparent in the descriptions of the participants' experiences?
- What types of power relationships are reflected in the descriptions of the participants' experiences?

Significance of the Research

Although a large percentage of people in jail have educational needs (Solomon et al., 2008, p.15), and although these needs affect recidivism (Steurer, 2001), not all jails have educational opportunities (Ruddell & Mays, 2011). Only 14% of the US jail population participates in CE (Solomon et al., 2008, p. 15). In prisons, however, 52% of the population participates in CE. Based on the assumption that CE is valuable because it has been shown to reduce recidivism in prisons, and given that jails see more people in a year than do prisons (Solomon et al., 2008), the discrepancy between jails' and prisons' CE participation rates is concerning.

Without studies such as this, it is difficult to develop needs assessments for jail-based CE reentry programs that take into account participant descriptions of needs and experiences. My perspective is based on the observation that rural counties have high recidivism rates but few CE reentry programs (Solomon et al., 2008, p. 15), which I have described as a challenge to reentry. Since both adult education and criminal justice literature present a narrow selection of readings on rural jails, and since reentry programs are “extremely limited” in number (Solomon et al., p. 11), I identify jails as on the margins of both criminal justice and adult education. Correctional education, which is positioned at the nexus of criminal justice and adult education, should have an understanding of what reentry is like in rural communities because small jails are different than large urban jails and state prisons to the point where they represent a marginalized group of people who have unique experiences during reentry. This study asserts this uniqueness and claims that the underrepresented voice of the person experiencing rural reentry is qualified to describe the experience as a contribution to program planning. To that end, I both document this voice and provide an interpretation of the participants’ descriptions that is focused on the types of learning they make apparent and the power relations they reflect.

No literature describes how or when people develop meaning during the experience of being held at a small county jail and then reentering the local rural community. Studies such as this shed light on rural county jails in Pennsylvania as missing an opportunity for CE research and practice (Gee, 2011; Ruddell & Mays, 2011). County jail wardens are open to the community providing programs, research, and grant opportunities (Gee, p. 32). However, these resources are scarce (Solomon et al., 2008). Although county jails nationwide are described as an “entry point to the correctional system” (Solomon et al., p.

4), they do not have a wide array of programs like state prisons (Solomon et al., p. 11), as discussed earlier. For jails, services to assist people with the consequences of being held (that is, incarcerated or detained) are secondary to “control and security [which] are deeply engrained as the primary mission [of a jail]” (Solomon et al., p. 10). With access to a description of the reentry phenomenon as a learning experience, this study presents an opportunity for community agencies to gain insight into the potential learning opportunities that participants describe.

In summary, this study is significant because it introduces to the discourse of punishment the idea of reentry as a learning experience, and this from the perspective of those who experience it at the local county level, which is the level with the highest number of correctional facilities but the lowest percentage of the population engaging in CE (Solomon et al., 2008). Correctional education has been shown to reduce recidivism (Steurer et al., 2001), yet few people engage in CE; thus, this study is significant at the local level because it provides a basis for a reentry program needs assessment. This study provides a description of what rural reentry is like in the local community and an interpretation of the phenomenon through conceptual and theoretical frameworks that help identify the types of learning that might be occurring during reentry. So, although this study does not aim to solve broader issues that are connected to reentry such as mass incarceration or recidivism in general, it is germane to these issues.

Developing a Conceptual Framework

Since publication of *Life After Lockup* (Solomon, et al., 2008), one conceptual approach to CE has been published by Gehring (2012). Gehring’s approach helps define terms like *rehabilitation* as they relate to CE by filtering the CE experience through the lens

of four quadrants and five levels of organization. As part of my conceptual framework, I included the five-level categorizations of program “maturity” outlined by Gehring in his book *Correctional Education: An Integral Approach* because I found this part of his approach a helpful way to think about CE’s historical development.

I also chose Gehring’s Integral Approach for a conceptual framework because it helped with analysis of reentry as an educational experience. It is the most fully described approach to correctional education in print, and it helped me outline the factors affecting reentry in terms of the personal, social, and institutional relationships described by the participants. Gehring arranged criteria for determining programs’ maturation according to four quadrants, within each of which programs are critiqued based on critical theory in adult education, and, to a large extent, how the learning environment helps or hinders transformational experiences (Gehring, p. 42).

Developing a Theoretical Framework

Asking about living through reentry within the context of one rural community provided a description of the reentry experience new to the discourse of punishment. The theoretical approach that guided this study was based on an approach to education *as experience* based on Dewey’s (1938/1997) experiential learning theory; it is also based on Mezirow’s transformational learning theory, which is tied to critical adult education. This theoretical framework reflects a symbolic interactionist perspective.

The theoretical framework that guided this study allowed me to take a strengths-based approach to adult learning in the correctional environment because none of the theories I drew from asserted that learners need to be “fixed” due to some social malady. A deficit perspective stating that there is necessarily failure on the part of the person who

reenters and then recidivates is used as the basis for much of criminological theory, including classical deterrence theory, punishment theory, and rehabilitative theory. Each of these theories represents a broad set of authors in the criminology literature, and each relies on the basic assumption that people who are “deviant” need to be aligned with the norm. Other theories, such as social learning theory and environmental theory hold the criminal in more regard, yet still operate on the fundamental principle that there is something outside of the norm about the individual that needs to be addressed (even if by only addressing external factors such as environment). To establish a research perspective, I needed to approach the question of whether or not people in jail have something “wrong” with them that makes them bad. I needed to approach the question of whether the PA DOC’s act of making a checklist of needs and assessing individuals according to them was an act of asserting dominance by defining needs that might not even exist or be applicable.

In an out-of-print literature base provided to me by the Study for the Center of Correctional Education at California State University San Bernardino, I read about several experiences in small jails that connected recidivism to the actions of the broader community rather than an individual’s deficits, *per se*. This literature focuses on democracy as a collective exercise of power, describing one program in which the inmates actually ran the institution (Osborne, 1924). Reading about these programs influenced my research perspective by broadening my awareness of the possibilities within a system that I had formerly thought of as the ultimate definition of restrictive. At about the same time, I began reading works by Foucault, and a large portion of this study relies on my explication of the panoptic paradigm as relayed by Foucault (1977/1995) and how the possibilities surrounding CE have historically been embedded within a power relationship defined

outside of the field, by different fields of study (namely, criminology, the study of crime, and penology, the study of punishment).

I considered several other perspectives for this study, including prioritizing a search for theories to answer the question of why do people recidivate. However, I determined this to be too advanced for current study in rural CE because it needs to be contextualized by the exploratory question of what reentry is like as a learning experience. Choosing a different perspective would not allow the theoretical “room” I needed to consider the tension between *panopticism* (Foucault, 1977/1995) and *transformation* (Mezirow, 1990, 1991, 1995), since the former seemingly precludes the latter in the literature of correctional education.

Study Design

To prevent the study from shifting focus to the community, outlying social issues, or the jail itself, I bounded the study as an instrumental collective case study, with the participants at the jail being chosen to make the collective case. The unit of observation I chose was each individual participant in the collective case, and I identified the unit of analysis (“what it is you want to be able to say something about” [Patton, 2002, p. 229]) as the participants’ descriptions of the reentry phenomenon. Because I chose a critical phenomenological approach, the unit of analysis was viewed as embedded within the participants’ understandings of the power structure in which they experienced the phenomenon—their descriptions were viewed philosophically as descriptions of their *lifeworlds* (to use Mezirow’s [1991] term).

There were seven participants, all of them men aged 18 to 24. I chose young men because I considered them to be at the outskirts of a marginalized population since they

were in jail and neither seemed to qualify as adults or juveniles. I interviewed the men in jail, having screened them first for eligibility based on their age and making sure they had been through the experience of community reentry. I collected the data during semi-structured interviews (Englander, 2012), and critical phenomenology was the approach that I chose to guide the analytical design of this study. This approach built upon an initial objective search for the essence of a phenomenon, and it then provided an interpretation of the phenomenon as described within a clearly bracketed hermeneutical framework. Critical phenomenology allowed for three “reductions” of the data. In the first reduction, which was transcendental, I sought to describe the essence of community reentry. In the second, which was hermeneutical, I allowed for interpretation of the participants’ descriptions of community reentry as a learning experience. In the third, which was critical, I explored the data as embedded within a power structure which thus can be examined for participants’ descriptions of power relationships. I took care to distinguish between the act of analyzing the data and the act of describing themes while I was accomplishing the transcendental reduction, but during the hermeneutic and critical reductions, the phenomenological approach that guided this study called for my interpretive acts to be integrated with my descriptive acts.

Outline of the Dissertation

In Chapter 1, I articulate the study’s background as concisely as possible and introduced the conceptual and theoretical frameworks and the study design. I explain that my substantive interest is learning that takes place during reentry, and I establish that this study fills a gap in the adult education research literature. My argument is that correctional education practices need to be understood because of potential connections to social issues

such as community reentry. Throughout Chapter 1, I briefly identify key terms when encountered and conclude with an outline the study's design.

In Chapter 2, I first provide more in-depth definitions of key terms, and then I outline the social and historical development of the jail system and of correctional education. I explain how Foucault (1977/2005) described subjugation and social control as developmental factors in the birth of the prison—and thus of the educational system related to it. Because it informs this study's conceptual framework, I also describe the structure of "mature" types of CE programs as put forth by Gehring (2012) in his *Integral Approach to CE*. I lay out a theoretical framework suitable for studying reentry as a learning experience, and I describe critical adult education, outlining a connection in the literature between social action and adult education. I include Foucault's (1997/2003) views on power, and I examine Dewey's (1938/1997) views on education as experience and Mezirow's (1971) views on critical adult education as transformative.

In Chapter 3, I identify the research approach and methods that guide this study, beginning with an explanation of the phenomenological approach that I use to study reentry as a learning experience. I recognize that Zahavi's (2008) and Marsh's (1987) views of phenomenology would fit this study's requirements for a phenomenological approach that is at once descriptive, interpretive, and critical. My recognition is the result of reviewing of Englander (2012) and Zahavi in comparison to qualitative methodologists such as Moustakas (1994), van Manen (1990), Creswell (2007), Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Patton (1990, 2002), each of whom inform the methodology I present in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 presents themes that I identify by analyzing the data according to the phenomenological reductions, organized into three groups and interpreted in light of the

conceptual and the theoretical frameworks established in Chapter 2. The first group of themes is transcendental. I follow its description with a separate analysis. The second two groups of themes are drawn from the hermeneutical and critical reductions, and I embed the analysis of those themes within their descriptions, thus reflecting the way in which I interact with the data. I apply Gehring's (2012) model to the findings, and I describe the phenomenon in terms of learning experiences. Finally, I present the power relationships that I identified in this study as affecting community reentry.

In Chapter 5, I present a general description of rural community reentry as a lived experience. I interpret the themes to answer the study's research questions. I discuss the descriptions and their analysis, and I make a recommendation for use of this research and express its limitations.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

I began searching for literature to answer the question, *What is it like for young men to reenter a rural community from a county jail?* Although there is information about community reentry in general in the literature (Kaiser & Lewitzke, 2010), there is a dearth of information about reentry from jails or reentry into rural communities (Solomon, et al., 2008). So, I focused on texts that provided background information about the phenomenon of reentry and the context in which CE is administered. I turned to two major texts providing complementary ways of approaching CE as part of the philosophical and historical development of corrections, shedding light on the political context of reentry and any educational program associated with it. The first text, Foucault's (1977/2005) *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, casts the CE environment as a microcosm of the society to which a prisoner is released, with a power structure that influences which knowledges will be deemed useful for making decisions that affect how society identifies, characterizes, and treats people who are labeled as deviant. The second, Gehring's (2012) *Correctional Education: An Integral Approach*, depicts the CE environment as a unique arrangement of internal and external variables that affect adult education inside correctional facilities. Gehring views CE as having matured over the years as penology has developed, yet points to a hidden history in the early US prison system wherein several administrators successfully experimented with establishing their facilities as democratic learning environments.

There is not enough data about reentry from county jails to identify solid boundaries of what "reentry" means in the current literature. Although the phenomenon of reentry has not been defined in the CE literature as such, crime rates are rising in rural

areas, and there is growing interest in rural reentry from a criminal justice perspective (Ruddell & Mays, 2011). The phenomenon of rural reentry is recognized, but few researchers are writing about it.

This literature review presents the intertwined histories of the development of the study of punishment within the field of criminal justice, influenced heavily by the writings of Foucault, and the development of CE as a field of study within adult education. Similarly, this literature review presents the historical development of CE as it relates to both the development of criminal justice and educational philosophy. In the first section of this chapter, I present the key terms that I will use while discussing CE and community reentry. Then, I introduce major concepts from Foucault and provide a historical overview of CE. In the next section, I present the Integral Approach to CE (Gehring, 2012), and in the final section, I outline the theoretical framework that guides this study.

Identification of Concepts and Definitions

A confusing web of concepts and definitions surrounds the topic of CE. Neither *reentry* nor *recidivism* are standardized terms in the criminal justice or adult education literature (Lyman & Lubuglio, 2007). In this study, I define *reentry* as the experience of leaving a jail or prison and returning to the outside community. The term *reentry* was used synonymously with *transition* in the Urban Institute's landmark publication on the status of the jail-to-community phenomenon nationwide, *Life After Lockup* (Solomon, et al., 2008, xvi.). *Transition* is sometimes also used as a verb representing an individual's physical relocation during the reentry phenomenon; that is, one can *transition* during *reentry*. Going back to jail afterward, as discussed below, is *recidivism*.

Jail and *prison* are not synonymous. In this study, I focused on *rural reentry*—relocating back into the community from a small correctional facility in a rural county. “Small” county jails are generally situated in “rural” communities, as are large county jails situated in urban communities (Ruddell & Mays, 2011, p. 108). “Rural” and “small” are often used interchangeably for rural county jails (Ruddell & Mays, 2007, p. 105-107; Solomon, et al., 2008, p.9; see also Ruddell & Mays, 2006). There is not enough information in the research literature to provide a comprehensive picture of reentry from rural jails; most research is based on larger, urban populations, but estimates are that about 2,000 of the nation’s 3,300 jails fit the definition of rural (based on the population density fitting most government definitions as described by Ruddell & Mays, 2007). Literature seldom acknowledges a distinction between these small, rural facilities and large, urban facilities. This is relevant to the study of community reentry as a learning experience because smaller jails have less money to fund interventions aimed at reducing recidivism.

To date, one researched intervention in the reentry process in general has been *correctional education* (CE). CE programs are designed to deliver educational content to an incarcerated population. CE programs have been shown to reduce recidivism at the state level (for example, the landmark “Three State Study” in correctional education by Steurer, Smith, and Tracy, 2001). However, research shows a lack of program and research funding at the local county level (Gee, 2011; Ruddell, 2005; Ruddell & Mays, 2006; Wodahl, 2006). Regarding all types of programming found in jails nationwide, “religious programming” is the most common (in 70% of jails), followed by “alcohol programs (dependency, counseling, or awareness)” (62%), and correctional education, defined as “any educational programming” (60%) including “secondary education, basic adult education, job search

training, vocational training” (Solomon et al., p. 12). Throughout this study, the word “programs,” refers to each category mentioned above. “CE programs” specifically means the last category: “secondary education, basic adult education [sic], job search training, vocational training.” Any program designed to facilitate transition to the community during reentry is referred to as a “CE reentry program.”

The field of CE figuratively is located at the intersection of adult education and criminal justice (specifically, criminology: the study of crime, its causation and definition, and the factors influencing its prevalence). Gehring (2000) called for all students in CE programs to be treated as adult education students because the expectations of them are the same as for the adults with whom they are confined. He argued that CE *is* adult education. I could find no assertions to the contrary, notwithstanding the existence of CE inside juvenile detention facilities. The idea that CE is adult education dates back to the writings of MacCormick, a pioneer of correctional education as a field of study and the founder of The Correctional Education Association. MacCormick (1931) stated, “Education for prisoners must be ‘adultized.’ They are adults, with adult interests, concepts, and experiences” (p. 10).

As implied already, much of the work of CE research is in determining the relationship between CE and *recidivism* after reentry. The variation in the term “rural” can complicate research efforts (Ruddell & Mays, 2011), and so can the definition of “recidivism” (Lyman & LoBuglio, 2007). Although recidivism in a general sense is defined as a return to incarceration, the definition has not been operationalized as a standard measurement in terms of what constitutes a return and within what time frame. Three years is a common time frame, but the question of what constitutes a return seems to vary,

with some researchers including technical parole or probation violations (TPVs) as a return while others consider committing a new offense as a return (Lyman & LoBuglio, 2007). Examples of TPVs include: not informing a probation officer that a phone number or an address had been changed, not appearing for a scheduled meeting with a parole or probation officer, and testing positive for drugs during a urinalysis. Individual rural county wardens in Pennsylvania had differing ideas of what constituted “recidivism” and none could cite published studies of their own facility’s recidivism rate (Gee, 2011). Most wardens estimated the recidivism rate at their facility to be 50-70% (Gee, 2011, p. 32). Gee (2008) estimated the recidivism rate in Tioga County, PA, at 83% (p. 315).

Several factors affect recidivism in rural communities in particular (Feather & Tromanhauser, 1968; Kaiser & Lewitzke, 2010; Nuttall & Hollman, 2003). Using the qualitative categories presented by Feather and Tromanhauser, these factors can be summarized into groups as follows:

- lack of education,
- unemployment/lack of job skills,
- drug and alcohol abuse,
- debts/Money problems,
- bad environment/home life,
- failure to adjust/immaturity, and
- bad associates/no one to go to.

The above topics can be found in CE practice as the main topics of CE *programs*. Each could be found in the literature labeled as a CE program or as part or whole of a reentry program, and each represents an area of need as defined by previous efforts in community reentry

research (Freudenberg, Daniels, Crum, Perkins, & Richie, 2008; Golden, Gatchel, & Cahill, 2006; Kaiser & Lewitzke, 2010; Katsiyannis, Zhang, Barrett, & Flaska, 2004; Vacca, 2004).

One way of looking at the general historical movement of CE as it came to exist in institutions' program rosters is to say that it began with adult basic education (ABE) that was focused on functional literacy (another problematic term, as noted by St. Clair and Sandlin [2004]); additions to adult basic education (ABE) programs then included general education development (GED) coursework, vocational education (training in specific job skills such as carpentry), job preparation education (sometimes referred to as transition skills), parenting skills, and family literacy, as well as a catch-all category that Steurer called "cognitive training enhanced by special reading techniques and inmate tutors and accommodations for learning disabled students" (p. 50). Thus, correctional education is not limited to GED and ABE classes. Literacy is often defined broadly when applied to CE programs that are offered, and there is no standard definition of the word *program* in the literature or in practice. It would not be surprising to find a financial literacy or computer literacy course described as *correctional education*. The vagueness of *program* and lack of a precise definition for CE means that both are likely to be used interchangeably.

Some CE programs are referred to as *reentry programs* and are studied at the state and federal level based on the needs (or deficits, depending on the perspective) that the programs are intended to address. Some larger jails incorporate a "reentry philosophy" into their operations so that reentry focus is a "way of doing business;" others "focus on the transitional needs" for targeted portions of the jail population (Solomon et al., 2008, p. 61). Regardless of whether a jail takes a holistic approach to community reentry or a program-by-program approach, "few reentry efforts are highly resourced" (Solomon et al., p. 62).

Due to lack of standard definitions, CE could be confused with other organized services that have no specific educational intent. Other services that US county jails have been known to offer include mental health services and personal development services (outlined in Table 1). Few small jails are able to fund any CE services at all; although some type of “educational programming” is found in 60% of jails nationwide, it is not likely that these are *small* jails (Solomon, et al., 2008, p. 11).

Table 1. Services Offered in US County Jails

Service	Percent of US Jails Offering Service
Mental Health	
Suicide risk assessment at intake	87%
Mental health screening at intake	78%
Psychotropic medication	66%
Correctional Education	
Any educational programming	60%
Secondary education	55%
Adult basic education	25%
Job search training	15%
Vocational training	7%
Substance Abuse	
Alcohol programs	62%
Drug programs	55%
Personal Development	
Religious programming	70%
Life skills training	22%
Parenting training	12%

Note: Adapted from Solomon, et al. (2008, p.12)

Historical Shifts in Perspectives

In this section, I outline the major historical shifts in correctional education while providing a frame of reference for power relationships (Foucault, 1977/2005). Foucault's concepts parallel those in dominant viewpoints on crime and punishment (Werner, 1990). In *Correctional Education: Theory and Practice*, Werner describes historical shifts by referring to *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Foucault, 1977/2005), which describes a fundamental change in the discourse of punishment after the French Revolution. Foucault presents a historical description of two "physics" of power in the discourse of punishment (p. 208). In this section, I highlight the features of Foucault's philosophical description of incarceration's development as a social institution. I explain the main terms of the discourse of punishment and make connections between Foucault's ideas and the historical development of CE as put forth by Werner.

Subjugation

Foucault's work is frequently cited by authors seeking to describe situations in which groups of people and their knowledge are being "subjugated," which Foucault defines by stating,

when I say 'subjugated knowledges' I am also referring to a whole series of knowledges that have been disqualified as... insufficiently elaborated knowledges: naive knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity."
(Foucault, 2003, p. 7)

Subjugated knowledge is "local knowledge," and it differs from "disciplinary knowledge;" local knowledge exists in local people, who in turn are people who are subjugated (p. 8). By contrast, "disciplinary knowledge" is that which comes from science; referred to as

“erudition or scientificity” above, disciplinary knowledge is the dominant form of knowledge in contemporary power relations (p. 8).

The concept of subjugation by disciplinary knowledge is connected to the Integral Approach described by Gehring (2012). The most mature levels of Gehring’s approach are characterized by giving priority to local knowledge through a democratic learning approach. However, neither Gehring nor Foucault attempt to answer how a social system, such as jail, that is designed to subjugate people would at the same time afford people with a democratic learning experience.

Social Control

Relevant to a critical interest in rural reentry as a learning experience is how disciplinary knowledge is prioritized over local knowledge—and by whom—during reentry. The dominant criminal justice perspective in the 1980s was rehabilitation: the purpose of jail is ostensibly to teach someone a lesson. However, what this lesson is is unclear. The explanation of the lesson is “below the required level of scientificity” using Foucault’s language, above. There is no evidence in the CE or specific criminal justice reentry literature that the “lesson” has been operationalized by any party other than correctional administration, researchers, or volunteer education providers such as local colleges or universities.

Although these parties may all have goals and objectives for articulating the “lesson,” the person in the jail possesses their own knowledge of reentry and their own conceptualization of it—which may or may not be congruent to the any given program’s objectives. The teaching of the lesson—the social control—is the *raison d’être* for CE or any services in correctional facilities in the Foucauldian panoptic paradigm. The design of the

institution itself, as noted below, contributes to the internalization of the expectation that there is a lesson to be found, as one is constantly being either while both in or out of jail.

The Panopticon

The modern-day criminal justice environment of CE is an elaborate machine of classification, categorization, labeling, assessing, and monitoring inspired by Bentham's panopticon architecture, and it is a microcosm for mass surveillance activities by a democratic government designed for social control (Foucault, 1997/2005). The panopticon was not merely a building to house criminals; it was a "discipline-mechanism" to be applied to the structure of society (Foucault, p. 12). The result of this mechanism is that each individual begins to monitor others *and* oneself, "eliminating the need for force" (Prins, 2010, p. 429).

Architecturally, Bentham designed the panopticon so that its structure makes it impossible for a captive to escape the view of the person in control (Werner, 1990). The architecture of the Panopticon was such that each person was always subject to surveillance, and, in turn, each person internalized this constant gaze (Prins, 2010). The panopticon was not designed to ferret out local knowledge and elevate it to such an erudite or scientific position that it would be able to participate in the discourse of punishment.

Rather, the very architecture of the panoptic arrangement inhibits knowledge from being hidden or localized. Everything that is done is under surveillance, and the subjugated person in the panopticon has internalized this surveillance as a form of self-surveillance (Foucault, 1997/2005). The panopticon was an architectural structure resulting in total access to prisoners, thus facilitating their domination and control, and it served as a metaphor for how local knowledge can be subjugated by governments through the use of

surveillance and through the use of sanctioned disciplines of science to produce a knowledge erudite enough to be used for social control (Foucault, 1997/2005). Local knowledge is ferreted-out in a panoptic structure so that it can be subjugated. This occurs first by the identification of local knowledge through constant surveillance (Foucault, 1997/2005) and second through public documentation of facts that are generated by a socially constructed knowledge (Smith, 1974). The implication of Foucault's work is that democracy is an apparatus of social control, as citizens have willfully elected to socially construct knowledge and produce a group of people to sanction the production of that very same knowledge which they need to use to freely inform their own choices. Thus, in a panoptic society, people give up their local knowledge to be ruled by an elected few who represent the masses. These few rely on the disciplines of science to exact social control.

Punishment

Prior to large-scale adoption of Bentham's panopticon as a prison or jail structure, CE began as literacy instruction for the purpose of reading the Bible as penance (Werner, 1990, p. 32). Inside, early prisons resembled monasteries because they shared the philosophical purpose of coming "to know oneself better and arrive at right action through isolation and contemplation" (p.10). From the late 1700s to the late 1800s, incarceration became an increasingly acceptable method of effective punishment and social control (p. 20-22). During this period, "the entire economy of punishment was redistributed" (Foucault, 1997/2005, p. 19). This redistribution was not a shift away from punishment; rather, it was a shift within the discourse of punishment from a focus on an individual's offense toward God to a focus on an individual's offense toward society (Werner, 1990).

Society becomes the new *sovereign*, and then disciplines of science are used to classify and categorize people according to their offenses so they can be punished.

When Foucault wrote that the economy of punishment had been redistributed, he was referring to the French Revolution; there is a parallel between the institutionalization of the system of punishment between the French and American Revolutions—and these correspond to other changes in how punishment was being managed across the world. For example, the Mark System in Australia was the predecessor of indeterminate punishment, in which a sentence can be altered based on one's behavior *after* sentencing (Werner, 1990, p. 34). With the ability to codify, categorize, and classify prisoners scientifically, their punishment—that is, the length of their sentences—could be made commensurate with their behavior while incarcerated.

The history of punishment is parallel to the history of intervention as a “necessary” consequence of the Christian doctrine of Original Sin: as humankind is born sinful, so must crime be expected (Werner, 1990, p. 2-3). Physical punishment of the criminal's body would “always exceed the crime in severity and power” as punishment for offending the property of the king—that is, the sovereign's body was seen as violated, so the offender's consequence was most often corporal (Werner, 1990, p. 5). The notion that punishment is corporal seems deeply embedded within the discourse of punishment.

Discipline

Domination by a sovereign entity before the French Revolution shifted to domination by institutionalized scientific discipline after it (Foucault, 1997/2005). Instead of sins against kings and crimes against God and the realm, the new “physics of power” (p. 208) functions as a system designed to administer punishment for any crime as a sin

against society because a king is no longer in charge; rather, under a democratic system, the people are supposedly in charge. Society hails scientific discipline as a new sovereign entity, deferring to scientific discipline as the holder of truth and generator knowledge so that crimes can be categorized and suitable punishments can be dealt (with this categorization and labeling being a significant aspect of “mechanisms of power” [p. 209]).

The system of punishment governed by science recapitulates the former system of punishment overseen by a sovereign power (e.g. a monarch) (Foucault, 1997/2005). When Foucault writes of Bentham’s panopticon, introduced during the French Revolution, he describes it as a feat of engineering, the “perfect disciplinary institution” (p. 208). Then, he describes how in Bentham’s architectural design, Bentham had also given the blueprint for “unlocking’ the disciplines...[to] get them to function in a diffused, multiple, polyvalent way throughout the whole social body” (p. 208-209). In this way, the new “physics of power” in a post-sovereign world is not based on offense toward one man—the king—but toward the multiplicities of each individual of society (Foucault, p. 208). If discipline were diagramed, the new physics of power would be operated by “the whole lower region... with their details, their multiple movements, their heterogeneous forces, their spatial relations” rather than by one king in the topmost, sovereign position (p. 208).

Scientific discipline became the new form of social control, and it made for a “light” and “swift” system of surveillance possible—this is the system Foucault (1977/1995) overtly labels as “panopticism,” which is “the design of subtle coercion for a society to come” (p. 209). Scientific discipline (or simply “discipline”) is “a modality for [power’s] exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets” (p. 215). The power structure of the panopticon equates to a

behavioralist application of science to the physical body (called *discipline*) for the purpose of controlling will and identity, with expressed control over every possible aspect of another person's life being given to a scientifically approved administrator of punishment, such as a ward or officer. The result of discipline is internalization of the surveillance system's eternal gaze, at which point people self-surveil—an indication of subjugation (Foucault, 1997/2003).

Discipline functions differently than sovereign law: “the discourse of disciplines is about a rule: not a juridical rule derived from sovereignty, but a discourse about a natural rule, or in other words a norm... a code of normalization” whose edifice is “the field of human sciences. And the jurisprudence of these disciplines will be that of clinical knowledge” (Foucault, 1997/2003, p.38). To summarize: the discourses of clinical knowledge govern the code of normalization within the panoptic society conceived by Foucault. Foucault's philosophical contribution to the study of community reentry as a learning experience calls into question whether the experience of reentry is being used as a mechanism of normalization or social control.

Foucault argues that discipline—how a body is treated—is not so different between society's institutions, which revolve around the subject of examination and inquiry, giving the example that “educational psychology is supposed to correct the rigours of the school, just as the medical or psychiatric interview is supposed to rectify the effects of the discipline of work” (p. 226). Foucault argues that these disciplines are self-referential, and, in effect, self-serving. They are “caught up in disciplinary technology” (p. 227) and reinvent their need for existence *by* existing. Disciplining the physical body creates a need to discipline the physical body in the same way that the existence of disciplinary scientific

knowledge creates a need for more of the same—and all this for the purpose of social control.

Historical Development of Correctional Education

The extent to which Bentham’s panopticon has influenced CE cannot be measured, but CE established its roots within the contexts of the architectural panopticon and the emerging panoptic society described by Foucault. Penal philosophy, covering criminal justice in a broad sense, from arrest to sentencing to supervision after release, went through several phases in the United States, each a variation on the fundamental question of whether or not the “deviant” (in the eyes of the criminologist) can change. The earliest conversations in the discourse of punishment included education only to the extent that any program offered was in actuality a type of penance to pay for sins (for example, literacy only for the sake of learning to read the Bible) (Werner, 1990). Having reviewed the historical shifts in perspectives on discipline and punishment, I now consider the development of correctional education within this historico-political context.

Initial Correctional Education Efforts

It may be a “mistake” (Werner, 1990) to apply the term correctional education to the earliest activities that were penance as well as activities in the prison-for-profit or hard-labor facilities that immediately followed in the mid-1800s (p. 30-32). By 1870, Congress was discussing two options for changing how punishment would be applied in the United States: the parole system and the Maconochie Mark System (Werner, p. 35), the latter of which led to indeterminate sentencing in 26 states by 1915 (p. 46). Gehring, historian for the Correctional Education Association, has written volumes detailing the period in time from Zebulun Brockway’s first educational reforms in Elmira, NY, through

the reforms of the 1910-1920s, led by Thomas Mott Osborne, to that of Austin MacCormick beginning in the 1930s. At this time, the field of Correctional Education entered a “progressive” era, and “corrections” became a field of study in its own right, distinct from the broader penal system (Werner, 1990, p. 48).

From the 1950s to 1980s, rehabilitation was considered by more administrators as a plausible philosophy of corrections (Werner, 1990). This marked a shift in perspective from incarceration a system of punishment to a system of rehabilitation. As early as 1950, MacCormick (1950) labeled retributive justice and punitive incarceration fruitless efforts at social control, arguing that the only then-current philosophy of criminal justice that could work at all would be deterrence theory—but that the US criminal justice system does not have the ability to conduct the swift and certain punishment needed for deterrence to result in effective interventions. In Foucauldian terms, the United States was not enough a panopticon for deterrence to work.

“Most criminologists in the United States today recognize that rehabilitation was an experiment that failed,” notes Werner (1990, p. 74), and this perspective continues today, as noted Chapter 1. Indeterminate sentencing was also “a thundering failure” because “inmates quickly learned that the only way to guarantee an early release was to manipulate parole board members into thinking that moral transformation had occurred” (p. 75). Other reasons for the rehabilitation perspective’s decline include that rehabilitation is an individual occurrence rather than an institution-wide phenomenon; people are unlikely to change in the “confining and demeaning” institutional environment (p. 74). Rehabilitation as a criminal justice perspective also failed due because it was too difficult to confirm and measure (Werner, 1990).

Correctional education is fundamentally at odds with the penal philosophies of *deterrence*, where the function of incarceration is to deter future criminals; *incapacitation*, which aims to remove criminally prone individuals from society; and *punishment*, which applies a penalty for a crime (Werner, 1990, p. 78). Rehabilitation is not at odds with CE, although its ineffectiveness as a penal philosophy is questioned by Werner (1990), when he suggests that “someone who was possibly never *habilitated* to begin with cannot be *re-habilitated*” (p. 74, emphasis in the original).

Correctional Education as Literacy Education

Werner’s statement above operates on the assumption that there two kinds of people: the habilitated and the un-habilitated—the normal and the deviant. A dualistic belief about human society underlies most criminological theories, perhaps illustrating why no theory—including rehabilitation—has proven to be a successful approach for reducing recidivism. If “habilitation” were to be defined, literacy would be one characteristic of the habilitated; this is assertion is based on my finding in the literature that literacy is the most common curricular area discussed as based on my review of several decades of *The Journal of Correctional Education* issues. Correctional education can be connected to the broader field of *adult literacy* by framing it as a social issue in which a large (and growing) population has been labeled as deficient in the literature and somehow in need of being fixed.

Wright (2001), a prominent Canadian researcher in adult literacy education in correctional facilities, describes a deficit perspective in CE. Students in CE have been discursively fixed by society as “full of deficits and needs and lacking in rationality” (p. 84). Lack of rationality as perceived by society—a limitation of local knowledge (Foucault,

1997/2003)—is the primary reason why “the student’s interpretations of the world are often ignored” in the development of correctional education programs (Wright, p. 84). As an alternative to the deficit discourse, the discursive function of *place* in the critique of grand theory, stating that local places “resist overarching program prescriptions and produce different discourses of literacy” (p. 86). Wright asks whether local spaces will be used to “prepare the ground for democratic social relations” or simply “(re)create a world inlaid with economic and administrative models” (p.86). Posed from a Foucauldian perspective, the question becomes whether this is a space where local knowledge will continue to be subjugated by the dominant form of disciplinary knowledge or if emancipation is truly possible.

Literacy appears in CE literature more than any other curricular area. My review was based on a *Journal of Correctional Education* database provided to me by University of California’s Center for the Study of Correctional Education. Gehring (2012) drew a direct comparison between Freire’s approach to literacy education and what he called the *universal level*—the most mature CE programs, according to his conceptual approach. On one end of the spectrum Gehring described is an approach whereby literacy is a part of students learning to change the world around them; on the other end of the spectrum, the approach is to use literacy as a mechanism for inscribing social order into subjects, much in the same way that Werner (1990) described early correctional education as learning to read the Bible in pursuit of penitence for sins.

Some approaches to learning appear to be disqualified from the discourse of punishment within the CE literature. Approaches that are informed by humanism and presume human development to be a function of internal growth or self-actualization—for

example, Freire's (1970/2010) focuses on *conscientização*, "the deepening of the attitude of awareness" (p. 109). Approaches such as these, which allow for student autonomy, seem at odds with panoptic arrangements because CE within a panoptic arrangement might only function to reproduce a "body of knowledge that is accumulated and centralized" as opposed to unearthing of local knowledge (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 231).

Corrections management has been driven by its own, parallel, language of deficits which is currently embedded in the criminological discourse of punishment as the dominant "diagnostic-prescriptive method" of contemporary U.S. corrections (Gehring, 2010, p. 485). For example, in Pennsylvania, the Department of Corrections (DOC) makes connections between the scientific, clinical assessment of individuals and the type of experiences they have while incarcerated (Latessa, Smith, Schweitzer, & Lovins, 2009). This assessment and treatment is based on the work of criminologist Gendreau in the late 1900s, who offered seven principles of "effective intervention" that dictate which literature will qualify to participate in the discourse of reentry under the heading in criminology known as the "What Works" literature (Latessa et al., 2009). This 'What Works' literature describes the deficits of inmates as being "behavioral in nature," as identified by "standardized assessments" that target "predictors of crime" (p. 8). These "dynamic risk factors (i.e. criminogenic needs)" are often defined by the adjective "antisocial" (i.e., "antisocial personality," "antisocial attitudes," and "antisocial peer relationships") (p. 8). Such lists of criminogenic needs determine an inmate's prescribed instruction while incarcerated by the PA DOC. Literacy instruction in the PA DOC is specific to adult basic education coursework, which is required of any person who does not hold a high school diploma or GED credential.

Neither correctional educators nor criminal justice administrators have incentive to challenge the assertion in the discourse of punishment that the correctional population is inherently defective. These defects are accepted as a rationale for correctional education budget requests. Illiteracy is a commonly cited deficit of correctional populations (Shippen, Patterson, Dunn, Derzis, Nelson, & Houchins, 2010) and a metaphor for failure not only academically but also socially, economically, and morally (St. Clair and Sandlin, 2004). This metaphor seems to be at work in correctional education as well as in the broader field of literacy education. Steve Steurer (2001), president of the Correctional Education Association, placed illiteracy and learning disabilities on one end of a spectrum and “successful citizens, parents and community members” on another (pp. 50-51).

Steurer’s assessment of the development of literacy instruction in correctional education stands as an example of what Luke (1994) called a propensity for educators to seek “a definitive formula for literacy” (p. 309). Luke (1994) called into question the way literacy is conceived historically as “a replacement of the latter by the former: of untruths by ‘truths’, of wrong theories by right ones, of archaic practices and folk wisdoms by ‘state of the art’ pedagogic science” (p. 309). Steurer described the status of literacy education in correctional institutions as currently at the *developmental* level on Gehring’s model of maturation (see below); moving to the highest level of *reciprocity* would require a fundamental shift beyond the language of deficits. Instructional design, as outlined by Steurer above, has been to add one program to another whenever a new deficit is to be targeted or a new practice comes along. In this manner, everything can be fixed.

Luke (1994) has observed a similar phenomenon in the history of literacy instruction, noting that it is “littered” with “social and cultural panaceas and promises” (p.

308). In correctional education, the discourse of punishment is rooted in a paradigm that requires 'scientific' quantitative assertions of validity for both quantitative and qualitative constructs. Correctional education supposedly equips people to overcome the personal deficits that landed them in prison, thereby increasing their employability and consequently curbing recidivism. Correctional education is likened unto a panacea for deviance, and the use of recidivism as the primary indicator of success has been challenged in theory and in practice by several authors, including Gehring (2012), Solomon et al. (2008), and Lyman and LoBuglio (2007).

Gehring's Integral Approach

I have implied that viewing CE as a panacea for deviance is naïve. Although literature is available to show that CE reduces recidivism, humans exist in a context of complex relationships and environments. In perhaps the most thorough description of concepts related to correctional education, Gehring (2012) articulated a book-length framework for the study of CE, which he called the *integral approach*. This approach neither trivializes nor overly emphasizes CE instruction, and it challenges the banking concept of literacy. Gehring's approach does not acknowledge factors specific to county jails and therefore has that caveat when applied to the county level; nevertheless, it is the only comprehensive approach to correctional education that has been published since Werner's (1990) *Correctional Education: Theory and Practice*.

Gehring presented the development of correctional education as a function of four interrelated quadrants, and he emphasized that transformation is a key concept in how CE students' and teachers' needs are approached. He bluntly stated: "It don't mean a thing if it

ain't transformational" (Gehring, 2012, p. 8). Drawing on the writings of existentialist Ken Wilber (2000a, 2000b), Gehring describes the four quadrants diagramed in Figure 1.

Integral Approach	Interior	Exterior
Individual	1. Subjective Quadrant <i>Teacher's Rationale</i>	2. Objective Quadrant <i>Instructional Experience</i>
Collective	4. Cultural Quadrant <i>Teacher's Identity</i>	3. Social Quadrant <i>Administrative Configuration</i>

Figure 1. The four quadrants of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach

Overview

The subjective quadrant represents individual internal elements of experience; the objective is represents individual external elements; the social represents collective external elements; and the cultural represents collective internal elements (p. 51). Gehring also described five levels of maturity, or development, that researchers and practitioners in the field of CE can use for the study and implementation of CE programs (p. 8-12). Thus, any experience, substantive interest, theme, or concern in correctional education can be viewed along five levels of maturity and four quadrants of experience according to Gehring's model. This results in a three-dimensional stack of levels, as shown in Figure 2. In the section that follows, I will explain Gehring's model in depth, using it as a framework to organize additional literature on viewing reentry as a learning experience.

These quadrants parallel four "educational domains" for CE (Gehring, 2012, p. 427). The subjective domain for CE corresponds to teacher rationale (individual, internal); the objective domain corresponds to the instruction itself (individual, external); the social

domain corresponds to CE's administrative configuration (collective, external); the cultural domain corresponds to teacher identity (collective, internal) (p. 428). Gehring's model is teacher-centric; this is partly due to the dominant perspective toward education in correctional institutions being influenced by the "diagnostic-prescriptive" management context of U.S. corrections, which Gehring stated "is associated with the banking concept of education," which he then contrasts with Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy (p. 485).

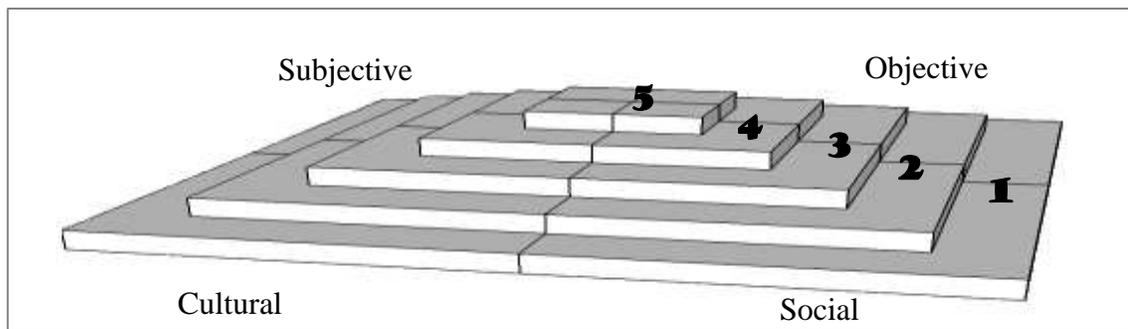
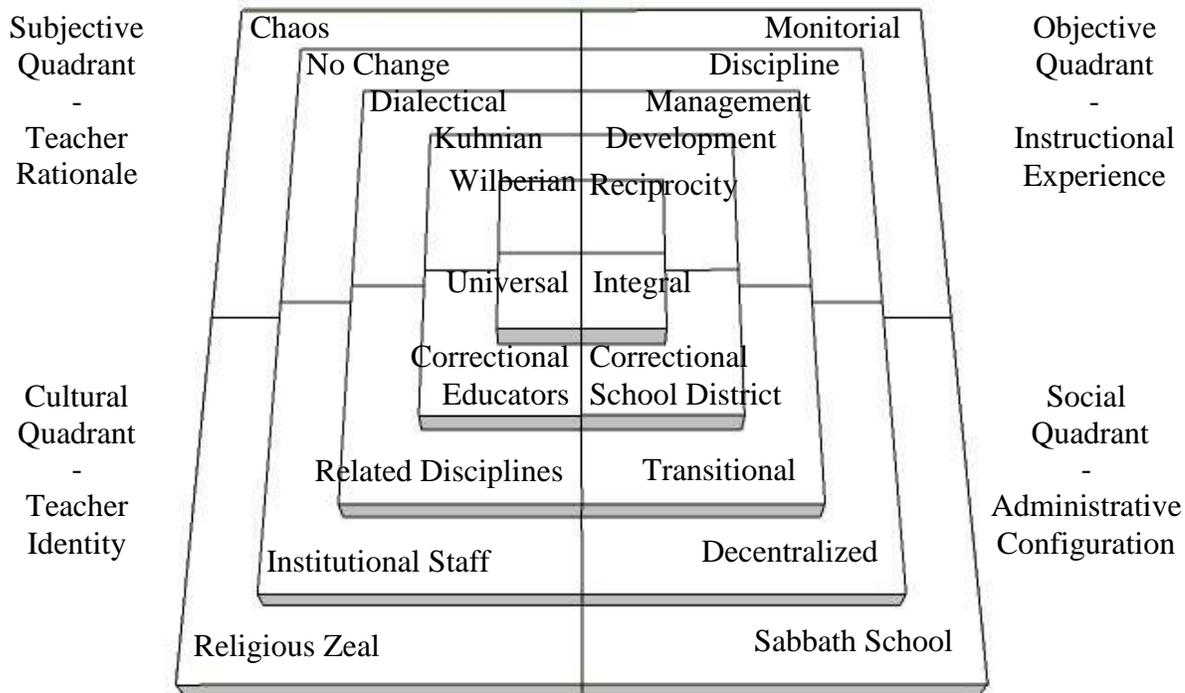


Figure 2. Comprehensive Model of Correctional Education, adapted from Gehring (2007, p.8.) *Inset:* Three-dimensional adaptation, showing five levels each split into quadrants.

Gehring's model is constructed of what Foucault (1997/2003) called "blocks of historical knowledges"—only some of which are reproduced as dominant discourses (p. 7). Other blocks of knowledge are subjugated; they are the "whole series of knowledges that have been disqualified as nonconceptual... insufficiently elaborated... naïve... hierarchically inferior... below the required level of erudition or scientificity" (Foucault, p. 7). Foucault was not talking about the subjugation of "common sense" but "specific knowledge that is local, regional, or differential...what people know at a local level... kept in the margins" (p. 8). The CE literature, in Foucauldian terms, is built of blocks of teacher and administrator knowledge rather than student knowledge; also, it is built of blocks of prison rather than jail knowledge. For example, empirical studies of CE programs—whether focused on reentry or not—tend to be quantitative studies for use by teachers or administration, and they tend to focus on concerns that teachers and administrators have. This is in contrast to literature that is built on blocks of student knowledge. There is an intellectual void in the available blocks of jail knowledge and student knowledge in the reentry and CE literature. Using Gehring's (2012) model to guide a review of CE concepts helps to identify the size and shape of this void because it allows opportunities to describe specific shortfalls in our collective understanding of the phenomenon.

The Subjective Quadrant

Gehring (2007) identified the subjective quadrant as a space to differentiate existential beliefs that guide why a person might choose to teach in a correctional institution, and he posited that teachers' subjective rationales can be categorically distinguished along five levels of maturation. The Integral Approach quadrants are again presented in Figure 3.

Integral Approach	Interior	Exterior
Individual	1. Subjective Quadrant <i>Teacher's Rationale</i> 1. Chaos 2. Lose-Lose 3. Dialectical 4. Kuhnian 5. Wilberian	2. Objective Quadrant <i>Instructional Experience</i>
Collective	4. Cultural Quadrant <i>Teacher's Identity</i>	3. Social Quadrant <i>Administrative Configuration</i>

Figure 3. The subjective quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach.

In the least mature level of teachers' rationales for teaching, 1, *chaos*, teachers have divergent motives and no common agenda; in 2, *lose-lose*, "correctional educators saw their purpose as perpetuating the warden's authority;" in 3, *dialectical*, teachers take a political approach based on "dualistic logic" entrenched in prison politics; in 4, *Kuhnian*, teachers are guided by "win-win" progressive ideals for correctional education and the hope of overcoming dualistic logic; in 5, *Wilberian*, teachers' motivations are similar to 4, and additionally "the teacher perceives the boundary of the education as beyond the level of current constraints" (Gehring, 2012, pp. 8, 432-433). Gehring gives examples of existence of these "levels" from programs throughout history; the levels are roughly parallel to the historical periods of development described earlier. For example, in early penitentiaries, level 1, "chaos" is the word used by Gehring to capture the sense of each person in each facility operating on their own accord. The continuum is from restrictive to progressive: from people not working together to people working together no matter how limiting the environment.

The effect of the teacher's subjective belief system can be strong enough to change the entire correctional education system (Gehring, 2012, p. 439). Gehring contended that the 'hidden heritage' literature of CE provides evidence that one person can, in fact, change an entire system; however, this heritage has been "covered up" (p. 436). Although a teacher's rationale is presented as highly influential by Gehring, a student's internal perspective is not discussed. However, Gehring described moving between levels as "a leap of consciousness experienced by someone, usually a formal or informal leader, who facilitates resultant system development" (p. 436). In some cases, this "leader" was a politician (MacCormick, 1931), and in others, students became the leaders (as described by Osborne, 1926).

So, although there is little direct research on engagement rationale from the students' perspectives, the literature does not entirely fail to represent student knowledge that could be considered. Wright's (2001) stated concern, mentioned earlier, is that students have been discursively fixed as "full of deficits and needs and lacking in rationality;" this is the primary reason why "the student's interpretations of the world are often ignored" in the development of correctional education (p. 84). Gehring describes rationales as critically important in CE, implying that the deficits perspective (as discussed earlier) will not lead to program maturity. In fact, the examples he provides of "mature" programs in terms of instructor rationale are those in which the *inmate* is the leader through a process of shared responsibility.

"Democratic prison program" is Gehring's (2012) term for shared responsibility of an adult education classroom inside a correctional facility (p. 164), and he cites "at least 22" programs, which were "overwhelmingly... successful by any standard" (p. 164). These

programs are described elsewhere by Gehring and colleagues (Muth & Gehring, 1986, Gehring, 1988; Gehring & Eggleston, 2000); he claims that knowledge about these programs that rely on the perspective and leadership of everyone who is incarcerated has been “systematically denied to practitioners” (p. 163).

Gehring’s model contributes to the study of rural reentry by expanding the phrase *CE reentry program* to include the potential for educational programs that challenge the definitions established in the framework itself. Defining maturity of CE as its propensity to foster a transformational learning experience provides a standard against which to compare descriptions of CE experiences. As the conceptual framework that guides this study, Gehring’s model emphasizes the teachers’ rationale as a factor in CE, placing reciprocal relationships with students on a different level of maturity than relationships based on a deficit perspective. Gehring agreed with Gibb (1978), who summarized that shared responsibility results in people who can be “highly goal-oriented, ethical, creative, and productive” (p. 251).

The Objective Quadrant

The objective quadrant “represents individual exteriors—empirical data that can be measured, such as would be done in laboratories, museums, and archives” (Gehring, 2012, p. 52). Gehring recognized the effect of the subjective on the objective, claiming that teachers’ (internal, subjective) rationales will directly influence their (external, objective) actions (p. 434). The model presents a typology of classroom instruction, with each type seen as a progressively more mature orientation for teachers of correctional education.

Integral Approach	Interior	Exterior
Individual	1. Subjective Quadrant <i>Teacher's Rationale</i>	2. Objective Quadrant <i>Instructional Experience</i> 1. Monitorial 2. Discipline 3. Management 4. Development 5. Reciprocity
Collective	4. Cultural Quadrant <i>Teacher's Identity</i>	3. Social Quadrant <i>Administrative Configuration</i>

Figure 4. The objective quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach.

To summarize the levels of maturity, the *monitorial level* teacher, 1, is concerned with religious exercises, often for the purpose of penance; the *discipline level* teacher, 2, is more secular, and the teacher's authority has replaced the authority of religious text; the *management level*, 3, teacher adds behavioralist "classroom management" techniques to curricula that are more secular; the *development level* teacher, 4, shifts instruction to a "cognitive psychological base" in which "cognitive-moral and cognitive-democratic strategies and outcomes" begin to be recognized; and the *reciprocity level* teacher, 5, bases instruction on student strengths, personal experiences, and participation in decision making (p. 434-436).

Gehring (2012) associated the "teacher as student and student as teacher sentiment" with the *reciprocity* level, along with "the best adult education traditions" (p. 435). Teachers who are steeped in Freirean educational approaches are designated elsewhere as exemplars of maturation (Gehring, Eggleston & Muth, 2012). In Gehring's model, the lowest three levels position the student as a passive recipient of knowledge

while the fourth level represents a shift toward the fifth, Freirean level. Gehring's assessment of Freire's (1998/2001) approach was congruent with Freire's characterization of the act of teaching as an act of learning:

the person in charge of education is being formed or re-formed as he/she teaches, and the person who is being taught forms him/herself in this process" as compared to when the student is "in the passive role of one who receives quantities of accumulated knowledge, transferred to [the student] by a 'subject' who 'knows.'" (p. 30-31)

The humanitarian and democratic outcomes of Freirean education or the significance of transformative education are difficult to quantify. A similar problem is reflected in the discourse of accountability in higher education: to appear as a scientific discipline that can validate student learning (for example, the field of outcomes assessment), student learning outcomes are required by regional boards of accreditation to be designed by faculty who will articulate "knowledge, skills, and competencies" that will be targeted through instruction and measured to provide "evidence of student learning" (*Characteristics of Excellence*, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2006, p. 63). This arrangement runs the obvious risk of limiting instructional design to include quantifiable concepts only. In CE, that may have already happened, since recidivism is the main metric in measuring the so-called success of an individual during reentry (Lyman & LoBuglio, 2006).

The question of who establishes definitions is the purview not of the law but of the normalizing function of scientific discipline, which is then codified into law, rule, and regulation as a "democratization" of the old version of sovereign power (in which power was exerted over land as in comparison to how it is currently exerted over humans' bodies, as discussed previously); this power schema is productive in that it provides a way to

establish and maintain social control (Foucault, 1997/2003, pp. 36-39). Power and knowledge define the history of literacy education (Luke, 1994), and they similarly define the historical development of corrections (Foucault, 1977/1995); by extension, they also define the history of correctional education. As Luke says about literacy education, “it is about power not solely in terms of which tests and practices will ‘count’ and which groups will have or not have access...It is also about who in the modern state will have a privileged position in specifying what will count as literacy” (p. 309). From a critical perspective, the instruction related to correctional education would be defined as *mature* when students enact their own definitions and curricula or when they have freedom—“power to frame purposes and to execute... purposes so framed” (Dewey 1938/1997, p. 67).

Today for incarcerated students, the U.S. Department of Education provides one definition of literacy. In the recent National Assessment of Adult Literacy Prison Survey (Greenberg, Dunleavy, Kutner & White, 2007), the Department affirmed the definition of literacy to be “Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential” (p. iii). The Correctional Education Association (Steurer, 2001) broadly categorizes correctional education as literacy instruction, which is then categorized by programs (ABE/GED, vocational education, family literacy). Greenberg and colleagues measured prose, document, and quantitative literacy, finding that the (federal and state) prison population scored lower than the average U.S. household on all measures but that people who participated in both ABE/GED and vocational programs scored better than those who did not (p. vi). Definitions and research such as this are not challenged within the correctional education literature base; rather, Comings (2001) advocated using such studies to develop local theory for classroom

practices, to show “evidence of impact,” and to “support requests for funding” (p. 52).

Comings is the director of the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Literacy becomes a justification for programming to funders, not an avenue for engaging students in designing their own educational experiences and engaging in the world beyond the classroom.

Here, while considering the objective quadrant focused on the instructional experience, Gehring’s approach is also relevant to the historical and philosophical development of CE as mentioned before, with a continuing theme being the role of student. The historical connection between ‘job training’ (used synonymously with vocational education in corrections) and literacy education can be traced back to the earliest correctional institutions, which, originally called penitentiaries, were first used to confine those who needed to pay for their sins according to the prevailing “demonic” mindset on crime (Pfohl, 1994, p. 75). Gehring and Eggleston (2006) note how the nation’s first penitentiary, Philadelphia’s Walnut Street Jail, was reformed by William Penn and the Philadelphia Quakers in 1771 as a way to “replace punishments such as mutilation” with Bibles and literacy instruction for the sole purpose of “spiritual redemption” (p. 1-2).

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, “the notion that work was essential to the imprisonment process” became embedded in the study of jail and prison administration, as labor first was used as a form of penitence and then punishment (Werner, 1990, p. 25). Corrections administrators quickly realized that prison populations could be exploited as a source of labor (Werner, 1990, p. 31). Prison reform movements through the 1930s counteracted not only prisoner abuse but also the emerging concept of the ‘criminal type’

that Lombroso had introduced in the search for the causality of crime (Werner, 1990, pp. 43-44).

With Lombroso's theory of skull shape as a determinant of criminality eventually disproven, the idea that criminals are categorically and even physiologically distinct never died. To summarize the earlier discussion of criminal justice history, after World War II, it is widely accepted that U.S. penology entered a phase where "[p]risoners were to be 'rehabilitated' through new scientific efforts;" these efforts didn't work (Austin & Irwin, 2001, p.9). In the 1950s, institutions' names were changed from 'penitentiary' to 'correctional' (Werner, 1990, p. 50), but the failure of the prison as a place of 'rehabilitation' or 'correction' was widely accepted by policy makers within two decades (Austin & Irwin, 2001, p.9; Werner, 1990, p. 25). The role of the prisoner was that of a subjugated individual, using Foucault's definition, regardless of the power-schema's label.

Since the early 1980s, a return to 'getting tough on crime' has permeated U.S. penology; this is a return to early criminological theories of deterrence that rely on the public spectacle of incarceration being used to dole out "just deserts" to secure social control (Austin & Irwin, 2001, p. 9). This return to the "classical perspective" in criminology relies on incarceration being unpleasant and on punishment being "swift, certain, and severe" to be effective (Pfhol, 1994, p. 74-75). Educating *criminals* to become better people makes little sense in the classical perspective—alternatively, current research on literacy in correctional institutions is often prefaced by an explanation of how literacy and job skills instruction are relevant to the national discourse on the economy (via reducing recidivism) instead of how they are relevant to rehabilitation and the national discourse on punishment (for example, see Shippen et al., 2010). One possible reason for taking a

discursive position that appeals to literacy's economic benefits is summarized by Pfohl, (1994) who offers an addition perspective on the role of the prisoner—*deviant*:

the classical perspective will favor a very specialized form of rationality—the rationality of the advantaged, the rich, and the powerful. The rationality of the disadvantaged, the poor, and the power-less will be either denied or classified as deviant. (p. 96)

The Social Quadrant

The objective quadrant showed how historical shifts in criminology have affected the development of instruction offered in correctional institutions in terms of the student's role in the discourse of punishment. According to this model, some rationales can have oppressive objective results while others can lead to reciprocal relationships between student and society. The social quadrant represents the "struggle to put educators in charge of educational decisions" during the time periods of historical development already described (Gehring, 2012, p. 437). Outside of the hidden heritage of CE literature, referred to earlier, there is little evidence to suggest that CE has ever been marked by a struggle to put students in charge (Gehring, 2012). Steurer's (2001) 'literacy model' of correctional education does not address student autonomy nor do Werner's or Gehring's approaches. The consensus seems to be that there is conflict between the concepts of teacher autonomy and administrative need.

Integral Approach	Interior	Exterior
Individual	1. Subjective Quadrant <i>Teacher's Rationale</i>	2. Objective Quadrant <i>Instructional Experience</i>
Collective	4. Cultural Quadrant <i>Teacher's Identity</i>	3. Social Quadrant <i>Administrative Configuration</i> 1. Sabbath School 2. Decentralized arrangements 3. Transitional arrangements 4. Correctional school district 5. Integral arrangements

Figure 5. The social quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach.

The levels of administrative maturation framed in the social quadrant (Gehring, 2012) are a matter of organizational hierarchy: in 1, *Sabbath School arrangements*, people who taught inmates to read and write using the Bible were regarded more as missionaries than as correctional educators, and they reported to both chaplains and wardens, and so there was not a hierarchy *per se*; in 2, *decentralized arrangements*, and 3, *transitional arrangements*, the warden has complete discretion over all decisions regarding education, and education does not extend beyond basic literacy and vocational instruction; in 4, *correctional school district* arrangements, the decision-making and reporting structures have been "reorganized into a system of real schools" by a "local education agency" in which "educators report to other educators" as in contrast to "mere educational programs;" finally, in 5, *integral arrangements*, a "deep system of combination or confluence" marked by "personal intervention by the leader" exists to unite corrections and educational systems (Gehring, 2012, pp. 437-438).

The *integral* level of Gehring's (2012) social quadrant hierarchy places the educator as the determining factor in development of CE's social elements. Altogether, Gehring and Eggleston (2006) listed 22 administrations in which the integral level has been achieved in CE worldwide. These spanned at least five countries:

Thomas Mott Osborne's Mutual Welfare League at New York State's Auburn and Sing Sing Prisons, and at the U.S. Naval Prison in Portsmouth, New Hampshire (1913-1926); at Anton Makarenko's Gorky Colonies in the Soviet Union (1922-1938); it was also part of the institutional milieu in Herr Von Obermaier's jail in Bavaria, Germany, in Colonel Montesino's Valencia Prison in Spain (both of which were in the 1850s), and at Frederick A. Demetz's famous Mettray juvenile facility in France (1840-1937), as well as at other institutions. (Gehring & Rennie, n.d., p.9)

However, it is not clear how place shaped the implementation of these CE programs or how urban or rural their environments were. Overall, Gehring's (2012) model "addresses statewide or systemwide services" (state and federal correctional institutions), rather than services related to individual institutions such as county jails (p. 427). This is a significant distinction, as there are 3,365 jails in the U.S. which see more than 9 million unique individuals each year (compared to about 2 million in state and federal systems combined); jail turnover is high, and lengths of stay are short (generally under one month), and about 750,000 people are in jail at any given time (Solomon et al., 2008, p. xv). Chandler (2005) noted that a significant segment of people in jail are "frequent fliers" who consume resources disproportionately to the alleged benefit or purpose of incarceration (p. 61). Lyman and LoBuglio (2006) refer to the nation's jail population as a "flow like a torrential river" as compared to the more stable state and federal prison populations, which are "likened to a stream into a reservoir with upwards of 700,000 individuals entering and leaving [state and federal systems] each year" (p. 10). The likelihood that each

jail administration could develop an *integral* level program with its current resources seems rather low.

However, rural jails have been given increasing space within the past few years, particularly regarding community reentry, which Solomon and colleagues (2012) described, stating,

in recent years, the field has seen an explosion of creative and productive partnerships between jails and law enforcement, probation, faith-based organizations, mental health clinics, victim advocate groups, the business community, and a variety of other social service and community providers. (p. xv)

However, this does not equate to the integral level (5) on Gehring's model for the social quadrant, as Solomon et al. do not describe confluence between educational and criminal justice systems that are spearheaded by leaders as described earlier; neither do they describe the existence of correctional school districts at the county level.

The county context is a unique place, and this could preclude the need for correctional school districts to oversee education in jails. Gehring's model seems to imply correctional education should not be left to the oversight of a warden, as this is characteristic of low-level development. However, developing a correctional school district is not a reasonable expectation for each county jail because county jails are generally small and run by a warden with a small staff and small budget— 63% of the nation's jails have fewer than 100 beds and 47% have fewer than 50; these jails are most likely rural jails, and they rely on local tax bases to support nearly all operations (Solomon et al., 2008, pp 8-10). Approaching CE from the social quadrant, in which jail educators and administrators face many practical challenges, highlights the “struggle to put educators in charge of educational decisions” (Gehring, 2012, p. 437).

A number of scholars have examined the characteristics of rural county jails (Stinchcomb & McCampbell, 2008; Wodahl, 2006; Ruddell & Mays, 2006; Harding & Clem, 2001; Gee, 2006). Their findings suggest common situations faced by small jail administrators across the U.S.. Jail populations and their needs are diverse, but jail and community service capability is low: “There is little uniformity across jails,” making it difficult to offer comparisons, but they generally have “no designated community-based system in place to facilitate the transition process” (Solomon, et al., 2008, p. 21). In jails nationwide, there are few programs, high staff turnover, overcrowding of detainees and inmates, outdated technology, and few providers to assist with mental health and human services (Solomon et al., p. 21).

To see a small, rural community overcome these challenges may require community involvement and participation in reentry programs: “At its core, addressing reentry from jail may be more about systems change than program implementation” (Solomon et al., 2008, p. 51). This generally falls in line with Gehring’s concept that systematic change is a sign of maturation; Gehring’s model appears to be a one-way hierarchy: counties must participate in correctional school districts if correctional education at their jails is to mature. However, Gehring (2012) allowed for “skipping” levels of maturation (pp. 437-439). Foucault’s “genealogy” allows for local knowledge to validate itself and thus frees it to critique dominant theories—local knowledge about rural reentry does not have a position of scientific distinction in the current literature base, and yet has potential *as* local knowledge “to fight the power-effects characteristic of any discourse that is regarded as scientific” (Foucault, 2003, p.9). The power to represent one’s own knowledge by critiquing dominant discourses is a timely issue for small jails specifically, as criminologists are

currently debating whether small jails should consolidate to save resources (see Ruddell & Mays, 2006).

The Cultural Quadrant

A teacher's internal apprehension of the collective "professional identity" of correctional educators is represented in Gehring's (2012) cultural quadrant (p. 439).

Integral Approach	Interior	Exterior
Individual	1. Subjective Quadrant <i>Teacher's Rationale</i>	2. Objective Quadrant <i>Instructional Experience</i>
Collective	4. Cultural Quadrant <i>Teacher's Identity</i> 1. Religious zeal 2. Institutional staff 3. Related disciplines 4. Correctional educators 5. Universal	3. Social Quadrant <i>Administrative Configuration</i>

Figure 6. The cultural quadrant of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach.

The lowest level of maturation, 1, *religious zeal*, is characterized by teachers that identify with religious fervor; 2, *institutional staff*, is when teachers are hired by wardens and identify as corrections staff; 3, *related disciplines*, is when teachers identify with the disciplines in which they were educated (for instance, as adult educators or reading specialists) and act as "sojourners in the institution;" 4, *correctional educators*, is when teachers identify as correctional educators even though they have come from different disciplines; 5, *universal*, is when teachers "identify primarily with the human condition,

with the desire to end all forms of brutality (genocide, racism, socioeconomic class barriers, sexism, patterns of life that are not environmentally sustainable)” (Gehring, p. 439, 440).

In adult education, the cultural outlook of the teacher is closely related to the concepts of empowerment and democracy. Gehring (2012) also connected empowerment and democracy to this quadrant. The most mature teachers’ cultural identification is that of pursuing equity—recognizing that empowerment itself is a varied and “rarely specified term” (Prins & Drayton, 2010, p. 209). To understand empowerment in CE is to understand “the centralizing power-effects that are bound up with the institutionalization and workings of scientific discourse” (Foucault, 1997/2003, p. 9).

Words like empowerment and democracy can be specified and demonstrated in their multiple forms so as to see their power-effects. Gehring wrote only of one form, which brings back to mind Corbett’s (2007) warning that a structuralist framework can blend together the nuances of resistances. One remedy is to complicate empowerment in CE along the same lines as Prins and Drayton (2010), who identified three key traditions that shape how empowerment is defined in adult education theory and practice: the “human capital tradition” operates from a “functional view” of empowerment that focuses on skill attainment; the “liberal humanist tradition” relates to a “psychological view” that focuses on “giving individuals a ‘voice;” and the “radical adult education tradition” takes a “critical view” that focuses on “understanding the causes of injustice and taking action to create more equitable conditions, not only individually but especially in concert with others” (p. 209-210). This latter, radical tradition is that which is referred to in the fifth, most mature level of Gehring’s (2012) Integral Approach.

Functional empowerment can be identified readily in the literature of correctional education that focuses on vocational education or community reentry, often as a rationale for why a given program has been or will be offered. For example, Young and Mattucci (2011) described a 16-hour plumbing program in New York State that used a hands-on, team-oriented instructional approach that promotes collaboration, teamwork, and confidence building (notable 'soft skills' in job-readiness training); they concluded their program description stating, "The women are especially responsive to this empowerment approach" (p. 49). Harrison and Beck (as cited by Young and Mattucci [2011, p.430]) estimate that about an eighth of the U.S. incarcerated population is female and that the incarceration rate of women has grown faster than that of men for the past ten years—Young & Mattucci cite this fact, yet this program for women does not address gender inequalities and the program is nevertheless described as empowering. Using Prins and Drayton's (2010) definitions, this is an instance of "tokenistic" empowerment (p. 209).

In a separate addition to the literature base, Mattucci (2011) provided an example of 'psychological empowerment' in correctional education, also specifically speaking of a vocational education program for women in a county jail. While teaching in a situation overlapping three areas of marginalization—incarcerated, female, county jail—Mattucci focused only on "the improved self-esteem that accrues from empowerment," correlating the two (Mattucci, 2011, p. 156).

By contrast, the 'radical' tradition of adult education defines a critical view toward empowerment as one that validates Gehring's (2012) view of maturity, which he also defines in terms of democracy, stating that democracy is

economic and artistic, as well as political, and participatory to the extent that learners are truly empowered to choose even those options that will lead to

their own failure (to learn from their mistakes)—quite a departure from levels 1-4. Level 5 teachers do not focus on teacher authority, though they may apply it selectively, as needed by students at various levels of immaturity. Instead, their focus is on active pursuit of formal and informal strategies to diminish, rather than exacerbate, status differences between themselves and students. (p. 440)

Dewey's (1937) conceptualization of democracy is similar; he stated that "democracy is much broader than a special political platform... It is that of course. But it is something broader and deeper than that" (p. 217). Dewey contended that democracy is both social and cultural, individual and collective, a way of thought and a way of life (p. 217). Closely related to Gehring's explanation of maturity, Dewey stated that democracy is a means toward the end of each individual contributing to a collective set of values that "regulate the living of men together" (p. 217). In contrast, authoritarianism "rests on a belief that the needed intelligence is confined to a superior few who because of inherent natural gifts are endowed with the ability and the right to control the conduct of others" (p. 219).

Dewey's description of authoritarianism mirrors that of a panoptic administration that is dominated by the deficit perspective. Illustrations of Dewey's concept of democracy are buried in the hidden heritage of correctional education, and outlined as such by Gehring and Rennie's (n.d.) brief overview of "What Works in Correctional Education," established by the Center for the Study of Correctional Education. One well-known use of democracy as a means toward development of an inclusive culture inside a correctional facility was developed by Thomas Mott Osborne (1924), who spoke of the deficits perspective as one of folly, saying of incarcerated people, "There are not many of them mental defectives; on the contrary, the majority are embarrassingly clever" (p. 8).

Given the corrections institution context, it may seem counter-intuitive to adopt a discourse involving student choice (whether that be the discourse of democracy or

“prisoner participation”), as the discourse on deficits is entrenched in the theory and practices of correctional administration, as outlined previously. Regardless, several examples of democracy within institutions have affected the development of correctional education—examples like Osborne, cited here as evidence of the most mature ‘integral’ level of Gehring’s social quadrant, which correlates with the ‘universal’ cultural level.

Additional examples are sometimes described in criminal justice literature as ‘prisoner participation,’ a term which Baker (1985) contends is diffuse because, although the early history of penology evidences a reliance on prisoner participation in many roles of prison management (from “intake interviewer” to “armed guard”), participation was driven by economic and situational need just as much (or more than) it was by humanistic rationale (p. 1). Baker illustrates through a review of first-hand accounts dating back to between 1900-1930 that early prisons and jails were not staffed by professionals who identified with a collective professional identity because of high staff turnover (which is still a problem, especially for small jails [Ruddell & Mays, 2006]); the result was that “inmate knowledge was the well-spring from which new employees drew in their transition to prison work” (p. 2).

There are a variety of manifestations of “empowerment” in the history of correctional education—from tokenistic gestures to allowing “inmates to literally run the institutions” (see Gehring, 2012, p. 10). Many accounts from the early 1900s have been buried (subjugated) in the history of CE to the point where it now seems innovative to suggest people in prison could be allowed to ‘practice’ democracy and exercise control over their own environment.

Theories Informing the Research

Within the literature on correctional education, the concepts of *power* and *democracy* have been related to reentry by authors in correctional education for many decades; for example, early works in CE by Osborne (1924) and MacCormick (1931) provide perspectives on democracy that have been used in practice in correctional institutions. Warner (1998) noted how perspectives like Osborne's and MacCormick's were aligned with Dewey's "general approach to education" (p. 118) and should be considered alongside the early work of Scudder (1952), who claimed that "prisoners are people," (p. 1). As early as 1931, MacCormick penned what would become known as the first formally articulated and documented program of adult education specific to prisoner literacy.

Correctional education has been the topic of adult education publications since the early 1900s; however, no specific theory of CE has been developed. An increase in correctional education opportunities has been shown to lower the recidivism rate in a variety of studies (Steurer et al., 2001; Bazos and Hauffman, 2004; Vacca, 2004); however, there is not general agreement that rehabilitation—which is ostensibly facilitated through some form of CE program—is a prudent way to reduce recidivism (see Chapter 1). After he successfully developed a program in which the inmates ran the institution's day-to-day operations, Osborne (1924) stated that any theory he had on the matter of why democracy in correctional institutions 'works' was subject to dismissal, and therefore he was not interested in articulating theory of correctional education—he was just interested in what he perceived as positive outcomes (p. 47). Although one might argue that CE has been a noted intervention for facilitating 'successful reentry', the literature persistently struggles to define what 'successful' means or why it is successful (see Lyman & LoBuglio, 2007).

The theoretical framework that guides this study is based on my postulation that functional definitions of success or failure need to account for individuals' life stories—that is, how people change over time. The framework that guides this study draws from concepts and theories from the broader field of adult education to study reentry as a learning experience. In this section, I first define critical adult education, then I introduce theoretical strands from Foucault, Dewey, and Mezirow that can be theoretically connected through a symbolic interactionist perspective (Lemert's [1960] labeling theory).

Critical Adult Education

Critical adult education presents a position from which to study reentry within its political context. Not all adult education has critical or emancipatory goals; one critique of modern adult education is that “the contemporary modern practice of adult education is governed by an instrumental rationality that works to the advantage of business, industry, and large-scale organizations” (Welton, 1995, p. 5). This ‘modern practice’ of adult education furthers “our late capitalist society” in generating “dissatisfactions (needs that cannot be met adequately within society’s frame), contradictions and periodically, massive crises, which create the potentiality for emancipatory practice” (p. 13). From a critical perspective, “emancipatory adult education” is central to social transformation and human freedom (p. 2). Welton compared adult education that furthers capitalism’s objectives to adult education that furthers individuals’ freedom to learn, defining the latter as *emancipatory adult education*: “how adults unlearn their adherence to unfreedom and learn to be enlightened, empowered, and transformative actors in particular times, places, and spaces” (p.12).

The times, places, and spaces under consideration in this study constitute the boundary of the reentry experience. Using the word *emancipatory* seems ironic in relation CE, given the highly restrictive environment of correctional institutions; in relation to reentry, the term emancipatory takes on additional meaning given the freedom that defines reentry as compared to confinement.

The theoretical framework that guides this study is flexible enough to approach previously uninvestigated “local knowledge” (Foucault, 2003, p. 8) held by those who have experienced reentry. Local knowledge is a knowledge that might be an “instrumental rationality” that “works to the advantage” of individuals and communities as compared to “business, industry, and large-scale organizations” (Welton, 1990, p. 5). In framing reentry from a critical adult education perspective, reentry—and its explicable connectedness to the topic of mass incarceration—is situated within the context of “capitalist crises” that can be “eliminate[d] politically” through “philosophical critique giving guidance to action” (Honneth & Joas, 1988, p.152). To summarize: Social action is central to critical adult education.

The critical turn in adult education began with Habermas, who induced a “learning turn” in social theory:

there can be no doubt that critical theory’s missing link until Habermas was its inability to link crisis and potential to a theory of how adult learning releases this potential in particular times and places, resulting in new institutionalized forms of freedom and enhanced individual and collective competence to be self-determining historical actors. (Welton, 1995, p. 26)

Habermas “places learning processes at the center of his critical project” (p. 25). One of critical theory’s core values, “from Marx to Habermas,” is the notion that “humans are essentially fallen but potentially redeemable,” placing critical theory in the humanist camp

that believes “humans can *learn* how to live their own lives in a truly self-directed and more satisfactory way” (p. 33, emphasis added). This type of learning is moral-practical according to Habermas, and it occurs in and defines the lifeworld, as compared to technical learning, which is based in the sphere of labor and industry (Habermas, 1970). Technical knowledge can be exploitive and dominating in a capitalist political structure that does not favor individual self-direction, hence adult education has the “normative mandate” to “the preservation of the critically reflective lifeworld” (Welton, 1995, p.34).

In considering adult education and rural reentry, I have framed the reentry phenomenon as a learning experience—one that can be educative or “mis-educative” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 51, described below). Unlike the major theoretical strands in criminology—the deterrence theory, for example—this theoretical framework does not assume individuals’ deficits are a precursor to crime. For even if there were an obvious deficit—for example, a *genetic* reason why people commit crime— “[t]he very fact of natural and psychological inequality is all the more reason for establishment by law of equality of opportunity, since otherwise the former becomes a means of oppression of the less gifted” (Dewey, 1937, p. 220). So, this theoretical framework gives less attention to individuals’ deficits and more attention to the unearthing of their perspectives—what they know and what they think about the experience they have lived through in the environments where they have been—providing the theoretical space necessary to shed light on how to politically eliminate “needs that cannot be adequately within society’s frames” (Welton, 1995, p. 13). In this sense, this is a theoretical framework for a needs assessment that does not derive from an individual deficits perspective. Rather, it derives from a critical perspective on adult education, one that emphasizes fostering learning

environments that promote critical reflection. This type of fostering environment parallels the top level of maturity described by in Gehring's conceptual model.

The theoretical framework that guides this study challenges the assumption that there are powerless people in jails who need to be empowered. The framework looks at the relationship between power and knowledge and how local knowledge is or is not used at both the individual and community level to address social crises. Foucault's ideas are the structural and systematic elements of the framework, Mezirow's theory helps describe the element of reflection, and Dewey provides a way to describe experience. Table 2 represents the three theoretical strands addressed in this review of literature, strands that can be woven together through their mutual basis in the symbolic interactionist perspective. In this section, I review the literature of symbolic interactionism and literature relevant to Dewey's experiential education, which relates to the conceptual background provided by Gehring's Integral Approach and the historico-political background provided by Foucault. I also review literature that both supports and complicates Mezirow's transformation learning theory.

Table 2. Overview of Theoretical Framework for the Study of Community Reentry as a Learning Experience

Author	Theoretical Element	Connection to Reentry	Connection to Study
Foucault (1977/1995)	Interpreting experiences using local knowledge is a precursor to describing panoptic power and knowledge relationships in which autonomy has willingly been subjugated by the authority of scientific knowledge.	Reentry is a political process, and it is not clear what volition over one's experiences can be expressed by the participant due to the systematic barriers that define a panoptic power structure.	Critical: People who reenter might describe a local knowledge base in which the panoptic arrangement of corrections and society complicates the idea of emancipatory adult education.
Mezirow (1990, 1991, 1995)	Critical reflection on the premise of social crises can lead to transformation of meaning perspectives and result in action to change the crises' premises.	The jail-reentry experience may qualify as a crisis in which people reevaluate the premises on which their meaning perspectives rely.	Interpretive: Descriptions of reentry can be indicators of how a person has made meaning of a given experience and/or changed their meaning perspective(s).
Dewey (1938/1997)	Education is social and experiential, and experiences are situations that vary according to their continuity and the interactions of which they are comprised (p. 58).	The interactions experienced in jail and reentering are heavily influenced by the criminal justice system, which both prescribes and interrupts the experience; experiences are either 'educative' or 'mis-educative' (p. 51).	Descriptive: Criteria for <i>experience</i> will help to identify whether and how education or miseducation is a factor in the experience of reentry.

Symbolic Interactionism

The theoretical strands from Foucault, Mezirow, and Dewey are in mutual agreement with a symbolic interactionist perspective, and this agreement allows for appropriating theoretical strands from them to create a theoretical framework for approaching rural reentry. It is because of the premise of symbolic interactionism—that meaning is exchanged through symbols, namely words, which are collectively defined—that adult learning can take place. Edwin Lemert (1951, 1972) summarized symbolic interactionism from a sociological perspective in criminology: the future behavior of people who have deviated from social norms is largely a matter of the social reaction to their deviation and what that person thinks of the society's reaction. Social reaction comes in the form of a label, such as 'deviant' or 'criminal,' and an individual might assume a social role based on his or her interpretation of others' definition(s) for the 'deviant' or 'criminal' label and the behaviors that the individual interprets society to associate with the label. Accepting the label, as evidenced by "organizing one's life around" the deviant label/role, constitutes what Lemert (1951) is credited with identifying as secondary deviance, in which an individual arranges their life by a new identity (p. 55). This adoption of a new identity described by Lemert parallels what Mezirow (1995) has described as transformation: an alteration of an individual's meaning perspectives as a result of reflection on either *content and process*, which is "everyday transformation of a meaning scheme," or as a result of "critical reflection on *premise*," which is a "more profound" transformation (p.45, emphasis added).

Symbolic interactionism is the basis on which phenomenological research approaches are critical: a critical reduction in phenomenology that "reflects on particular

individual and social histories” (Marsh, 1987, p. 148) takes into account the contextual reality that the state favors “an ideology of scientific expertise” over individuals’ “personal symbolic interactions,” which are discouraged by the state as being “anachronistic and obsolete” (Marsh, p. 147). This ‘contextual reality’ is expressed as a *crisis* in critical theory terms, and it is addressed in transformation learning theory through reflection on the premise of a social situation’s origins (Mezirow’s *premise reflection* [1995]).

Because theoretical literature specific to rural reentry is non-existent, theoretical literature from the broader field of adult education contributes to the theoretical framework that guides this study. Several authors hold theories sharing symbolic interactionist tenets. For example, Foucault’s writings on discipline, punishment, power, and knowledge are based in a perspective that relies on the symbolic interactionist principle that human understanding is a product of how one interprets the meaning of others’ understandings. The act of exchanging meaning and interpreting meaning occurs through the exchange of symbols, or *communication*. The premise that communication is the vehicle for how meaning is shared (and thus how societies are transformed) also holds true for Dewey’s writings on experience and democracy and for Mezirow’s writings on transformation.

Experiential Education

John Dewey (1938/1997) describes what he calls “the new type of education” as compared to “traditional” education (p. 25). His stated goal is to explore the “organic connection” between experience and education with the caveat that not all experiences are educational, as some are capable of “arresting or distorting the growth of future experience” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 25). Dewey described growth in terms of two

continuums: *continuity*, the connectedness of one experience with those before it and after it, and *interaction*, the “interplay” between the “objective and internal conditions” that define any situation. Dewey called continuity and interaction two inseparable concepts that are “the longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience” (1938/1997, p. 44). At the crosshairs of continuity and interaction is the definition of any given experience as either educative or mis-educative, as these two elements “provide the measure of the educative significance and value of an experience” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 45). Significance and value are defined in terms of how likely an experience is to promote growth, which is a broadening of future experiences as compared to a narrowing of experiences that will ultimately lead to one’s failure to be able to control future experiences because future experiences will be habitual reproductions of past experiences rather than opportunities to generate new knowledge (Dewey, 1938/1997).

Gehring’s conceptual framework is sensitive to the continuity of experience (Dewey, 1938/1997). Gehring (2012) defined CE programs that promoted connectedness between learning experiences as the most mature according to his model. However, being jailed, by definition, interrupts continuity of experiences; for example, jails serve the function of interruption of physical location by either detaining people or incarcerating them for relatively short periods of time after which they will return to the surrounding community (Solomon et al., 2008, p. 4); at that point, the vast majority of them will return to jail, and then they will be released again. (Precise recidivism rates are not known at most county jails, as mentioned in Chapter 1 [Solomon et al., p.53-54]). This effectively changes the potential for outwardly expanding growth to an inward, self-referential cycle. The theoretical principle of continuity, according to Dewey, means that “the future has to be

taken into account at every stage of the educational process” (p. 47). This means that connectedness to the rest of one’s lived experiences is highly important for learning, and the discrete subjects and content of technical learning in a traditional setting should not be considered “genuine” preparation: “[C]ollateral learning in the way of formation of enduring attitudes, of likes and dislikes, may be and often is much more important than the spelling lesson... that is learned” (p. 48). In terms of continuity of experience, “the most important attitude that can be formed is the desire to go on learning” (p. 48).

Gehring’s framework is also sensitive to the “interaction” of experience (Dewey, 1938/1997), which is dependent on environment—“whatever conditions interact with personal needs, desires, purposes and capacities to create the experience with is had” (p. 44). Dewey assigned “equal rights” to objective and subjective aspects of interaction, including everything from physical surroundings to fantasy of mind in his definition of what constitutes “interaction” or “situation” (which are inseparable) (p. 43). Dewey placed “emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 67), a concept which Gehring upheld as a key criterion for maturation in his model of CE. This stands in contrast to the current federal and state ‘criminal mind’ paradigm as the main influence on the research and programs that take place in our nation’s jails (see Glover, Curtis & Henry, 2010 for an example of how states operationalize the ‘criminal mind’ paradigm for the purposes of quantitative research). This paradigm is limited to a behaviorist approach to CE that is commensurate with the lowest levels of maturation according to Gehring’s (2012) model.

Continuity. Continuity is the interconnectedness of experiences. Foucault (1972) described a theoretical construct of continuity, focusing on the societal level, conceptually converging with Dewey's notion that the temporal connectedness of experiences positions the subject in relation to his or her own knowing. Although there is conceptual overlap in this regard between Foucault and Dewey, each remains distinctive because Foucault's is a view of continuity about the history of society and Dewey's is a view of continuity regarding personal experiences. Dewey (1938/1997) handles the continuity of experience at the personal level:

Now we have the problem of discovering the connection which actually exists *within* experience between the achievements of the past and the issues of the present... We may reject knowledge of the past as the *end* of education and thereby only emphasize its importance as a *means*. (p. 23, emphasis in original)

Foucault (1972) handles the continuity of experience at the collective level:

If the history of thought could remain the locus of uninterrupted continuities, if it could endlessly forge connections that no analysis could undo without abstraction... it would provide a privileged shelter for the sovereignty of consciousness. Continuous history is the indispensable correlative of the founding function of the subject. (p. 12)

Foucault (1972) describes the obvious tension inherent to the relationship between continuity and discontinuity: continuity is identified by discontinuity and *vice versa* (p. 10-12). For the study of rural reentry, theoretical interest can be found in both the continuous and in the discontinuous history of the person and of the rural community. For both Foucault and Dewey, the concept of continuity is critical; it is marked by a sense of controlling one's ability to be represented in history by way of control over what one experiences. Foucault calls continuity a shelter for "sovereignty of consciousness" (above);

alternatively, Dewey (1938/1997) says of interrupted or “disconnected” continuities: “Under such circumstances, it is idle to talk of self-control” (p. 26).

A theoretical element defined by temporal relation of experiences can also be differentiated by *microscopic* and *macroscopic scales*, (Foucault, 1972, p. 4). It is too simplistic to state that continuous history is good for all experiences; the consequences of this statement for an entire community and for an individual must both be considered. It may be possible to grow too much or too fast or “in the wrong direction” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 36). Dewey considered continuity as only one element of experience, and he stopped to consider the possibility that continuity can “leave a person arrested on a low plane of development, in a way that limits capacity for further growth” (p.38). Foucault (1972) complements Dewey’s definition of continuity by pointing out that discontinuity has an effect that *may not necessarily* arrest growth because at least it serves a purpose of showing what continuity is. Discontinuities are the figurative white space in the graphic design of history’s documents. The resulting theoretical implication is that a mis-educational experience could be reconceived as educational, depending on how history is recorded and interpreted—and by whom; therefore, an approach to rural reentry guided by a principle of continuity is prevented from premature conclusions about what has and has not been educative.

Interaction. In addition to experience being a “moving force,” Dewey (1938/1997) offers that “all human experience is ultimately social” and in an environment; thus, *interaction* is a counterpart to continuity (p. 38). The principle of interaction has two sides: the external, objective conditions of the surrounding environment in which the interaction takes place and the internal, subjective condition of the actor(s); together, these form a

situation (p. 42). Existence, then, is a succession of situations (p. 44); “it is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment,” and environments are “whatever conditions interact with personal needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience which is had” (pp. 43- 44). Dewey asserts the objective conditions of the environment can be changed by the actor, and *vice versa*, through “contact and communication” (p. 38-40). Contact and communication leave behind remnants in history because they are “surfaces” of interactions; Foucault (1972) refers to “the surface” of history as “the document,” an artifact through which history “tries to reconstitute what men [sic] have done or said,” and which can be “books, texts, accounts, registers, acts, buildings, institutions, laws, techniques, objects, customs, etc.” (p. 6-7). Documents, defined broadly as such by Foucault, are remnants of our interactions as defined by Dewey.

Although Dewey’s *interaction* is personal, it does not describe the role of identity development in a way that can be applied specifically to reentry without first connecting it to the ‘labeling theory’ put forth by Edwin Lemert (1951, 1972). Introduced earlier, Lemert (1951) theorized from a symbolic interactionist perspective (compatible with Dewey’s) that the future behavior of people who have deviated from social norms is largely a matter of what they think society thinks of their deviance. There is a social reaction to deviation from norms, and that reaction comes in the form of a label such as ‘deviant’ or ‘criminal’ (p. 55). Individuals might assume such a role based on their interpretation of others’ definition(s) for the label and the role associated with it. Accepting the label, as evidenced by “organizing one’s life around” the deviant label/role, constitutes what Lemert calls a “secondary deviance,” at which point

stereotypes, patterns of exploitation, accommodation, segregation, and methods of control spring up and crystallize in the *interaction between the deviants and the rest of society*... The status of the deviants is redefined, and special pariah roles may be assigned to them (p. 55, emphasis added)

To borrow from Lemert's reasoning while examining Dewey's principle of interaction, secondary deviance is an act of mis-education because it arrests the growth of the individual in terms of what is possible for future development and learning. In CE, then, a critical approach to adult education as described earlier, relies on Dewey's *interaction* as a measure of educational value specifically in terms of how it creates an environment for premise reflection on how an individual has chosen to accept a label identified by society, if at all.

Although it may be useful to look at historical instances of CE that have operated on principles derived from the theoretical strands presented in this theoretical framework, Dewey (1938/1997) cautioned against generalizing the outcomes of one interaction to others:

It is not enough that certain materials and methods have proved effective with other individuals at other times. There must be a reason for thinking that they will function in generating an experience that has educative quality with particular individuals at a particular time. (p. 46)

Or, concisely: "There is no such thing as educational value in the abstract" (p. 46).

Nevertheless, Dewey's (1938/1997) conceptualization of experience can be considered when reviewing Osborne's (1924) *Prisons and Common Sense*. Osborne describes his tenets of corrections, which include "Prisons must be educational institutions" (p. 34) and "Prison training must be based on citizenship...to know how to be a good citizen" (pp. 41-42). The Mutual Welfare League that Osborne described at Auburn State Prison in Upstate New York was "a prison system not imposed arbitrarily by the

prison authorities, but one which is desired and requested by the prisoners themselves” (p. 57). This Mutual Welfare League was subsequently used as an approach to democratic correctional administration in Sing Sing and in the United States Naval Prison. Osborne’s tenets are congruent with Dewey’s (1938/1997) conviction that

[t]here is, I think, no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process. (p. 67)

Osborne describes an arrangement in which the continuity of the individual’s experience is not arrested and in which the interaction between the individual and his environment was conducive to a democratic arrangement in which those who were incarcerated had control over the experience.

Transformation Theory of Adult Learning

Mezirow (1990, 1991, 1995) describes the transformation theory of adult learning by defining the theoretical elements of meaning schemes and meaning perspectives and then explaining how critical reflection upon their premises can result in their transformation. Critical adult education is the process of changing or creating new meaning schemes or perspectives through critical reflection and critical discourse, and “emancipatory participation in critical discourse and reflective action is both the means and the goal of adult education, or adult development, and of social action in a democratic society” (Mezirow, 1995, p. 69). Transformation theory has been criticized as temporally constricting transformative learning as a specific, “finite” activity rather than an ongoing process (Newman, 2012, p. 44). In spite of this and other criticisms by Newman, such as verification of transformation only coming from the transformed themselves, I chose Mezirow’s transformation theory as appropriate for this conceptual framework because it

represents what Gehring (2012) identifies as a key element of the ‘most mature CE environment.’ Thus my subsequent analysis and interpretation of the data needed to include an assessment of the extent to which such learning was reflected in participants’ descriptions of their experiences. Transformation theory is not useful in the sense that the study’s data reflect the type of learning articulated by Gehring (2012), but in the sense that Gehring’s approach provides an aspirational framework for conceptually organizing CE as a field of study—which includes approaches to education such as transformation theory.

In considering transformation theory, I reviewed the criticism that Mezirow’s description of reflection does not capture it as a process, but treats it as a discrete activity (Newman, 2012). In “Transformation Theory of Adult Learning,” Mezirow (1995) defines learning broadly in symbolic interactionist terms, stating that “metaphorical inference” is used to “construe meaning” from “value laden symbolic models” whatever they may be (p. 39). What it means to create meaning is defined as “the process of construal by which we attribute coherence and significance to our experience in light of what we know” (p. 40). Mezirow differentiates between three types of construal: “presentational construal... which does not involve an internal dialogue;” “propositional construal,” which uses “language categories and words to create meaning” (p. 40); and “intentional construal, as when we are deliberately attempting to pose or solve a problem, describe, or explain” (p. 41).

As individuals construe meaning, whether intentionally or not, they are comparing experience to what they already know—this comparison is an ongoing process, based on the concept of *continuity* (Dewey, 1938/1997) as I have discussed it within the context of this study; it is not described by Mezirow as an exclusive finite act, as suggested by Newman (2012). As it is construed, meaning is structured as meaning perspectives and

meaning schemes (Mezirow, 1995). Meaning perspectives are either intentionally learned or culturally assimilated, and they fall into three categories: sociolinguistic, psychological, and epistemic (e.g., “learning, cognitive and intelligence stylese, sensory learning preferences”) (p. 42). These meaning perspectives are “articulated in a *meaning scheme*—the specific set of beliefs, knowledge, judgment, attitude, and feeling which shape a particular interpretation” (p. 43). The connection between how individuals make meaning and how they learn is that extant meaning schemes and meaning perspectives are “symbol systems” that “provide the frame of reference within which we engage in intentional learning” (p. 43).

Reflection is the process by which intentional construal transforms meaning schemes and perspectives (Mezirow, 1995, p. 44). Mezirow distinguishes between ordinary reflection upon “nature and consequence” and critical reflection that also “includes and relates the circumstances of their origin with their nature and consequence” (p. 45). In this regard, Mezirow delineates content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection. The first two can result in “everyday transformation” of a meaning scheme; the latter a “more profound transformation of a meaning perspective” (p. 45). Transformative adult learning in this specific sense “may be defined as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience in order to guide future action” (Mezirow, p. 49). This critical definition of adult learning aligns with Welton’s (1995) definition of emancipatory adult education. Examples of transformative learning have been criticized as learning that is not of a different type, but of a different degree (albeit a positive one, see Newman, 2012).

Mezirow holds that “participatory democracy” is “both the means and social goal” of transformative adult learning (1995, p. 66). An affinity with Dewey’s ultimate goal for an educative society can be seen in how Mezirow writes about Dewey: “[d]ecentralization of authority, democratization of the workplace, redistribution of wealth, strengthening of civil liberties, and the representative institutions essential to dissent and the diffusion of power were essential elements in Dewey’s vision of a ‘learning society’” (p. 66). Mezirow argues for the primacy of discourse as “communicative action” for addressing knowledge claims in a learning society. He based his concept of communicative action on Habermas’ (1987) *The Theory of Communicative Action*, and he defined the term *discourse* as “a special form of dialogue” that he borrowed from Habermas to use in defining *rational discourse*, an action that “involves an effort set aside bias, prejudice, and personal concerns and to do our best to be open and objective in presenting and assessing reasons and reviewing the evidence and arguments for and against the problematic assertion to arrive at a consensus” (Mezirow, 1995, p. 53).

Communicative learning “involves understanding what somebody means or the process by which others understand what you mean” (Mezirow, 1995, p. 49). In Mezirow’s transformation theory of adult learning, the ultimate importance of discourse is its function in the ability to create meaning of lived experience through communicative learning, a basic human right:

One’s capacity to make meaning of one’s experience through equal opportunity to participate democratically in discourse, requires conditions which are not threatening, exclusionary, prejudicial, exploitive, or dependency-producing... The fundamental human right to understand the meaning of one’s experience through discourse implies, not only a basic education to develop cognitive skills, but also physical security, health, employment, and shelter (1995, p. 61).

“Opposing systemic forces” identified by Habermas are systems that “create constraints on free and full participation in rational discourse” (Mezirow, 1995, p. 57). In contrast, the “ideal conditions” for rational discourse are those that value “participatory democracy, tolerance, freedom, education, equality of opportunity” (Mezirow, p. 57). However, as Mezirow noted, “It seems painfully obvious that existing [social] institutions cannot be easily reconciled with true participatory democracy” (p. 67). Finally, Mezirow “fully recognizes the crucial importance of power and influence of the dominant structures in a bureaucratic and capitalistic society in determining learning needs and opportunities and structuring upward mobility” (p. 67); however, he was general in this description. For Mezirow, participatory democracy through transformative learning seems to be either *on* or *off*: “There are no increments or degrees of transformation... and this leads us into linguistic and logical traps” (Newman, 2014, p.350).

The theoretical framework that guides this study must be flexible enough to confront the notion that correctional institutions operate according to a panoptic power system that is not conducive to critical adult education. By framing recidivism as a social crisis within a panoptic society, a *critical* approach to adult education becomes possible because “[i]t is in these ‘crisis moments’ that exploited men and women are particularly open to unlearning their false self-understandings and acquiring an emancipatory consciousness about the system’s transitoriness and irrationality” (Welton, 1995, p. 20). In crisis moments, a person’s symbol system is subject to question and to change, thereby creating an opportunity for transformation of meaning perspectives and meaning schemes or for the acquisition of new perspectives or schemes.

Chapter Two Summary

In this review, I presented literature to contextualize the phenomenon of rural reentry. I defined and discussed recidivism, CE, programs and reentry. I identified small jails as unique places that are in rural communities, and I compared them to larger facilities in urban communities. After using the literature to position rural reentry within its adult education and criminal justice context, I discussed the philosophical and historical development of correctional education to more completely describe how a study in correctional education is a study in adult literacy.

My assumption that adult literacy education is an important element of reentry is obvious. I examined the discourse of punishment relevant to CE, connecting it to Foucault's conceptualization of the correctional institution (the panopticon) as a metaphor for social control. Discussing the importance of adult literacy to CE, I reviewed the adult literacy literature's conceptualization of "inmate" as inherently deficient, noting how this perpetuates the need to control the "inmate" through some sort of disciplinary mechanism (which could look like anything from punishment to rehabilitation). I used the *Integral Approach*, a conceptual framework presented by Gehring, as a way to reframe the spectrum of concepts that are relevant to the phenomenon of rural reentry, categorizing rural reentry as an instance of CE itself. Finally, I presented theories informing this research study from Foucault, Dewey, and Mezirow.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study engaged seven participants in one small jail in a rural community. The methodological approach to phenomenology that guides this study has a philosophical tie to Foucault's (1972) perspective on identifying knowledge at the local level and to the symbolic interactionist perspective that power is a relationship between people that is mediated by human communication. At issue in this study is the phenomenon of reentry, framed as a learning experience using a conceptual approach from Gehring (2012) and theoretical strands from Dewey (1938/1997) and Mezirow (1995). The following research questions guided the study:

- What are the lived experiences of reentry for young adult men who reenter a rural community after being held at their local county jail?
 - *Sub-Question:* What meaning do the participants make of their lived experiences?
- What types of learning are apparent in the descriptions of the participants' experiences?
- What types of power relationships are reflected in participants' descriptions of their experiences?

This chapter is divided into several sections outlining the actions taken in this study. In the first, I describe the phenomenological approach that guides this study. Then, I describe pre-research activities such as site selection, participant characteristics, recruitment, and phenomenological bracketing. I outline the acts of data gathering in one section, and I describe the acts of analyzing and interpreting the data in another.

Phenomenological Considerations

Both phenomenology and grounded theory would be suitable research approaches for a framework to conceptualize reentry in terms of learning *experience*. I limited data gathering and analysis to a methodology focused on *describing* the phenomenon of reentry and then interpreting it according to the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that guide this study rather than gathering data focused on trying to explain *why* people experience what they do. This boundary kept me within a phenomenological approach and away from theoretical discussions, for example, on the causation of crime.

Unlike researchers who identify with Heidegger or Husserl at the onset of research, I agree with Zahavi's (2008) argument that the meaning of the phenomenon being studied takes on a more complex understanding when the perspective of Heidegger is interpreted as building on the perspective of Husserl rather than supplanting it. Zahavi's description of critical phenomenology incorporates and goes beyond the intent of earlier phenomenologists to provide transcendental and hermeneutic phenomenological reductions; critical phenomenology also considers the power relationships as described by the participant and interpreted by the researcher, resulting in a critical reduction of the phenomenon.

Researcher Choices about Presuppositions

Phenomenology is the study of lived experience, also phrased as the study of the lifeworld (van Manen, 1997). One distinction between Husserl's phenomenology and that of Heidegger's is that Husserl identifies the lifeworld as human experience *sans* reflection (Lavery, 2003). The source of intelligibility for Husserl was in the "primal" consciousness, whereas for Heidegger humans already exist in a world full of intelligibility: "For

Heidegger, the source of intelligibility is more mundanely the context of meaning in which our practices are embedded” (van Manen, 2007, p. 17). One basis of distinction between Heidegger and Husserl is the difference between apprehending meaning from an object *as it is* as compared to through interpretation (van Manen, 2007). From an epistemological viewpoint, Husserl focused on trying to identify the essence of a phenomenon from an etic (outside) stance that transcends personal experience by purposefully setting aside (or *bracketing*) the presuppositions a one has about the phenomenon (the researcher’s *epoche*) (Lavery, 2003; Zahavi, 2008). Husserl’s object of concern was the relationship between the knower and the known; Heidegger’s object of concern was more ontological, focused on the knower’s reality of ‘Being’ in the world (Lavery, 2003, p. 27.) Husserl focused on the “intentionality” of the investigator (Lavery, 2003, p. 23). Heidegger situated the researcher as more participatory and from an emic (internal) stance, as he held that the world discloses itself to the observer-participant through acts of interpretation as beings in the world (hence, Husserl’s “transcendental” phenomenology as compared to Heidegger’s “hermeneutical” phenomenology; see Zahavi, 2008). Revealing agreement with Heidegger’s stance that the human being is always in a state of interpreting, there some crossover between Heidegger and Husserl: “Only through reflection can we appropriate aspects of lived experience, but the interpretability of primal impressional life is already in some sense given by its own givenness” (van Manen, 2007, p. 16).

In practice and philosophy, Husserl and Heidegger try to handle the question of what the investigator is to do with his or her presuppositions. Husserl’s phenomenological reduction is when the researcher focuses on their own intentionality, the direction that their mind takes toward an object, and then ‘brackets’ that intentionality so as to set aside

presuppositions in an attempt to describe an object's essence as purely as possible (Lavery, 2003). Heidegger developed beyond Husserl's philosophical basis by stretching the boundary temporally; he recognized that *being in time* (the title of his major work) is critical to the meaning of a phenomenon—and that this applies to both the investigated and the investigator.

In this study, I bracketed my presuppositions (as described in the methodology that follows) and then used that bracketing in multiple ways. First, I used my bracketing in an attempt to code the data with as little of my interpretation involved as possible. From this, the first two themes were developed. Then, I used my bracketing as a way to interact with the data, including my interpretation of the participants' descriptions of reentry as a learning experience as a part of the data set. At that point, I articulated the next three themes. After, I again used my bracketing, but with a specific focus on the power relationships as per my second research sub-question. This last reduction of the data reaches beyond the interpretive, hermeneutic phenomenology of Heidegger and the descriptive, transcendental phenomenology of Husserl.

Critical Phenomenology

Critical phenomenology has developed on the notion that subjects have limited knowledge of the world until phenomena are interpreted in light of extant power relationships. Whereas some phenomenologists assert that preunderstandings are impossible to bracket out, critical phenomenologists have called for using preunderstandings in the development of descriptions that critique a phenomenon's power relationships (Zahavi, 2008). This requires bracketing to identify what one's preunderstandings are. Marsh (1984) advocates for a phenomenological approach that

goes beyond the hermeneutical and the descriptive; he says, “don’t look merely, but interpret and *criticize*” (p.147, emphasis added). In a critical phenomenology approach, phenomenological interest grows beyond a description of a phenomenon and beyond an interpretation of that phenomenon’s meaning to a point where that meaning is seen as situated in a context that is not considered neutral; the context must be criticized to unveil the thing itself that is being experienced by the participant in the fullness of his social-environmental and historical-political situation (using Dewey’s [1938/1997] definition of *situation*).

To clarify how phenomenological approaches to research can be critical, Marsh (1984) explains how capitalist systems of society favor “an ideology of scientific enterprise,” and he states that such knowledge systems make “anachronistic and obsolete” the knowledge of individuals who, through “symbolic interactionism” are making meaning of their lived experiences (p. 143-147). According to the framework that guides this study, the interpretation of any phenomenon’s meaning and the description of the phenomenon must be taken into account alongside the participants’ description of any systems of knowledge or power that influence the way the individual makes meaning of the phenomenon. The context of a situation’s power relations is important for describing how people make meaning of their situations. Of special importance to this study, lending from its theoretical framework, is a description and interpretation of the phenomenon that elucidates how the participants reflect on the premises of their meaning structures, using Mezirow’s (1995) terminology. A critical examination of the data, then, goes beyond identifying where the reentry experience falls on the *continuum of continuity* and how it can be described in terms of *interaction*.

Site Selection and Description

I chose a small jail in rural Pennsylvania partially because I already had access to the site and the consent of the warden; I had previously conducted research at this site, and I already had some rapport amongst the staff and some of the people who are held at the jail. In prior research with rural jails in Pennsylvania, I also have conducted interviews with this jail's warden. In a survey of over half of the rural jail wardens in PA (Gee, 2007), this warden and nearly all others expressed support for more research in their facilities and with their populations.

As far as county jails go, this particular one is "nice." I had previously heard this sentiment expressed by students in my GED classes at this jail as well as by corrections officers, the jail administration, and visitors to the jail. My own experience of touring other county jails, which includes multiple facilities in PA, NY, and CA, leads me to this same general sentiment. The unpleasant odor and commotion that come with some other jail environments is missing from this particular jail. The air smells clean, it is relatively quiet, and most people's dispositions seem polite and respectful. Participants described the jail in colorful terms, and none seemed to express an aggressive or negative sentiment. One made light of this particular jail, comparing it to others he had been in and calling it "a joke." Another said, "I'll be honest with you, this place right here is a cake walk compared to the jails down there [in the city where was once incarcerated]."

Participant Characteristics

The US jail population is "relatively young," with about 30% being under 24 years old (Solomon et al., 2008, p. 13). Three of the seven participants were 23 years old. Two were 21, and two were 24. All were born in the same county as the jail, except for one who

was born in a major metropolitan area in the southern part of the state. He relocated to the same county as the jail prior to arrest to be with family who had previously relocated. All were white. This may seem at odds with commonly reported statistics about race and incarceration; however, the county in this study is 97.3% white (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/42/42117.html>).

I chose young men incarcerated in rural county jails as participants because they seemed to be a marginalized population in the research base, but they are also a large percent of the population experiencing community reentry (Solomon, et al., 2008). They are too old for the juvenile justice system, so they would not be included in juvenile justice research. They also do not fit into the age category of “adult” when it is defined as starting at age 24, which is why I refer to them as young adults. I determined these young adult men were a population that “fell between the cracks” of CE research due to their incarceration at a rural facility where research is not as common an occurrence as it is in state prisons. These young adults were also likely to have less exposure to the criminal justice system than their older jail mates. Their experiences were viewed as holding potential for being unique amongst the general jail population in part because they did not qualify for research studies focused on juveniles, on college students, or on adults age 24 and over.

The number of participants interviewed to answer phenomenological questions has been described as “irrelevant,” meaning that a researcher should “Interview so many subject that you find out what you need to know” (Englander, p. 20). In this sense, any description that one receives of the phenomenon is perceived as helping answer the question of “What is it like to live through this experience?” One person could conceivably be able to give a sufficiently thorough description of the phenomenon so as to answer this

question, given enough time (Englander, p. 20). Creswell (1998) does not go as far as to state that the number of participants is irrelevant from a phenomenological approach, but he does give a wide range in number from five to 25 participants (p. 64). Morse (1994) does not provide a maximum number, but suggests that six is a minimum (p. 225).

The idea of saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) of data is closely related to the methodological choice of sample size. However, it is the researcher who decides, during research, how much saturation is enough—that is, when there is no “new” data being found during the research activities—and this is a somewhat arbitrary decision. Charmaz (2006) suggested that the researcher’s decisions on attainment of saturation might be influenced by their history of research experience as well as the type of claim the researcher was making, with loftier claims being held to a higher internal standard by experienced researchers in regards to saturation (p. 146).

Recruitment and Eligibility

To find participants, the jail administration provided me with a list of each person in the jail along with their ages and an indication of whether or not they had been in the jail before. Also, an invitational flyer was posted in the jail blocks’ common areas (Appendix A), listing the study’s purpose and eligibility criteria. Each person deemed eligible received an invitational letter (Appendix B), and each 18-24 year-old male was asked to come down from the cell block to the multipurpose room so I could ask if they wanted to participate in the study. A total of 17 people fit the age criteria, but only 10 had also experienced reentry. Three did not want to participate, yielding seven young adult men who had recidivated. The choice of asking men to participate was also partly based on convenience: although the number of women in jail is rising, there are still many more men

in jail on any given day. In some regards, selection of individuals depended on factors outside my control, such as the potential participants' expected lengths of stay and their availability while in jail. Obtaining approval from the warden to work with individuals who may be "in the hole" (under additional supervision) or on work release did not prove difficult, and the warden was very receptive to my presence at the facility, as were all of the corrections officers and the people who were being confined.

Six of the seven completed all three interviews while one only completed one. I did not dismiss his data, as it was still relevant to the phenomenon. Three participants provided me with participant checks that lasted two sessions while two provided me with check-ins that lasted one. I found no reason to turn down any willing participants other than one person who had not been incarcerated at a jail before even though he had been held in a juvenile detention facility.

Although each participant had been incarcerated at this county jail before, their experiences with incarceration and reentry varied in terms of length of stay, reason for stay, number of stays, and amount of time between stays. Some had been in and out of correctional facilities prior to becoming adults, with up to seven different trips to either jail or juvenile detention. Others had had only one or two experiences with the criminal justice system. Three had been at jails in different counties as well. Two were awaiting decisions on whether or not they would be moved to a state prison. The remaining five believed they would be released back to the community within a few months. A short biographical description of each individual appears at the end of this chapter.

I chose young men who had recidivated because they were now somewhat removed from the experience of reentry. A phenomenological approach relies on the participant

being temporarily removed from the phenomenon, as a person cannot reflect on a phenomenon while experiencing it (van Manen, 1997, p. 10). Given that my goal was to provide a “rich description of the phenomenon and its setting” (Kensit, 2000, p.104), I could have also decided on a case-study design that relied on one participant as an instrumental case, which may have been easier to accomplish without specifically relying on someone who had recidivated for information; however, I selected multiple participants to multiple perspectives on the phenomenon. This methodological choice emphasized the importance of recidivism in the reentry experience and considered when making recommendations based on this study.

Phenomenological Bracketing

Epoche is a term that Husserl borrowed from the Greek for “stay away or abstain,” and the purpose of establishing an *epoche* is to “bracket” one’s presuppositions about the phenomenon to understand the meaning of something without imparting meaning to it (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). Groenewald (2004) stated that the purpose of bracketing is also referred to as phenomenological reduction, which means that by identifying one’s preconceptions about the phenomenon, the researcher is more readily able to approach the research phenomenon as objectively as possible. The conclusion is that the researcher would be ‘closer’ to the experience of the phenomenon and thus gain a better understanding of its meaning. However, I questioned what the researcher does with bracketing during research and whether or not it was possible or desirable to *set aside* the *epoche*. This question was pondered by Heidegger, who reacted to the mathematical form of Husserl’s phenomenology and took a more interpretivist perspective which, as explained

by Zahavi (2008), does not mean that Heidegger's perspective was mutually exclusive from Husserl's later writings.

Interaction with my bracketed ideas about reentry was not explicated as a separate phase, but as an ongoing interaction that I captured through the use of writing memos during my research (see below) and maintaining a "Bracketing Manifest" in which I wrote down my presuppositions as lists of "things I believe, things I want to believe, things I don't believe, and things I don't want to believe" (Appendix C). Creswell (2007) states that researchers must "set aside their experiences" (p. 59), beginning research by "bracketing *out* one's experiences" (p. 60, emphasis mine). This suggests that Creswell's concept of the epoche is true to the Greek definition of the word, but there are different perspectives on what "to do" with the epoche once it is "out." Zahavi (2008) and Marsh (2004) both advocated for interpreting the data critically, giving the epoche an active research function. In this case, that entailed me asking questions about the premises of my own meaning perspectives, in keeping with Mezirow's (1995) description of critical reflection. In short, my theoretical perspective led me to act on research as a learning experience that involved me as a participant.

Creswell (2007) explains the epoche as a way of removing one's predispositions with the small exception of when researchers "write about their own experiences and the context and situations that have influenced their experiences," the inclusion of which Creswell stated should be minimized: "I like to shorten Moustakas's procedures, and reflect these personal statements at the beginning of the phenomenology or include them in a methods section" (pp. 62-63). However, the methodology I developed for a critical reduction from the phenomenological approach required comparison of the participants'

descriptions and my own interpretation to my own epoche. It was a purposeful constant comparison, similar in that respect to grounded theory. Throughout the description of this study's methods, I mention returning to the data three times to focus in on three reductions of the data: the descriptive, the interpretive, and the critical. My epoche enabled this practice functionally, which is why I discuss bracketing in depth here. I returned to my epoche so I could approach the data three times, with the utility of the epoche changing each time. As per Laverly (2003), the purpose of what I've labeled the transcendental reduction "is to become aware of one's biases and assumptions in order to bracket them, or set them aside, in order to engage the experience without preconceived notions about what will be found in the investigation" (p. 23). I looked at the data again using a hermeneutical approach, in which "the biases and assumptions of the researcher are not bracketed or set aside, but rather are embedded and essential to interpretive process" (p. 27).

Data Gathering

I delineated boundaries on the research study and kept the context intact by framing this study as an *instrumental collective case* of young adults at a small rural jail in Northcentral Pennsylvania to "get insight into the question [of what reentry is like] by studying a particular case" (Stake, 1995, p. 3). The selected case study design is *instrumental*, as my "use of case study is to understand something else" beyond an *intrinsic* interest in only the phenomenon of leaving this particular jail and reentering this particular community (p. 3). Because phenomenology is not a research methodology *per se*, I have chosen a case study design to organize my phenomenological approach using semi-structured interviews (Englander, 2012) as a primary method of gathering phenomenological data.

In this study, I look at the challenge of reentry and reframe it as a learning experience—a crisis moment which holds the opportunity for emancipatory adult learning according to the transformation theory of adult education. To better understand this phenomenon, the unit of observation I chose was each individual participant in the collective case, and I identified the unit of analysis (“what it is you want to be able to say something about” [Patton, 2002, p. 229]) as the participants’ collective description of the reentry phenomenon. Because I chose a critical phenomenological approach, the unit of analysis was viewed as embedded within the participants’ understandings of the power structure in which they experienced the phenomenon—their descriptions were viewed philosophically as descriptions of their *lifeworlds*.

Data gathering is the beginning of interpretation, as the researcher does not have the ability to *not* interpret what he or she perceives through their senses (see following pages); during data gathering, the researcher must continually practice the bracketing described earlier by not allowing their own interpretations to alter the data coming from the participant (Creswell, 1998, pp. 54 & 113; Moustakas, 1994, p. 90). I used memo-writing during and after interviews as a way to grapple with my inability to ‘turn off’ my own interpretive interactions with the world. The semi-structured interview format, in which participants can feel free to talk at length about their experiences (Patton 2002) while I asked main questions and probing questions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), helped keep me on track during the interviews rather than turning the interviews into a conversation about my own spur-of-the-moment interpretations.

Interview protocol

I followed a three-part interview protocol (Appendix D): (1) a preliminary meeting to determine eligibility and obtain consent (Appendix E), (2) three interviews, and (3) focused participant checks. This is a modification of Seidman's (2013) "three-interview series" (p. 16) as I have chosen to expand from three interviews to a total of seven possible meetings (a preliminary meeting, three reentry interviews, and two participant checks). Three interviews were conducted with participants, averaging an hour per interview.

Pen and paper note-taking can make participants feel as self-conscious as a recording device, so "personal discretion should be used" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993). I used a digital voice recorder while interviewing, and I kept any notes I took in full view of the participants.

Preliminary meetings. The preliminary meeting began with *grand tour* questions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in the preliminary meeting because they helped move the conversation along while I reviewed the study's purpose and intent, along with participants' rights and informed consent (Englander, 2012 p. 27). I clarified the participants' ages, where they were born and raised, and whether they had had a reentry experience before. I asked what schooling had been like for them. I asked about their family arrangement and for other information that they thought would be pertinent to giving me a sense of what life was like before their first arrest.

I had learned from past research with this population (Gee, 2006) that the researcher is often asked questions in return. I have been told by participants in the past that the presentation of the researcher as a person is important; this coincides with calls for the researcher "to be oneself" (Erlandson, 1993, p. 93) rather than trying to be a

researcher, *per se*. Moustakas (1994) offered that initial meetings can begin with “social conversation” (p. 114) to help establish rapport. When looking at phenomenological methods used in other disciplines, I noticed that the need to establish rapport is not unique to the corrections setting. For example, Ardley (2005), who wrote about phenomenological interview techniques in the field of marketing, confirmed the need to build rapport and implied that “how the interviewee responds to the interview is largely attributable to a question of trust” (p.117). For this reason, much of the preliminary meeting was ‘getting to know each other.’

Near the middle of this interview, after establishing initial rapport, I used questions that “probed” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 271) the participants to ‘bring me up to speed’ on what was going on life just prior to their first arrest. This method of using probing questions and open-ended questions is described as “in-depth” interviewing by Patton (1990), but in the preliminary meeting, the purpose was to elicit a broad overview of the participants’ background to plan for the reentry interviews, which were more accurately “in depth” (Patton, 1990).

This preliminary meeting is based on Englander’s (2012) description of a “preliminary meeting” to be held prior to phenomenological interviews, and “during this initial meeting with the participant it is also useful to review the research question. This gives the participant time to dwell and ponder on the experience” (p. 27). I followed Englander’s (2012) recommendation of waiting approximately one week between preliminary meeting and interview because giving the participant some time to think and interpret on their own “can aid the researcher in getting a richer description during the interview without the researcher having to ask too many questions” (p. 27).

Reentry interviews. To begin the reentry interview, I asked the participants if they had any comments on our preliminary meeting a week earlier. Some provided oral comments that I was able to use as probing questions. In general, throughout the reentry interviews, my intent was to follow-up on any descriptions of situations (as defined by Dewey) that sound like learning opportunities or any meaning perspectives (as defined by Mezirow) that sound like they might have changed—and so from time to time I asked for clarification on what I perceived as having been a learning opportunity.

I used Patton's (1990) suggestion to begin with an open-ended question for the reentry interviews. More specifically, Englander (2012) stated, "The first question one should ask to the participant is: Can you please describe as detailed as possible a situation in which you experienced [the phenomenon]?" (p. 26). The purpose of the reentry interview was to capture as much in-depth description as possible about the situations encountered during reentry.

Englander stated that the two questions required of phenomenological semi-structured interviews are to ask for a description of the situations encountered during the phenomenon and then to ask what effect those situations had on the participants' lives (p. 26). Probing questions (Patton, 1990), such as "Could you tell me more about...[a particular situation]?" or simply "What was it like when...[a particular situation occurred]?" will be used in addition to what Lincoln and Guba (1985) call "'pumps'—sounds such as 'uh-hum' or 'umm'" (p. 271). The back and forth between open ended and probing questions regarding different situations as the participants presented them allowed for each participant to describe the situation as a "story" more than one time. Englander (2012) stated, "Asking for a situation is vital since the discovery of the meaning of a phenomenon...

needs to have been connected to a specific context in which the phenomenon has been experienced” (p. 26). By asking for situations, I treated the phenomenon as an object slowly revealing itself to me through the participants’ descriptions as I figuratively walked around “reentry” and came to learn about what the facets of its surface are like.

The second reentry interview was more specific about the participants’ life history. This “focused life-history” interview (Seidman, 2013, p. 17) was intended to give me a sense of where reentry fit into the overall flow of the participants’ lives. To provide a visualization of how the phenomenon is represented by the participants, I supplemented the participants’ oral response by drawing a timeline of their biography during the second reentry interview. I had offered participants the opportunity to engage in this or other creative activities during the time between the preliminary meeting and the first reentry interview; however, this engagement was limited to my diagramming of their biographies.

Although they were all under 24 years old, they had, for the most part, relocated several times, moving between parents’ or friends’ houses and in and out of the local county jail. I needed a way to diagram their ins and outs to keep track of the continuity of their experiences. In keeping with Creswell’s (2007) charge to be “creative” when gathering data for qualitative analysis and interpretation (p. 126), I drew a diagram sketching out their biography with each participant as he spoke, and we used the diagram as a map of sorts during the interviews so that we could be sure we were both talking about the same time period. Several participants came back to the third reentry interview with the comment that they knew they had misremembered the order of events of their lives or forgotten a significant event’s occurrence altogether.

By the time of the third reentry interview, each of the participants and I had defined a specific period of reentry that we were discussing, and the participants were engaged in what Seidman (2013) identified as the details of the “contemporary experience” itself—in this case, reentry. The types of questions I followed for the reentry interviews specific to the reentry experience were:

What sorts of opportunities did you have?
What happened?
Who was involved?
Where was that?
When was that?
Could you tell me more about...?
What did you do when... ?
What was it like when...?
How did you know how to...?
What do you mean by that?

The participant checks, or “reflecting on meaning” are Seidman’s (2013) third interview in his “three-interview series,” and they are described below under their own heading, where they more-or-less fit within the loose chronological order of research activities as they appear here. These sections do create a somewhat false distinction between gathering data and using it to help describe the phenomenon.

Memoing

To effectively gather data without contaminating it, the researcher has to “do” something with their own thoughts and beliefs. I have already described the epoche, which is partially accomplished by writing memos to oneself during research. This results in a reflexive data point in its own right—and it occurs as soon as possible after gathering data because gathering data is also an interpretive act.

Field notes are a first instance of memos and can be used to identify where bracketing has or will take place, as well as to identify areas for follow-up. Based on a study

by Leonard Schatzman and Anselm Strauss which was supplemented by Robert Burgess, Groenewald (2004) suggests four types of field notes:

- Observational notes (ONs) — 'what happened notes' deemed important enough to the researcher to make. Bailey (1996) emphasises the use of all the senses in making observations.
- Theoretical notes (TNs) — 'attempts to derive meaning' as the researcher thinks or reflects on experiences.
- Methodological notes (MNs) — 'reminders, instructions or critique' to oneself on the process.
- Analytical memos (AMs) — end-of-a-field-day summary or progress reviews.

I developed a one-page template for easily gathering these artifacts from myself (Appendix F). I listed the five senses for ONs; I included a field for initial reflections on the meaning of the description (TN); I added three MN fields, one for reminders, one for instructions, and one for critique; and I added a “summary of progress” field for AMs.

My ONs were the least varied, as the environment of the jail did not change much and sensory stimuli were highly similar during each interview. My TNs provided me with my initial thoughts on the meaning of the phenomenon. For example, one note on theory stated, “People, places, and things are factors of reentry.” Most of my MNs were critical of my speaking too much during the interviews. My ANs were the most varied of all my notes. I used this space to list observations and questions that I had about the interviews.

Data Analysis

The conceptual and theoretical frameworks that guide this study support returning three times to the data that are gathered: Once to reduce the phenomenon to an overall description of how it reveals itself without the researcher’s interpretation, a second time to interact with the data hermeneutically in terms of how learning is discussed and what types of learning are apparent, and a third time to identify factors involving power

relationships that effect the reentry experience. To fully describe a phenomenon, then, requires a critical approach with three “reductions” according to Marsh (1984): the descriptive, the hermeneutic, and the critical, which is “oriented toward the future” (p. 147). Phenomenological themes are the “structures of experience” (van Manen, 1990, p. 79), and the final act of analysis is using the themes written as structural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994) to produce a collective case description of the phenomenon of reentry.

In general, analysis does not have to be conceptualized as a mutually exclusive ‘step’ from data gathering in phenomenological research approaches (Groenewald, 2004, p. 17). Groenewald advocates for approaching the data using methods that do not literally analyze (that is, do not break data into parts), but instead try to investigate “the constituents of a phenomenon while keeping the context of the whole” (p. 17). This attitude toward the data is one reason why I have identified with a phenomenological approach rather than a grounded theory approach, although I did choose to use grounded theorist Charmaz’s (2006) method of moving quickly through the data to identify *in vivo* phrases that seem meaningful.

To determine a specific set of methods for interpreting the data, I first read several recent reviews of methodological developments in phenomenology. Three of these (Groenewald [2004], Marsh [2004], and Zahavi [2008]) provided additional specifics that complicate the texts of Moustakas (1994), van Manen (1990), and Creswell (2007). Zahavi, for example, offered a critical viewpoint on phenomenological reflection that challenged Creswell’s reduced use of bracketing as a methodological tool. After reviewing these and other writings, I identified and participated in the phases of research described below.

Holistic Review

This phase of data analysis served the function of becoming familiar with the data by reviewing it repeatedly. Groenewald (2004) recommended that the researcher “listens repeatedly to the audio recording of each interview to become familiar with the words of the interviewee” (p. 18). “Holistic” also refers to what van Manen (1990) called the “wholistic or sententious approach.” This strategy involves the researcher expressing the “fundamental or overall meaning of a text” (van Manen, p. 94).

Horizontalization

The strategy of horizontalization (Moustakas, 1994) frustrated me, as I do not commonly consider that “every statement has equal value” (p. 125). I tried to view horizontalization as a strategy to gain a holistic sense of the data rather than to identify units of meaning *per se*. In identifying units of meaning, I found that I was simultaneously parsing-out significant statements (see below). I went back through the transcripts, the diagrams of the participants’ life histories, and my memos to reflect on why I had chosen these statements as indicating meaning. In this regard, function of this phase was a reflexive one in which I identified the units – groups of words or parts of artifacts—that informed my holistic sense of the data. I used this reflexive technique to identify how to unitize the data set into portions of text as well, and in a general sense, my method can be summarized as looking through the units of meaning for a set of significant statements within the data set that were further interpreted as to what all of the data mean in relation to each other. This leads to identifying themes (see below) as well as a returning to this phase as each of the phenomenological reductions is made.

Identifying units of meaning, then, became an ongoing process because what was viewed as 'significant' changed as I understood the phenomenon better throughout the course of the interviews.

Identifying Units of Meaning

One phenomenological approach to data inquiry is horizontalizing the data set (Moustakas, 1994). In horizontalization, all data is supposed to be viewed as existing on a horizon of equal meaning. The researcher's bracketing is supposed to make possible such a feat so that meaning can arise from this horizon of data (Moustakas, 1994). In identifying units of meaning and identifying significant statements, I first had to transcribe the text. I transcribed about 40 hours' worth of interview data into Microsoft Word, listening to each phrase in chunks of 6 to 10 seconds, and entering and double-checking the text of each phrase at least twice. I entered all non-verbal utterances, stutters, laughs, and other indicators of emotion. At one point in a participant's second reentry interview, he began to cry. This was noted on the transcript.

Hycner (1985) summarized this stage of research, which he stated comes after the important step of the researcher transcribing the interviews, as "a crystallization and condensation of what the participant has said, still using as much as possible the literal words of the participant" (p.282). Hycner did not limit statements to text; a "unit of general meaning" can be a word, phrase, non-verbal, or paralinguistic communication" (p. 282).

Identifying Significant Statements

"Significant" to this study were statements that shed light on the meaning of reentry. In accordance with my research questions, significant statements were viewed as any that brought me closer to an awareness of the factors affecting reentry and/or the interactions

that the person who reentered had had with their community. For instance, when more than one participant referred to themselves as “dirty” (as in, “I was dirty”) due to failing a urinalysis while out on probation, I recognized significance in the way they placed themselves as the subject of the sentence rather than constructing a sentence that placed their urine sample as the subject (“my urine was dirty”). Given that my theoretical framework is sensitive to how labels gathered from society affect personal identity, I wrote a note to myself with the words “label: dirty” on it while moving through the data set.

Van Manen (1990) notes two additional strategies beyond the holistic approach useful at this juncture when conducting phenomenological interpretation; they are the *selective or highlighting approach* and the *detailed or line-by-line approach*. Together, they are roughly correlated with the second step (“significant statements”) noted in Creswell’s (2007) synopsis of Moustakas’ (1994) approach to phenomenological analysis, which Creswell deems as “the most practical, useful approach” (p. 159). The detailed or line-by-line approach bears similar elements to Reissman’s (2008) treatment of Labov’s (1988) *structural approach* because it parses units of discourse into relatively small chunks of approximately six words (as opposed to others who uses larger units, such as stanzas).

In this study, I used Labov’s structural approach in tandem with van Manen’s line-by-line approach to identify significant statements (this is as a precursor to the identification of thematic elements, see below). I found Labov’s structural approach to be better for identifying significance when participants were telling extended stories. Charmaz’s *in vivo* technique proved useful in helping identify which of the participants’ words to use in capturing titles for thematic elements. As I went through a text phrase by phrase as suggested by Labov (1988), I began to view the participant data as *narratives*.

Labov describes narratives as following a beginning-middle-end pattern that he calls “orientation,” “complicating action,” and “resolution” (p. 7-11).

I have described a review of the raw interview data at several instances: once when transcribing, as short chunks of words, which helped me find some of the narratives’ structural components (Labov, 1998); once during a holistic review upon horizontalizing, in which I took notice of any *in vivo* statements (Charmaz, 2006); and once using a line-by-line approach, in which I used a highlighter and purposefully hunted for significant statements (van Manen, 1990). Additionally, later, I returned to the raw data during my final writing of the general description of the phenomenon and while compiling quotes for the final written descriptions of the themes.

All of my work with the data was accomplished using Microsoft Word and hard copies of the transcripts. I used sticky notes and scratch paper to make lists of significant statements, short memos, reminders about what I was thought was significant, and questions for myself. Although this generated a tremendous amount of paper and clutter, I found it easier to keep organized than a “virtual” system such as a qualitative data software system. I also found that I had greater access to the data—I could manipulate it by hand without the restraints of an electronic system.

Clustering Thematic Elements

The phases of looking at the data in search of significant statements yielded a list of statements that were ultimately clustered to form themes. Before this point, I had identified about 140 significant statements amongst thousands of units in the horizon. Identifying thematic elements was assisted by comparing significant statements to my

epoche to check for bracketed terms that might help to reduce the phenomenon to essential description, especially in regards to data related to learning.

The function of this phase was to cluster the significant statements into what Moustakas (1994) calls “meaning units” or “themes” or what I noticed was roughly parallel to Van Manen’s (1990) use of the phrase “thematic statements.” After reviewing the methodology of several leading authors in phenomenological approaches, Greonwald (2004) stated that going back to the recorded interview can be helpful in determining how to cluster individual units of meaning into clusters that will become themes:

going back to the recorded interview (the gestalt) and forth to the list of non-redundant units of meaning to derive clusters of appropriate meaning... By interrogating the meaning of the various clusters, central themes are determined. (Greonwald, p. 137).

During the course of identifying thematic elements, I had my first participant check (see below). This provided me with access to the participants’ reflection on my interpretation of the data. We had an open conversation about the themes, and I invited them to correct or revise any words that they felt did not adequately describe reentry from their perspective. During the first participant check, I drew attention to my listing of significant statements. We talked about each significant statement and potential theme. The purpose of this activity was to ascertain the “invariant constituents” of the phenomenon—that is, the things about the phenomenon that do not change.

Participant Checks

Participant checks served to validate the units of meaning, significant statements, and themes with the participant. Participant checks are a “hermeneutic conversation” with the participant (van Manen, 1990, p. 99). Participant checks are a conversation about the researcher’s interpretation of the data, and I experienced them as part data analysis and

part gathering of additional perspectives on the data. I explored the phenomenon as someone who did not have a wealth of personal experience with it, so I found it important for the participant to become a part of the interpretative process. Participant checks provided an opportunity for me to take van Manen's (1990) suggestion that "themes may become objects of reflection in follow-up hermeneutic conversations in which both the researcher and the interviewee collaborate" (p. 99). Isolation of significant statements requires a significant amount of "judgement (sic) calls...while consciously bracketing... in order to avoid inappropriate subjective judgements (sic)" according to Groenewald (2004, p.19), who built his methodology based on Holloway (1997) and Hycner (1999).

Follow up questions such as "Is this what you meant?" or "Has your thinking on this changed?" were asked after reviewing the significant statements and thematic elements during participant checks, as described in the previous section. Because significance of statements was sometimes indicated by the frequency of similar statements and the chronology of events (Groenewald, p. 19), participant checks helped to minimize arbitrary judgment calls on my part or over-reliance on quantifying of data, and it avoided "training independent judges to verify the units of relevant meaning" as a "good reliability check" (Hycner, 1985, p. 286). The participant-check interviews served as the third phase of interviewing as suggested by Seidman's (2013) three-interview series, which he labeled "reflection on the meaning" (p. 22). Seidman's position was that "making meaning requires that the participants look at how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation" (p. 22). These factors—that is, the thematic elements of reentry—were the primary subject of the participant checks.

The two participant checks varied in that I was able to refine my findings between them. I took a two-week break between these visits to the jail, and I spent that time thinking about something *other than* this investigation. When I returned to the data set, I was ready to refine my findings (see below), and then I met with the participants again. I found these conversations to be exceptionally useful in terms of my ability to clarify the participants' words so that I had some indication that I understood them clearly.

Refining Findings

Generally stated by van Manen (1990), "The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence" (p. 36). After reading van Manen, as well as Cresswell, Englander, Groenewald, Hycner, Moustakas, Zahavi, and various others I have referenced earlier, I was still at a loss for what to "do" with the central themes that a phenomenological study describes. Groenewald (2004) cited a statement by Ellenberger to depict the ultimate goal for a phenomenological description: "the aim of the investigator is the reconstruction of the inner world of experience of the subject. Each individual has his own way of experiencing temporality, spatiality, materiality, but each of these coordinates must be understood in relation to the others and to the total inner 'world'" (pp.153-154).

My interpretation involved a process of reflecting with the participant and writing reflexively on my own to accomplish three reductions of the phenomenon. First, my goal was to provide a general description and an explication of the thematic elements of the phenomenon (its invariant constituents). After this first, transcendental reduction, I rewrote and re-described themes as I returned to the data and my bracketed epoche. While engaging with the data a second time, I gave myself license to analyze the data while I

interpreted it; this process was guided by the study's theoretical framework, with a focus on how the learning theories could be used to interpret the experience of community reentry. Just as my first interaction with the data was in response to my main research question and my second interaction with the data was germane to my first research sub-question, my third time revisiting the data was with the intent to focus on my second research sub-question. My bracketed epoche and the raw data were interpreted in light of what was said about power during the interviews.

I searched for labels for the themes that relayed their conceptual value. I completed this last, as per Boyatzis' (1998) recommendation; however, several of the labels that I chose were *in vivo* statements that I encountered following my horizontalization of the data. This phase of my research has been identified by Hycner (1985) as a time to modify the themes that were generated from the clustered units of meaning based on participant feedback—what Hycner called the “experiential ‘reality check’” (p. 291).

I also reviewing the memos that I had written along with my observational, theoretical, methodological, and analytical notes. I developed a one-page reminder list for each set of notes, and I created diagrams to help visualize how the thematic elements and significant statements described the phenomenon.

Creating Descriptions

After I identified “general and unique themes for all the interviews” (Hycner, 1985, p. 292), I “place[d] these themes back into the horizon” (Hycner, p. 293). At this point, I considered the textural and structural descriptions of the participants' experiences, using the themes as milestones to mark out my findings. Hycner referred to this later phase of phenomenological data analysis as a composite summary that “describes the ‘world’ in

general,” (p. 294). To that end, I articulated the themes in terms of three reductions in accordance with my theoretical perspective: the descriptive (transcendental), the interpretive (hermeneutic), and the critical. My last writing activity was editing the final synthesis of my textural and structural description of the phenomenon which includes my interpretation of the reentry phenomenon through the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that guide this study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I present my researcher identity and the condensed biographies of the participants. Then, I present themes from the three phenomenological reductions. The themes are in three groups, one group for each reduction. After presenting the first group, based on the transcendental reduction, I present an analysis of what was described as the essence of the phenomenon by using the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that guide this study. After this first, transcendental reduction and its analysis, I returned to the data and my bracketed epoche, which I now interacted with so that I could engage in interpreting the data. For this reason, the second and the last groups of themes are presented with my analysis embedded in the description. While engaging with the data a second time, I interpreted what the participants said; this process was guided by the study's theoretical framework, with a focus on how learning theory could be used to interpret the experience of community reentry. The second reduction addresses the first research sub-question, looking at the types of learning that are reflected in the participants' descriptions of reentry. The third reduction intended to focus on my second research sub-question, identifying what role power relationships had in shaping the experience of community reentry.

Researcher Identity

I obtained my master's degree in education at a small state university located in the rural Pennsylvania county where I grew up. Being a small town, it was no surprise that I had family members who worked for the university. One of these was my aunt, who directed the adult basic education programs for the county. One of the GED teachers had

recently taken a position elsewhere, and she called to ask if I would take the job on short notice. “There’s just one thing,” she said. “The class is at the jail.”

I started that week and have continued intermittently for about ten years. During my time at the jail, I was surprised to hear some students say that they would rather be in state prison because prison had more choices for educational opportunities. *Why, I wondered, are there so few opportunities in a place where they would matter so much?* The differences that I noticed between jails and prisons motivated me to conduct two studies through during my master’s degree: in the first (Gee, 2006), I asked participants who were being held at the jail what they perceived as their needs and their opportunities; in the second (Gee, 2011), I posed similar questions to half of PA’s rural county jail wardens.

In addition to my identity as a researcher in the field of CE, I am a CE teacher. I have taught at the jail in which the study was conducted, and my aim was not to be teaching while conducting interviews so that I was not serving multiple roles at once. During the course of interviews with the participants, which took about three months altogether, my brother became incarcerated. My brother also knew one of my participants. Thus, I found myself as a subject drawn into the participants’ reality that, as he put it, “this is a small town.” I decided to confront the duplicity of my role as a researcher and my role as the brother of an inmate in a straightforward manner under advisement from my advisor, and I told each participant that I wore two hats: one as a family member of someone who is going through a circumstance similar to the one that they are living through—and thus, someone affected by themes they’re presenting to me. The other hat was that of a researcher, and it was this role that I asked participants to focus on during our interactions. Although I did not perceive my brother being incarcerated at the jail in which this study was conducted as

a limitation or conflict *per se*, I did find it a mentionable aspect of this study, and I cannot rule-out that this circumstance influenced my interpretation of the data.

Continuing Interest in the Phenomenon

I am interested in how rural communities with small jails can reduce the rate of recidivism through adult education programs like the one I instruct. I am interested in programs that are designed to use the potential strengths inherent to rural communities as pointed out in *Life After Lockup* (Solomon et al., 2008). While teaching at the local jail, I became more aware of what is commonly called the “cycle of incarceration.” That is, I would notice some students return to jail several times after having been released. Knowing the scholastic aptitude of many of these (mostly) young men as indicated on their Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores and/or their GED scores, I became perplexed as to why they would recidivate. My critical perspective on the subject of reentry became marked at times by two contrasting beliefs: that the person who is behind bars is responsible for bettering himself and that the community is responsible for helping to make this occur.

As I progressed through my PhD program, I became most interested in the assumption that being in jail is supposed to be a learning experience that is proven upon reentry: If people do not “learn their lesson” after jail, then society re-incarcerates them until they learn how to “be good.”

Participant Profiles

Throughout this text, I keep references to participants at a minimum even though these are pseudonyms because I interviewed a small population of people in a small jail in a small community. Some of the participants had relatively unique situations regarding their

incarceration, and if I were to state their descriptions beyond a brief description, it would be rather straightforward to connect their true identity with their pseudonym.

Alex

Alex, 23, has two younger siblings and a young child of his own. He was born and raised in the same county as the jail. He had been incarcerated on four previous occasions. Alex graduated from a local high school a year early. When he was a toddler, his father committed a murder and then took his own life. His mom was in two long-term relationships while he was growing up, each lasting for about eight years. He referred to the men in those relationships as step-dads. His mom is currently married to a third man. In regards to the loss of his father, he described it as having a substantial effect on his life, connecting it to his history of drug use because emotional support is needed to cope with both: "I struggle with a lot of stuff with my family from the past with my father and stuff like that, and as far as emotional support for addiction: It's just not there; the understanding's not there."

He described his late teens as a time when he was

more or less always just struggling staying clean, you know what I mean? Always using and partying and doing my thing... Then it just spiraled downward and, uh, just a mess, and then I always had trouble trying to stay clean... and then I bounced in and and outta [jail] because I couldn't stay clean—not because I went out and caught new charges and stuff like that.

He also described himself as currently on a different level of maturity from the majority of other young men in jail:

I try to hold onto that desire to stay clean being surrounded by everybody that doesn't want that... they're still stuck out there about, like, the fun stuff... and like I'm, uhm, I've exceeded that, long ago.

Alex was waiting to find out his sentence, as he was in on a probation violation and didn't know if his probation would be revoked or not. (Revoking probation can involve taking away someone's "good time" or "street time" and essentially resetting the clock on one's probation sentence. It can also result in incarceration up to the maximum of the original sentence, known as "maxing out," at which point a person would be released without a probation sentence following them because the entire length of their stay had been served.

Alex self-described himself as well-educated, and as an indication he used a varied and precise vocabulary and clear metaphors to impart meaning during our conversations. Alex was reflective and transparent, and he was very engaged in conversations, needing few prompts to generate in-depth responses in which he was comfortable 'thinking out loud.' It seemed as though Alex had spent a substantial amount of time thinking about reentry and his past experiences.

Don

Don, 23, has two younger siblings and a young son of his own. He was raised in the same county as the jail with the exception of a six-year span when he was in the southern part of the state due to his parents' separation. At the time of this study, Don had been in jail twice before and he did not have a high school diploma. He described his mom as someone he "can't be around" because she's "into painkillers and stuff like that."

Don described his formative years as mainly revolving around drug use:

I got into it about 12 years. In the beginning it was fun, just to get high every once in awhile, and I turned it into an everyday thing at work; and before, when we were at school, getting high at school; and when I started working, getting high at work. I had to have it every day to work. I was working in the oil field ever since I was old enough to work.

Don described his attitude toward addiction as rather passive and dismissive:

when I got out I was supposed to do [addiction counseling] but never did. [I] never set it up. [I] never wanted to. [I] didn't care. [I] just wanted to be out of here. Basically I wasn't ready to get sober, so all's I wanted to do was get high again.

Don was straightforward with his answers, and yet his responses offered little beyond the exact minimum needed to answer the question, thus requiring me to use more probing questions than I used with some of the other participants. Of particular interest in his speech pattern was how he would often omit the word "I" as the subject of his sentences when he was speaking in the first person. I frequently inserted an "[I]" into his transcripts to mark where sentences began. This pattern of speech seemed to characterize his overall laid-back personality.

Of all the participants who had children, Don talked about his child the most, listing his child and getting high as his two main priorities. When I asked if those were competing interests, he answered that they were not.

Ricky

Ricky, 23, has two younger siblings and a young daughter of his own. He was raised in a heavily populated urban county in southern Pennsylvania and is one of two "transplants" to the area represented in the sample. At the time of this study, Ricky had been in jail at least five times before, both in a large, urban jail and in a small, urban jail. Ricky did not have a high school diploma, as he dropped out in the 8th Grade. His father passed away recently, while he was in jail, and he did not describe a close relationship with his mother. He did not describe himself in a particularly positive light: "I'm definitely the fuck up of the family. I follow right in my dad's footsteps. Like he always said: God put me here to torture him."

Ricky's life since the age of 18 has been a five year-long series of arrests, incarcerations, and releases. He describes himself as rather resolute in both drug use and accompanying behavior. Of a recent trip up from the urban county where he was born, one that culminated in his being incarcerated in this rural county, he said (with sound effects):

I came up [from the city], popped a couple Xanies two hours into my trip, and I was in the Wal-Mart parking lot, stealing TVs. Dah, dah, dah, dah! Caught the DUI shit, [But I] didn't have to go right in for it. I didn't have to go right in and do the jail time: Yeah, I went right back to Wal-Mart and tried stealing another TV.

Ricky often expressed confusion over his situation of being incarcerated for doing drugs and stealing. Although he acknowledged that law enforcement officers are "just doing their jobs," it almost appeared as though he thought he should be allowed to steal and do drugs. I know that this was not the case, as he did talk about staying off drugs for extended periods of time.

I found Ricky to be extremely laid-back and very matter of fact; he was not as reserved in his commentary as Don. Ricky used very colorful language and often had me laughing simply by the way he would tell a story. He often expressed utter shock at some of the ways things are done "up here in the country" (such as the act of farming, in general, and, more specific to the study, the way the local newspaper publishes individuals' names in the local newspaper's "Court Report" section). Although he fit the eligibility criteria as a young man, 18-24, who had reentered a rural community from a small jail, he certainly was not happy about it. He contended that moving to the country was a mistake.

Sid

Sid, 24, has two older siblings and three younger siblings. He also has a toddler of his own. He was raised in the same county as the jail. At the time of this study, Ricky had been in jail once before. Sid did not have a high school diploma, but he obtained his GED while he was in this jail during his previous incarceration.

Sid's situation in jail was unique in that he was serving a sentence over the two-year threshold for being sent to state prison. Due to a special family situation, he was allowed to stay at his local county jail rather than going to state prison. Sid's father has spent most of Sid's life in jail, but he described a close relationship with his mother and siblings.

This is how Sid described growing up in a farming family, which he characterized as one of the important aspects of getting to know him:

There was four of us [kids] that dropped out. The other ones, well, they were working on the farm from 5:30 in the morning, we get up, to work on the farm, get our chores done, and then be to school by 7:30. So it was rough. So then, right after school: get our homework done, go right back to the farm.

Sid felt as though the teachers in his high school disrespected his family for being farmers, and he eventually quit school for that reason. He described himself as getting along well in any situation except for school. This did include jail. One of his most interesting statements came immediately upon meeting me. He exclaimed, "I'm not institutionalized!" before he had even sat down.

Sid described himself as having a learning disability. Given that the research methods were interview-based, this did not seem to hinder our engagement. I found Sid to be thoroughly engaging. He was one of the most talkative participants and truly enjoyed telling his story. He was smiling nearly 100% of the time, and it honestly was an enjoyable

experience to speak with him. Sid did not describe himself as having an addiction; however, his parole had previously been revoked due to drinking.

Sean

Sean, 21, has one four older siblings and one younger sibling. He did not have a child of his own. He was raised in a rural county in upstate NY with a similar demography as the jail's county in this study; however, he was from an urban area within the county. He moved to this county at about age 18 to be with a girl that he met online. At the time of this study, Sean had been in jail three times before. Sean did not have a high school diploma, as he was in and out of alternative schools since the 9th Grade, but he earned B's and C's while in school and obtained his GED while he was in this jail during his previous incarceration.

Sean describes his upbringing as complicated due to separated and remarried parents, but he did not describe family life as negative:

Growing up, I didn't have a shitty childhood growing up by any means, you know. I had, I had a good childhood. My parents were there for me, you know. My step parents got along great with my, like my step dad got along great with my dad, my step mom got along great with my mom. It's like, my mom did the flowers for my dad's wedding.

Sean describes his friends as "more influential than my parents." His parents "came from a good family," to which he contrasted his own behavior:

I was hanging out with the... kids that did drugs, the kids that skipped school, the kids that smoked pot... That's who I hung out with, you know. I was walking around, like, you know, with my pants down around my ass.

The major events in Sean's life for the past three years involve moving from rural PA town to another to be with various girls met on the Internet. He seemed to be a very social person; he was an exceptionally "easy" person to talk with; and he spoke quickly--and a lot. He described being involved with drugs and alcohol only in social settings; he did not

describe himself as an addict. While drugs and alcohol were directly involved in two of his cases, he is able to abstain from them for prolonged periods of time.

Dean

Dean, 22, has one older step-sibling. His parents have been together for over two decades, but were never married; he describes being close with his family. He does not have any children of his own, but thinks of his nephews as sons. He was born and raised in the same county as the jail. At the time of the study, he had been in jail two times before. He dropped out of school when he was 18, in the 10th Grade. He obtained his GED and began work, holding a steady job in a factory for the past three and one-half years, which has occupied most of his time.

Dean's story was unique in that, although he was in jail twice before, both stays were brief. His first one was for one week, and after that he had a period of one and one-half years before being re-incarcerated. This stands in contrast to the other participants, who served stays averaging in the range of months and who had shorter periods between stays.

Overall, Dean describes a supportive relationship with his parents: "I have plenty of support... I help them do pretty much whatever they want done. They help me out, you know." His time is occupied by "hunting, fishing, and working." He is a social drinker, which is germane to one of his arrests, but stated that he does not have a drinking problem. His mother was arrested for the same thing as he was when she was younger, which he reckoned accounts for his parents' continuing support.

Dean was a very slow speaker, and he rarely ventured into sharing opinions or explaining why he thought a particular way. Dean would tell a detailed and personal story,

but limit it to a recounting of facts. His voice rarely ventured from a low monotone, and he mumbled. He talked about having a low literacy level (being “not good with reading and stuff”), and he did not seem to be a confident speaker.

Will

Will, 21, has one older sibling and no children of his own. He was born and raised in the same county as the jail in a split family, and one of his parents recently passed away. At the time of the study, Will had been in jail twice before. He described dropping out of school in the 11th grade and obtaining his GED by saying, “I thought life was going to be so much easier if I could just get out and work and do what I wanted.”

Although his parents were divorced, he explains that they kept the animosity between them to a minimum and that they were a “normal family” to the extent that “normal is different for everybody.” He describes his parents as supportive, even though he started a heavy heroin habit in his late teens; his dad had an open door policy, but his mother was less trusting because he stole money from her.

Much of Will’s life was occupied with using heroin with his friends, something he regrets. He explains how he had a lot of potential in sports, but how heroin affected him physically:

I was just like a skeleton walking. It’s something about them drugs that make you feel like you’re in such good shape when, really, people take one good look at you—and it’s like you’re on the verge of death.

Will was a passionate speaker, and he was transparent with his opinions of himself, his drug use, and what he had experienced throughout his periods of incarceration and reentry. I found him to be engaging because he spoke so clearly about his experiences. He

had clearly thought about our conversations between interviews, as he would refer to previous questions that I had asked.

Due to Will being somewhat of a famous felon locally because of a high profile, county-wide manhunt, and due to his recreational activities being similar to my brother's, Will was the one participant who I 'knew of' before the study. Although we had never met, it was clear within a few minutes that we knew enough about each other through our mutual knowledge of each other's families to speak conversationally from the onset. We did not have that awkward period where I explained who I was and what I was doing in jail, as he already knew.

Themes and Analysis

I arranged the six themes that I identified in the data in three groups in this section. Several themes comprise sub-themes. The methods of this study are based on a phenomenological approach that calls for three reductions of the data. The latter two reductions rely on gathering and analyzing evidence as two interrelated steps, so the analysis for these two groups of themes is embedded within the themes' descriptions. In the first, transcendental reduction, my aim was to describe the essence of the phenomenon after the tradition of Husserl, using my bracketing as a way to focus as distinctly as possible on the phenomenon as it was presented to me by the participants. Therefore, the transcendental reduction is presented as two discrete sections: description and analysis.

Description of Transcendental Reduction

In my epoche, I state that I do not want to believe that incarceration is an inescapable cycle. As part of my analysis, I reflected on this sentiment while working with the data, and I was confronted with the participants' description of reentry as a series of

ups and downs that *they* described as a cycle of being released from jail and going back into it. They wanted to tell me about the entire cycle, including what it was like to be in jail, and I realized that it was difficult for the participants to separate the two experiences of being in jail and going through reentry. I told participants that I wanted us to focus on the reentry experience, after their release from jail; however, it was clear they would not refrain from also telling me what being in jail was like. When I looked back at what they described as their in-jail and on-the-street “cycle,” I noticed that participants had described the phenomenon of reentry as following an up-down pattern of its own—regardless of how much I consciously tried to avoid this preconception about reentry that I had stated in my epoch.

In this first reduction of the data, I identified a pair of themes: *getting my feet underneath me* and *slipping up*. Together, these characterize what it is like to walk out of this particular jail with as little as “nothing,” rebuild a life, and then find yourself back in jail. All participants described a similar pattern, and the degree to which the phenomenon was individuated was seen in the degree of “nothing” that they described having as well as the extent to which they rebuilt a life before returning to jail.

I used a hand-drawn version of Figure 7, with participants’ *in vivo* statements noted in quotes, during the course of participant checks to help me uncover the invariant structures of the reentry phenomenon’s meaning (those aspects “without which the phenomenon would not be the same” according to Moustakas [1994, p. 51]) in a way that transcended individual experience and represented the essence of the phenomenon itself. The diagram presents an upward arrow on the left side along with the *getting my feet underneath me* theme. A discontinuous corner at the top indicates that the participants did

not necessarily indicate a precise moment when things “fell apart,” only that they eventually did, as indicated on the right side of the diagram by the downward arrow *slipping up*.

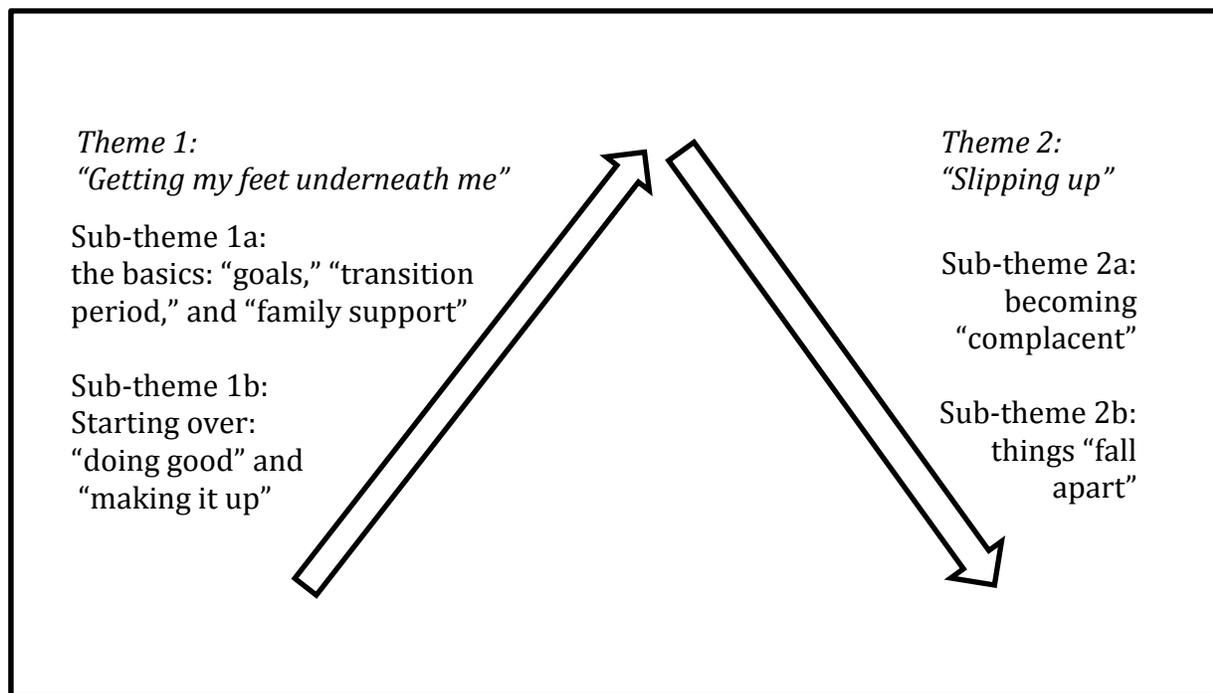


Figure 7. Diagram of the transcendental reduction.

Theme 1: Getting my feet underneath me. Several significant statements served to capture the meaning of *getting my feet underneath me* in the participants’ own words. This phrase captures the essential perspective that participants held to “make it up,” or to regain what they had lost in terms of relationships, possessions, and sobriety. Some participants professed that this was relatively easier for them than for others. Individual differences were accounted for by participants in terms of what I came to label as the first sub-theme 1a: *The basics*. This sub-theme was described in three aspects: “goals,” “transition period,” and “support.”

Sub-theme 1a: The basics. When I first approached the participants with the broad question of what reentry was like, I received equally as broad answers: “rough,” “it sucks.” After a few probing questions, though, I identified a commonality between the participants: They were all describing rebuilding their lives to some degree. They all had the goal to return to some version of what had been “normal” to them. Some had no homes or belongings to return to after jail; they only had the clothes on their backs. Some had families, friends, significant others, and places they could stay. All but two had children, but only one had access to his child during reentry. Few participants described having someone to herald their efforts at staying out of jail during the course of reentry, but all described having someone to denounce them upon their return to jail. As statements regarding these variables became significant and rose above the horizon of the data, I eventually grouped them all as “the basics” of *getting my feet underneath me*. “Goals,” “transition period,” and “family support” became three aspects of *the basics* that were common to each participant. Alex’s description of what “getting my feet underneath me” is like provides a first step in describing *the basics*: “having goals, a support system—people that you can trust—are like the most important things as far as going out and having a shot at making it.” Because these aspects of the sub-theme are closely related, the descriptions below overlap.

Goals. When describing what they determined to do upon reentry, some participants used the word “goals” while others used the word “objectives” or “intentions” or, when talking about them retrospectively, “expectations.” Will noted that not everyone has “goals” to the same degree, specifically when regarding changing a behavior, stating, “Everybody has different intentions when they get out. It’s because some aren’t ready to stop what they’re doing, and some people are, and some people don’t know.” Goals related to

stopping drinking and using drugs were common amongst the participants who self-identified as having a drinking or alcohol problem. One type of change was summarized by more than one participant as “staying clean,” which ran the spectrum from “a little bit of a challenge” for Ricky to a lifelong episode for Alex, who said, “I have revolved around staying clean—like, for as long as I can remember.” Even the participant who did not (Dean) still listed “not going out to the bar” as a goal. In their eyes, changing behaviors was a predominate feature of the experience of reentry.

Participants described non drug- and alcohol-related goals as well, such as securing housing, employment, and possessions that had been lost (in more than one instance, a vehicle). For Sid, securing housing prevented him from achieving probation from jail, delaying reentry. “The thing that was holding me up is a home plan,” he said, “I didn’t have any place to go.”

Transition period. Upon release, said Will, “It’s time for your life again.” This evaluative statement was embedded in a more detailed description of what the first couple weeks of reentry are like:

When you get out, you get super excited to get out. When I get out, I just have like a bunch of anxiety ‘cause it’s like back to the real world—cars driving everywhere. ‘Cause it’s like, you’re not used to that stuff right at first, and then once I start—for me it takes like a week or two—it’s like, it’s off your shoulders. You’re out. It’s time for your life again.... and then once you get out after that step of getting used to it, it’s just, you know, your plans and objectives you have to meet.

When I asked Will what he would call this getting used to being back in the community, he felt “transition period” would be a useful term. In addition to having goals, experiences during this transition period of *getting my feet underneath me* were described

in terms of support. Alex connected “transition” to his self-described need for addiction treatment and the fact that this rural county lacks particular resources:

It is important to have something to transition to when you get out, whether it be a sober living environment, a halfway house, something along those lines—I think that is much needed around this area—with rules or regulations about treatment and follow-up.

Participants described a transition period as important because they had “adapted” to life in jail, or become “institutionalized”, and were then released, and now need to transition back to their communities. Will summarizes how disorienting this can be:

Every time you come to jail and do a little bit, there’s a certain part of you that gets institutionalized—with everybody. You just get used to the fact, the way you’re living [in jail], and that’s what it is. And *anyone’s* going to get adapted to their environment.

Alex talked about transition in terms of physically moving from one environment to another: “Going from any environment for a period of time, especially the building structure, where you live for a certain amount of time, and then you get out to something else—it’s going to be different.”

Sean had spent well over a year in jail for a high-profile crime. The length of time spent in jail and the charges that were filed against him were described by him as factors in his reentry, as he could not return to his home and had relocated to an environment in which drugs and alcohol were easily obtained. When I talked to him, he had been in the county jail for a total of three years, and he seemed acutely aware of the concept of institutionalization, telling me immediately upon meeting me “I’m not institutionalized!” In Sean’s story, I could see the connection between institutionalization and reentry: he described wanting to take the initiative to make it up and do good while at the same time

wanting to receive orders because he didn't know what to do. He described institutionalization like this:

You really get to a point where you get used to being told and it's what you know. You forget about the way it used to be. You're used to being told when you can and can't do something. You're used to being told, 'That's wrong. This is right. This is what you need to do. You don't mouth off to me. Do what I say when I say as I say it. And you don't ask me any questions.'

All participants save one (Sid) had experienced reentry more than once, and they were able to compare different reentries. Participants said that the experience of being in jail for different amounts of time (a few days versus a few months) affected how they reentered. Sean summarized it this way: "I think it depends on how long you've been locked up for... For me it takes anything from a couple days to a couple weeks. You know, you're still getting over it... the longer you were in, it takes longer to get used to being out."

The transition period as described by several participants was a time when they were motivated toward the goal of reaching an educational milestone. Will, Don, Sid, Sean, and Dean all went to GED classes (although not the same one). Will described how obtaining a GED did not help his job prospects; however, it did not help him find a job:

I went, I obtained my GED the first month I was out, and I looked for a job everywhere. And I had people, "We'll call you. You're a good candidate." And I got, "Oh, well, you have a felony on your record."

Dean described a link between education and his goal of becoming a certified small engine mechanic, which he described as a lifelong passion:

I hope to go to school someday. I always wanted to be a small engine mechanic. I can pretty much do all that myself, but if I want to get certified and stuff, I'm pretty sure I got to go to school for that. I've been doing that stuff since I was seven or eight years old: tearing stuff apart, figuring out what it does and where it goes and how it works.

Will's brother eventually helped him find a job in construction and then in the oil and gas industry. Other participants were also successful in finding employment, but did not report that their GED experiences necessarily helped them. In fact, they were reluctant to speak about their GED experiences, and, as a researcher, it felt artificial and forced to ask too many probing questions. Sean obtained employment as a trash collector for a short time and Dean, Don, and Sid obtained jobs in industry and/or construction. Don also worked in the oil and gas industry. Ricky did not obtain his GED, yet still listed it as a goal (and he also listed the lack of a GED class as one of his major complaints about this particular small jail). Without a GED, Ricky was able to obtain a job through a friend. He described how he could not read the job application and how his literacy level was assessed as being very low:

I'm on a first grade reading level still. Can't read or none of that. They gave me tests and shit. Like, I couldn't even read the application they gave me. I had to get my pop to read everything to me. I can spell my name and shit, but— [long pause] I can write *the* and *cat*.

Even though he had a successful interview and obtained the telemarketing job, Ricky quit shortly thereafter because it was too far away and the gasoline expense was prohibitive. He then went back to relying on his grandfather for support.

Support. The human connections described in terms of support when *getting my feet underneath me* were frequently family connections, and, although participants did not have relationships with all of their family members, they had connections with some members and desired to have connections with the rest. Alex described "support" as "people that don't enable you but will never give up on you... no matter how bad you're doing... they don't just wait for you to end up in jail."

Alex described why he looked to the community to provide this type of support as compared to his own family:

I struggle with a lot of stuff with my family from the past with my father and stuff like that and as far as emotional support for addiction: it's just not there, the understanding's not there... I virtually have no family. I mean, I can call them.... but as far as like being there or having emotional support or any of that, that's been frayed a long time ago... I can't just like, lose my house, call my mom, and be like, 'Hey, mom, like, things are bad, I need a place to go.' Like, it's just not like that because we've been just dealing with the addiction thing... and I'm kinda like the black sheep, you know what I mean? "Oh [Alex] is in jail again! Can't stay clean! Damn him!" Like that type of stuff like that. I just struggle with it.

All of the participants but one (Dean, see below) described some sort of struggle within their family support system, either exacerbated by or because of having been incarcerated. Sean talked about jail being the "last straw" between him and his father: "My dad gave up because of me coming in and out of jail. He doesn't talk to me anymore. So. I tried reaching out when I first got locked up but he didn't want nothing to do with me." Sean described a similar situation with his mother, but not as extreme: "Sometimes I can get ahold of her and call her, and sometimes I can't. So it's like a, it's like a back and forth kinda with her." Will and his mother "had not seen eye to eye" on much of anything for quite some time, but when he was released, he made it a goal to amend that relationship due to his mother's then-recent cancer diagnosis:

I accomplished to get a relationship back with my mom. Even though it wasn't going to be for long, it was one of my things that in jail that I actually accomplished that I wanted to do when I got out.

Dean's experience was unique amongst the participants, as his parents were accepting of his incarceration and reacted to it as "no big deal" because Dean's mom "had gotten in trouble for the same thing when she was younger." Dean simply did not describe any repercussions to his family support system due to his incarceration. Without Dean's

input, I would only have encountered examples of “support” in the negative or the hypothetical, such as when Alex said, after explaining how he does not have support, “I feel that the whole family thing and having like emotional stability is crucial if someone is trying to stay clean.”

Sub-theme 1b: Starting over. Participants described being jailed as a period of time during which they experienced loss. After reentry they were occupied with “making it up” in regard to that loss. Part of that sentiment concerned what they called “doing good.”

Doing good. The phrase “doing good” was common in the interviews. As these types of *in vivo* statements became more obviously significant while I worked with the data, I probed participants for more details about what they meant. In the end, I chose *starting over* as a label for this sub-theme because it captures the repentant disposition that the participants described. While some participants, such as Don, described the desire to “do good” as lasting for a day or two, others (Alex, Sid, Sean, and Will) described it as lasting for an extended period of time. Dean, who had described having family support, also described starting over briefly in terms of “doing good” while on probation. To him, this meant no more “going to the bar and getting trashed.”

The “doing good” aspect of *starting over* is closely related to goals and support, as “doing good” was referenced when participants were speaking about goal of “staying clean” that was mentioned by most participants. However, the phrase “doing good” meant more than just “staying clean” because it captured the sense of repentance that participants described; therefore, “doing good” rose as a distinct point on the horizon of the data. The “doing good” and the “goals and support” aspects of *getting my feet underneath me* were presented together by Will, who uses the word “intentions” to refer to what was described

above as goals: “I thought I was doing good, and I had full intentions, and then I got these new charges.” The particular intention he meant was “staying clean.”

“Doing good” can mean something in particular in a small town. Will put it this way when he was describing what reentry was like:

Man! When I’m clean I’m actually a good honest person, and it’s like, they’re just shootin’ me down because I have a record... It’s not easy coming back, and once your name’s out there, especially in a small town like this, you know. In a big city or something, it’s a little different because people can, you know, fade into the woodwork. Around here, it’s not like that ‘cause there are just as many clean and sober and good people as there is not.

Will described needing to “do good,” and this would result in him being able to “make up” for the mark on one’s social record in a small community. He brought up the topic of shame as he relates to his family: “There’s a big thing of shame... The shame comes from they know that I’m a better person than I’m being. They know I can be so much more.” Sean also summarized the impetus he had for doing good as stemming from his family’s perceived status within the community: “My mom comes from a good family, my dad comes from a good family, and here I am getting in trouble with the cops, getting in trouble with the law.” Sean then described how he “really screwed up in life,” and he connects this to the family support aspect of this theme described earlier:

I been to like 7 different county jails, you know, and it’s like: this is what my life has become, and I’m getting tired of it. I’m tired of doing it. I want a- I want a relationship with my parents, but I can’t have that bc of my actions, and I know that. that’s just like getting out of jail—any of the times—it’s like a you’re excited. There’s so many emotions flowing through you when you get out of jail... you want to get out, and you want to do good.

Both going to jail and coming back to the community were characterized as disorienting, complicating “doing good.” When being put in jail, participants described being removed from their homes, sometimes forcibly by probation officers. They described

lack of communication with family members and being “cut off” from relationships. While there, their behaviors were highly restricted; ordinary activities, such as eating and showering, were controlled by others and highly regimented. Participants talked about the label that comes along with having been convicted of a crime, and how this added to the disoriented feeling they had upon release. Sean explained how the label is something he worried about:

You worry about what people are going to think or say about you because, you know, that’s your life. You went to jail. You know, you’re known as a ‘convict’ now, and you got that label whenever you go do something.

Type of crime affects length and severity of sentence, and the participants described how the small town setting made it easier for knowledge of their crime to affect social perceptions—for example, all participants’ names were published in the local newspaper under the “Court Report” section, and they commented that this affected their chances of “doing good” as applied to attaining employment and affected how others perceived them. Having their names published in the local paper caused them to reflect on their experience while attempting “doing good.” Ricky’s reflection may be coarse, but he provides an example of the rural aspect of this study. His perception that everyone knows what he did because it was published in the paper leads him to conclude that it is because the county is so small that his name is ruined:

It’s such a small community; they put everything in the paper up here. Everything. They don’t leave out a detail. By that time, my name was wrecked. My name was ruined. The family name—I fucked the name up. My grandmom’s friends and shit: “Your grandson’s in the paper again.” I came out: “What are you doing?”
 “Boy, keep ending up in the paper!”
 “Pssh... It’s not my fault. It’s the county. It’s so *little*! Can’t get away from it or anything.”

Ricky's entire experience—from being jailed to being publically shamed upon release—changed him, and he explained how his “state of mind” shifted as a result of having been in jail. He no longer wanted to use drugs, and he was motivated to look for a job:

I actually changed a lot. When I did my year in here, when I got out, I changed a lot with the getting high and shit—the whole state of mind. I woulda never looked for a job like if I stayed in my mind.

Making it up. Starting over for Will was described as a conscious effort of “making it up” to his family:

There was so much stuff I was doing to my family, like stealing, and stuff from my drug addiction—and then I was away so much—I never really got to be around and make it up to them, you know? ‘Cause sometimes, even though you give the product back that you took... that still doesn't make it okay, you know, there's a sense of feeling with them, “Well, you know, at least he attempted.” But I want to show them... that I want to be... more like how I was raise instead of what I kinda did on my own.

At this point, I asked Will if this was like a feeling of guilt, to which he replied, “It is a guilty conscience because I can play it off like it doesn't even bother me, but then deep down inside it's what kills me inside.” This repentant orientation while *getting my feet underneath me* was described by each participant to a varying degree. For example, Don described his first day out of jail as a day to “make it up” to his son, and then he quickly became more interested in drug use than in seeing his son. Don recognized a connection between his drug use and his inability to regain trust from the people in his life, another significant component of “making it up” to people: “It takes a while to gain the trust and shit back from your family because you just done it so many times that you been back in jail, back and forth.”

Participants talked about trust in terms of “regaining” trust. This helps convey the meaning of “starting over” and “the basics” of *getting my feet underneath me* in the sense that regaining trust is a goal and is related to family support. Ricky described his conscious effort at regaining trust upon reentry:

I try and build my trust up. Like that’s why I wasn’t getting high or nothing. I could of did all that shit when I got out, but I wanted to win my family back over. I wanted them to look at me the way they did when I was a little kid—like playing hockey and shit.

Ricky went on to talk about regaining trust as a metric for calculating how well one was doing and how good one was at making up for prior behaviors. In so doing, he captured a sentiment expressed by all of the participants: how well he thought he was doing at getting his feet underneath him was measured by how other people treated him. Ricky provided one of the clearest examples of what he meant by regaining trust as an indication that he was beginning to “make it up” to his family (as he had previously stolen from them to obtain money for purchasing drugs):

My grandpop would come out and let me hold his money... any other time, he wouldn’t have put that in my hand, you know what I mean. He wouldn’t ask me to do something for him. He wouldn’t ask me to go mail an important letter. None of that. He wouldn’t leave me in his house alone... He started having trust for me, though, like, it started looking good. Everything was looking better. They started coming around to me, like ‘Well, he really is trying to change his life. He’s out here looking for a job, trying to be a different person.’

Theme 2: Slipping up. Participants described different periods of time (for example, the transition period described earlier) that indicated what Will called common “steps” of how experiences develop during the phenomenon of reentry. One essential development during reentry experience after the transition period was a point where

participants reached—after differing periods of time—something they identified as “becoming complacent” followed by a time when “things fall apart.”

Complacency was described as a feeling of “I got this” or “slacking off.” Becoming complacent took longer for some than for others, and it eventually culminated in an episode of what I’ve labeled as “things falling apart” shortly before returning to jail. Participants commonly used phrases like “shit went downhill” and “shit spiraled downward” along with “slipping up,” the last of which I chose for this theme’s label because it implies a figurative downhill fall after *getting my feet underneath me*. Also, it is a phrase with known meaning in Alcoholics Anonymous and, for that reason, was used by the participants in direct reference to drug and/or alcohol use with friends, which is what “becoming complacent” resulted in for each of these participants (whether or not drug and/or alcohol abuse was technically the reason they were back in jail).

Sub-theme 2a: Becoming complacent. Alex had told me the story of how came back to jail, and then he brought up the topic of complacency after he was finished:

It’s easy when you’re [in jail] to want to do good; it’s difficult when you’re out there, and you forget what it feels like to be in a place like this. You get complacent, and you get comfortable, and you forget what it feels like to have nothing.

...You get complacent. You get comfortable, and it’s like ‘Ah, things will be different this time.’ Like, ‘It won’t hurt, one time won’t hurt nothing.’ And it turns out like you’re using [drugs] every day again.

Alex and Will both described complacency as it was linked to their struggles with addiction, and Will’s words nearly matched Alex’s: “You know, it’s real easy to forget about this stuff in here.” Will said this was because a “safe” feeling comes from complacency: “I thought I was safe—where I was with my rehabilitation. I thought I was safe to hang out with old friends ‘cause I had a lot of good old friends, so to speak.”

Will described making gains when he was released in terms of mending relationships with family members and trying to help out around the house as much as possible. He described how their accolades helped him decide on exerting less effort, giving a sense of what it was like for him to *become* complacent: “They would say they were proud of me, but it got to the point where it was like, well, you know: They’re really proud of me. So, it’s like, I don’t have to do much anymore.” Early on in our interviews, Will explained that his family and he had different ideas of what ‘comfortable’ meant. For him, all he needed was his motorcycle and his heroin.

They’ve given me so many opportunities, and I’m just like, “Yeah, whatever.” They’re like, “Don’t you want to be successful? Don’t you want to be? You know? You know you don’t have to be famous, but don’t you want to live in comfort? You know?”

I was like, “I am living in comfort.”

It was my own kind of comfort because, you know, I still had racing, and I was still really good. So I was like—I just kinda just brushed it off—I was like, “Maybe *someday* I’ll go somewhere with it, but not right now.”

When I probed Alex for more detail about complacency, he also likened becoming “comfortable” or “complacent” to a loss of motivation in the uphill struggle of *getting my feet underneath me*. For Alex, though, this resulted from a lack of support, and he highlighted how “doing good” in his experience must be recognized by others in order for it to be considered an accomplishment (as mentioned earlier). Alex broke from talking about himself in the first person at this point, although he was still describing his own experiences:

If you don’t have emotional support, then you you’re drive to, like, be successful is going to diminish. You might have every intention of doing good the day you walk out of jail, but if you don’t have people backing you up and reminding you that, like, when you’re doing good, that, like, “Hey, you’re doing good and I’m proud of you...” If you don’t have that, then, like, after a while, it’s like it dwindles. You don’t have that drive anymore... And if people don’t recognize like the good you do and stuff like that then it’s almost like

what's the point in doing good, you know what I mean? What am I really accomplishing?

The result, said Alex is that one “loses care.” This was summarized by Sid as the “whatever” stance: “I was going to GED getting high, didn’t care, failed... they’ve given me so many opportunities, and I just like: *Yeah, whatever.*” Don and Will also described this attitude of losing care that defines complacency. Will added that the support he had from friends was not helpful in terms of counteracting complacency:

The girl I was dating, well, she became my girlfriend, but she used to get high, and she was trying to stay clean at the point but she wasn’t really committed to it. But we would hang—you know, me and her—when we first started hanging out. It was great, but then we started hanging around our other friends and they were still using and getting high. And then one thing would led right to another and before you know it, you’re so far gone again it’s like, “Why stop now?!”

When he described reentry, Don had mentioned counseling, so I asked him if going to counseling was part of his reentry experience: “I was supposed to do that, but never did. Never set it up. Never wanted to. *Didn’t care.* Just wanted to be out of here.” Don’s reentry experience was compressed in time compared to all the other participants except Ricky. The first time he experienced reentry, Don was out for eight days before coming back to jail, and he described how losing care happened very quickly after a day of transition back to his family environment. While writing my analytical and theoretical memos, my working label for the “becoming complacent” aspect of the *slipping up* theme was “the fuck-its” because this phrase was repeated by several participants as a way of capturing the “I don’t care anymore” sense of “becoming complacent.” Alex put it this way: “The wanting to feel good outweighed the want to stay out of jail. It was almost like it gave me the fuck-its, you know what I mean? It was like: this was where caring got me so far.” Don also provided an example of this aspect of becoming complacent:

First day is just getting out. Sat at home. Hung out with family. That night I started texting old friends. Old friends that go to [the town where we would get drugs]. And they got shit, so I'm like, 'Fuck it. Get high.'
 ...It's all whether you care or not. One thing of mind says, 'Nah, you better not do it. You'll fuckin' go back to jail. Won't be around my kid or nothing.' But you got the addiction part saying, 'Fuck it. Just get high.'

And that's exactly what Don did for the next seven days of his reentry, although it was not necessarily provoked by anything other than the desire to be high. The second time he experienced reentry, Don said that he experienced the same pattern of events and attitudes as above. That time, he was out for two weeks. The first week was spent with his family for part of the day and his friends (getting high) the rest of the day. After the first week, the "fuck-its" kicked in, and he went camping and spent 100% of the time with a friend, high.

Don stated he has never been ready to become sober, and so his complacency with whatever he encountered during reentry was nearly automatic. The only thing he cared about was "seeing my kid and getting high." As he described it, if he was able to see his kid, then he was "good to go" and could then go get high. Other participants had particular "triggers" that cropped up as they became complacent. Ricky, for example, was triggered by frustration. He explained how his giving up on sobriety was influenced by the frustration he felt from not being able to meet his goal of securing employment: "When I went looking for a job, I didn't know what I was doing wrong. Like, fuck it, I'm ready to pop some percs! I'm ready to get high."

Sub-theme 2b: Things "Fall Apart." Participants often used phrases as "shit went downhill" or "spiraled downward" to mark the point in time after becoming complacent and shortly before return to jail. As Alex put it, "Everything just kinda fell apart at this point in time." I've chosen to summarize this sub-theme of *slipping up* as "things fall apart"

because it connects to a significant statement regarding personal responsibility, which participants called “doing what I’ve always done.” For many, “what I’ve always done” meant using drugs. Alex summarized the process of falling apart after a series of negative events:

...struggling for work, grandma dying of cancer, and it’s like everything was falling apart. Like, about ready to get evicted from my home because I lost my job, and it’s just like everything little by little fell apart and then ultimately it led me back to using yet again.

For Will, becoming complacent meant that he could “live two split personalities.” In one, he presented to his family the picture of a young man with “his act together” and in the other, he began partying with his friends. “I was trying to be the man my dad, my family wanted me to be, but with my drug habit and stuff, my other personality just over took that.” This split helped Will to escalate “doing what I’ve always done.” Looking back at it now, Will said:

My dad—I will never forget—I felt like the biggest piece of shit—my dad come out of my room holding a quart bag full of just empty heroin bags and needles and spoons and he’s like, “We gotta talk about this.” ...He tried sending me to rehab, and I was like, “Nah, I’ll get clean!” And I did, and I was clean for like a week. *And I was right back off doing whatever!* I just, every time he’d talk to me about it, I’d just make sure for a while I’d play my two split personalities.

Will had considered counseling, and had participated in Alcoholics Anonymous, but he found the problem of trying to make new friends to be exacerbated in a rural community:

I’d have to change literally every single one of my friends—all but one of my friends. That’s hard because living in a small town like this. You know, I went to school with all them people, so it’s like it’s hard to find new people without running back into that same person at some point in time.

When I presented to Will the phrases “becoming complacent” and “things ‘fall apart’” as a way to capture *slipping up* during our participant checks. He said, “That’s exactly it,” and then elaborated:

Once it started happening, I just kept slipping and falling back into the same situation over and over so it was like I fell and kept falling and falling, and I haven’t really done anything yet to start climbing back up, you know, to try to kinda climb back up to maybe my good point.

For Will, descriptions of playing two personalities and slipping and falling occurred alongside descriptions of “hanging out” with his “old friends.” Dean described in terms of “going back to what I’ve always done” as “going to the bar” and also “hanging out with old friends” as if they were obvious outcomes from the onset of his reentry, as did Don and Ricky, who both stated, “I wasn’t ready to get sober.” Dean and Ricky describe the realization that “things fall apart” as found in the acute instances of their rearrest, as compared to the descriptions of longer, drawn-out episodes of coming to awareness shared by, for example, Will, above.

Participants told me that *people, places, and things* factored into things falling apart, which might mean that *everything* factors into things falling apart. However, I immediately recognized this phrase as a saying that has specific meaning when used in Alcoholics Anonymous meetings: success or failure depends on surrounding yourself with particular types of people, in particular places, doing particular things. Don described people, places, and things this way:

Got old friends calling you, wanted you to go get high or drink or whatever. Gotta be strong enough to tell them, “Look, I’m trying to stay sober.” You going to go to places that give you like a mental relapse to want to use or want to drink again... and you gotta change the things you’re doing because you end up in jail or whatever. Or dead.

What Don described happened to Alex also: One of Alex's friends offered him crack and heroin to "help" him because he knew Alex was going through a particularly rough patch. Things had fallen apart for Alex to the point where getting high seemed helpful, even though he knew full well that it would have no long-term benefit:

My grandma just died...I'm about to lose my apartment, my fiancés moved out ... all in two days... I was getting screwed over at work. I was owed a bunch of money. I just, like, I was struggling. I couldn't even put gas in my car... I didn't know where to turn, and I felt like shit, and all I wanted to do was just feel good... and I didn't even go out of my way to find [drugs], it was like offered to me... and then I just ended up just doing it, and like the jail thing... like I knew perfectly well what the consequences, I knew what they were.

Don and Alex were not the only ones offered drugs at just the right (or, as they questioned it, perhaps the wrong) moment: During Ricky's reentry—on what he describes as a particularly bad day—a drug dealer with Percocet for sale stopped by his apartment. On this day, in this time and place, this particular thing is what he most wanted—and it was available. Ricky took the Percocet, and the next morning things "fell apart" when his probation officer showed up at his house asking for a urinalysis. This confluence of people, places, and things had presented the participants with options, and the decisions they made led to their re-incarceration.

Analysis of Transcendental Reduction

In this group of themes, participants described reentry as a cycle in which they began by leaving jail and getting their feet underneath them only to slip up later and return to jail. The factors affecting getting one's feet underneath him involved establishing "the basics," (such as goals, a transition period, and support) and attitudinal factors, which participants described as "starting over" through "doing good" and "making it up."

Returning to jail was marked by a period of “slipping up” which included becoming “complacent” with one’s situation and “losing care” before things eventually “fall apart.”

Educative and miseducative experiences. The “up-down” pattern as I have diagrammed shows each trajectory the same regardless of variations described by the participants. Perhaps more accurate would be a diagram constructed of a jagged line, indicating the various ups and down while attending to different goals (like when Ricky gained and lost a job only to be offered another one).] However simplistic the description may be, participants were expository in their awareness of their own situations. Several shared unsolicited theories and opinions regarding reentry as a cycle, using the specific terms “transition period” to provide temporal markers around reentry phases they described during the interviews. The falling apart, from becoming complacent to going back to jail, seems in direct conflict with transformative learning. If all experience is learning, but only some experiences are educative (Dewey, 1938/1997), then I would expect to see that falling apart was associated with miseducative experiences. However, some participants said they had either received coursework or earned their GED certificate while incarcerated, which seemed to indicate that educative experiences existed.

Each participant described their set of goals as specific to the situations they encountered during reentry. What the participants called goals are similar to what the Pennsylvania DOC has, at the state level, has identified as “criminogenic needs” that are risk factors for recidivism (Latessa, et al., 2009). As mentioned in the earlier literature review, Latessa et al. outlined principles based on “standardized assessments,” and targeted “predictors of crime... dynamic risk factors (i.e. criminogenic needs)” that are often defined by the adjective “antisocial” (i.e., “antisocial personality,” “antisocial attitudes,” and

“antisocial peer relationships”) (p. 8). These criminogenic needs were reflected in the participants’ descriptions as the needs for securing housing, garnering family support, coping with drug use or alcohol use, and interacting with known associates (what the participants referred to as their “old friends”). What participants described as needs, though, were not necessarily described by the participants as “educational” issues beyond attaining a GED.

In terms of needs, the theoretical framework that guides this study incorporated the standards set by Dewey (1938/1997) when distinguishing whether an experience was educative or miseducative. Dewey’s distinctions provide a clean connection to the up-down structure of Theme 1, *getting my feet underneath me*, as an “educative” part of the reentry experience compared to Theme 2, *slipping up*, as a “miseducative” part of the reentry experience (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 25).

Participants described becoming “complacent” as an indication of slipping up, which aligns with the description of a miseducative experience as: “An experience may be immediately enjoyable and yet promote the formation of a slack and careless attitude” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 25). Will, when he was talking about “hanging out with old friends” as a part of “things falling apart,” illustrated one facet of a “miseducative” experience:

Once it started happening, I just kept slipping and falling back into the same situation over and over so it was like I fell and kept falling and falling, and I haven’t really done anything yet to start climbing back up, you know, to try to kinda climb back up to maybe my good point.

Dewey’s main positions were summarized and applied to Themes 1 and 2. I considered the cycle of reentry as described in relationship to how Dewey described educational experience as educative or miseducative to the degree that participants are experiencing growth along the “longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience,” which are

continuity and interaction (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 44). This application is especially complicated for the topic of reentry because the participants' previous experience, being in jail, was by definition an intervention into their lifeworlds; incarceration interrupted the continuity of experience. In incarceration, one's experiential interactions are intentionally disturbed, limited, and controlled. It seems like anything other than jail would be an improvement, educationally and otherwise.

Nevertheless, Themes 1 and 2 provided a structural framework for what reentry is like, bounded by time and varying by achievement of individual goals and expectations. Participants provided a broad overview of the phenomenon's essential constituents as a structural description. The remainder of the themes serve as textural descriptions that are presented as interpretations of the significant statements in the data, using the theoretical framework that guides this study. Themes 1 and 2 represented concepts present in the quantitative literature, such as goals, noted above, which are described as "criminogenic needs" by DOC literature (Latessa, et al., 2009. 8). Themes 1 and 2 described the structure of reentry for each of the participants, and the data generated from tracking participant movements in and out of jail during the up-down "cycle of incarceration" are primarily the data used as an indication of recidivism rates in quantitative studies, which is the most popular metric for tracking outcomes of CE reentry programs.

Applying Gehring's approach. Because Dewey's definition of educative and miseducative experiences is somewhat broad, I looked at the themes in terms of the conceptual framework that guides this study, which focused on Gehring's (2012) integral approach to CE. Gehring's first conceptual area is labeled the subjective quadrant, and it is focused on teacher rationale. Few participants discussed any formal education, and those

that did were not expressing interest in describing their CE experience beyond telling me that they had taken GED classes at the jail through one-to-one instruction in a small group setting at the jail. Any participant who had this experience had it several years ago, as there were no classes at the jail in at least the past two years.

In regard to the instructional experience of the participants, Gehring's second, objective quadrant, participants were superficial in their descriptions, saying any CE programs they participated in (e.g., GED) were "nice" or "cool." Participants became more vocal if they had received their GED yet not found it to be beneficial for finding a job. My conversation with Ricky for provides an example of how Gehring's approach was used, noting that Gehring's approach distinguishes the purpose of the instructional experience into two different levels, with one level being to increase educational attainment for the purpose of participation in the *status quo* economy and the other level being to increase educational attainment in pursuit of a transformed lifeworld.

Ricky's main goal was to be able to read. "I'm on a first grade reading level still," he said. "I can spell my name and shit, but—[long pause] I can write *the* and *cat*." Ricky's goals were for economic purposes, as he had experienced difficulty reading a job application, but if he had deeper desires for personal transformation through literacy, it was not apparent. Ricky's description served as an example to capture the seeming overall sense of literacy's "functional" impact, as several of the participants' general viewpoint of literacy's benefit was from a "human capital tradition" that emphasized skill attainment (using terminology from Prins & Draydon, 2010, p 209-210).

Gehring's fourth, "cultural" quadrant, connects back to the second "instructional experience" quadrant and takes into consideration the definition of "empowerment."

Overall, using Gehring's approach, a paradox in the participants' descriptions is evident: the participants did not participate in mature educational programming, as defined by Gehring. At the same time, the participants expressed a desire for a less "mature" level of programming than defined by Gehring as the most transformational. Two types of educational experiences were requested by the participants: Ricky, for example, who requested literacy courses so he could learn a new skill to assist him in obtain a job, and Will and Alex, for example, who requested being sent to a rehab facility so they could learn new ways of behaving to help them learn to address their addictions.

The most mature CE programs are based on the "best adult education traditions" (Gehring, 2012), which seem at odds with the purpose of the panoptic arrangement found in CE. The participants described "getting institutionalized," which I find counter to reciprocal student-teacher relationships that characterize the adult education traditions of Dewey and Mezirow. Transformative learning is not apparent in statements like Alex's such as, "Every time you come to jail and do a little bit, there's a certain part of you that gets institutionalized." Using the theoretical framework that guides this study, I interpret this institutionalization as later defining the power relationships of reentry when participants interact with their probation officers.

Limitations of the reduction. The transcendental reduction as a phenomenological pursuit of providing a thick, rich description of a phenomenon has limitations when left unanalyzed within a conceptual framework. Although Gehring's framework and Dewey's concepts of interaction and experience can readily be applied to the correctional setting, the purpose of a transcendental description of the data's essence is not necessarily to ground it in previous research literature. This descriptive reduction has been grounded in

the phenomenon as experienced by the participants with additional reductive acts and interpretation as experienced by the researcher when approaching the phenomenon using Gehring's conceptual framework.

The hermeneutic description in the next section moves beyond an effort to reach objective graphing of the experience to instead interpreting the factors that affect reentry as a learning experience, pulling in interpretive actions made possible by comparing bracketed frameworks that were set aside when I purposed to describe the structures of the experience from a transcendental approach.

Hermeneutic Reduction

Laverty (2003) stated that “[h]ermeneutic research is interpretive and concentrated on historical meanings of experience and their developmental and cumulative effects on individual and social levels” (p. 27). In the hermeneutic reduction, I returned to the data using my bracketed presuppositions as a tool for engaging and understanding the data with freedom to interpret the data and articulate themes in terms of learning. I had developed presuppositions about community reentry based on my experiences as a GED teacher and my reading of the literature; the hermeneutic reduction gave me an opportunity to ask a more directed question about the reentry experience—in this case, my sub-question about the types of learning that were reflected in participants' descriptions.

Stemming from Dewey's (1938/1997) definition of “interaction” in the theoretical framework that guides this study, I found “interaction during reentry” to be sufficiently broad to include nearly all of human experience itself. Given Laverty's (2003) definition, Dewey's concept of continuity is also sufficiently broad enough to encompass all of human experience. Therefore, when I allowed myself to focus on the historical meanings of

experience in the hermeneutic reduction, as suggested by Laverly, I engaged the data as a participant myself, someone who was interpreting the data as I encountered it, acknowledging my interaction with the data as I interpreted it. I am a teacher. This is clear in the bracketing that I used to more clearly understand the data from an educator's perspective with a focus on what learning meant in relationship to reentry.

Upon reflecting on my memos and the notes, which is an interpretive act outlined in my methodology, I realized that the participants described a paradox regarding reentry as a learning experience. They were told "This will teach you" when they were put in jail, and yet their experience was that "jail doesn't teach you anything." Participants also described a realization they made while living through reentry: "Jail is what you make it." Figure 8 depicts these three significant statements as themes that contrast different aspects of the same concept (*learning my lesson*). Complementing the themes of the descriptive reduction already described, these three themes capture dimensions of reentry as a learning experience. The richness of these themes is that they are experienced outside of the temporal restrictions of the first, transcendental reduction. Because I had clear and highly descriptive data from certain participants, I was able to articulate two sub-themes that helped to provide more dimension to the theme of "*Jail is what you make it.*" These sub-themes help depict how participants approach the topic of learning (and indeed describe having learned) in an environment that they have claimed "doesn't teach you anything."

In this hermeneutic reduction, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks I've defined for this study serves as brackets that I use (as compared to setting aside) to help me interpret the meaning of reentry as a learning experience. I have already accounted for the experience as it unfolds in the descriptive, transcendental reduction. In this second look

at the data, I was concerned with the participants' experience of the phenomenon as *beings in the world* during reentry and my experience as a researcher *being in the world* while interacting with the data. I engaged in what Mezirow (1995) called a "movement of creating meaning" (p. 50) rather than trying to deconstruct and then synthesize the phenomenon's essence as in the transcendental reduction.

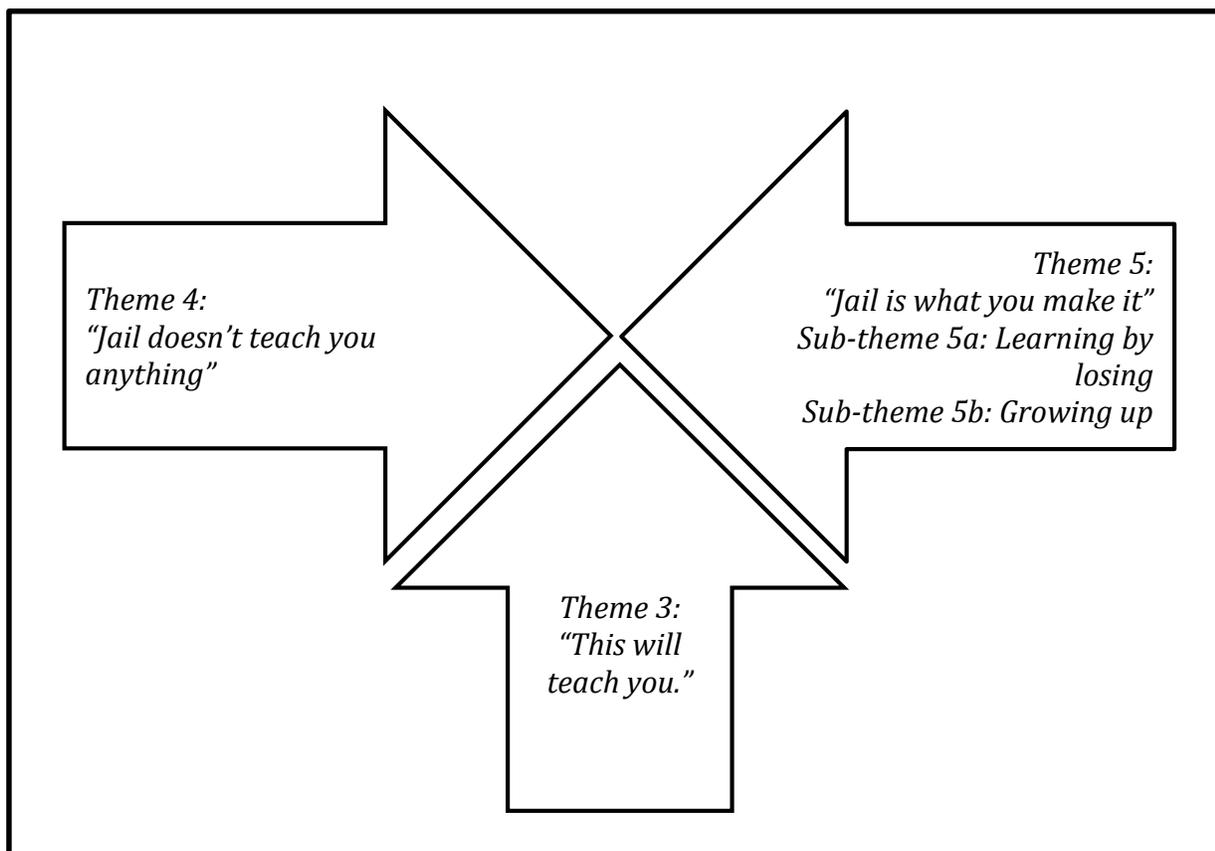


Figure 8. Diagram of the hermeneutic reduction

Theme 3: This will teach you. Participants said that when they reentered, others expected them to have learned some sort of "lesson." They knew while they were in jail that they were supposed to learn something because they were told outright by others: "This will teach you." Some participants, prior to things falling apart and returning to jail, had

acquired a job, an apartment, and possessions during their time of transition. Alex had all of this and lost it when he went back to jail. He scoffed at the notion that this would teach him anything:

They think that *this* [jail] is the solution. Like, “Oh, you messed up; you need to pay.” They think that *this* will teach you... It is just showing ‘em a—teachin’ ‘em a lesson-- you know what I mean? Sending me to jail is not going to teach me to stay clean...Therefore, when I get out, I know nothing about staying clean.

Alex had mentioned this several times, making the point that he “resents” being put into a system in which no educational support has been offered. He describes a meaning perspective that included this broad notion from society that jail should teach him a lesson—but he pointed out a discrepancy in thinking between those who punish and those who receive the punishment, such as himself:

They see it from a punishment perspective. You know, like, “Oh, you slipped up. You need to be punished. This is your punishment.”
It’s like, “No, I slipped up because I’m a drug addict, not because I’m trying to—not because I’m purposefully going out and trying to get away with something. That’s not it.”
It just doesn’t make sense to me, so I’ve been here like five times for [failing] drug tests. Like, I need something! I need treatment! I need something like that.

Although participants stated differences in opinion about what they should learn or why, they held that learning was a recurrent concept of reentry. Some, like Alex, perseverated on it, repeatedly bringing it up in terms of rehabilitation and learning how to deal with traumatic family issues. Others, like Dean, mentioned it in passing, non-chalantly: “I guess I should have learned my lesson.”

Some participants articulated a list of things that they know they need to know because they have learned in the past that it would help during reentry to have certain skills. Ricky stated that literacy skills would help with his family relations:

I'm trying to get a little bit of book smart in me now. You know what I mean? Like, learning how to read a little bit, learn how to write, cause when I get older—like when I get my daughter or something when I get out—she's might ask me what this is and I ain't gonna be able to read her a book, like. I can't even get anywhere in my life right now.

I had underestimated how often words like “teach” and “learn” would be used in this study and how important a distinction between them would be. Alex, for example, said, “It's not about you teaching me anything. It's about me learning something.” Each participant provided an easy “in” to talk about adult learning, and I quickly found that they all believed that “sitting in jail” was supposed to teach them a lesson, whether or not they held passionate ideas about adult learning. Ricky explained how “sitting here” was the grown-up version of being punished by sitting in a corner with your nose to the wall, which was especially evident when someone on the outside could have bailed him out. As Ricky put it: “My dad made me sit there, ‘You're gonna learn. You gotta get this shit through your head.’”

Symbolic interactionism is based on the notion that people care what other people think about them, and that they adjust their behavior accordingly; definitions and norms are set socially, and expectations for social interaction are based on what ‘others’ will think (Lemert, 1960). The thought that participants were supposed to be learning something was based on what they thought others were thinking about their experiences. Participants held their beliefs, in many cases, because they were directly told by family members that they should learn a lesson from being in jail.

The theoretical framework that guides this study relies on a symbolic interactionist perspective to tie together the theories of Dewey, Foucault, and Mezirow. Although there may be factors that affect learning, none of these theorists allow for “education” to exist in the abstract. There is no such thing as *the* educational experience; “[e]xperience and

education cannot be directly equated to each other” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 25). Even though symbolic interactionism is a socially based framework, individual variation means that no single given experience will result in learning for every individual. In other words, the participants’ expectations that jail itself would be a learning experience—although in line with social expectations—was shortsighted.

Theme 4: Jail doesn’t teach you anything. The experience of being treated like they were to have learned a lesson in jail continued upon reentry. Will explained how his parents treated him after his third time out of jail: “This time I got out and I messed up again, so it was like this time they were real distant with me. They were trying to teach me a lesson at first.”

But that lesson was elusive: one problem upon reentry, according to the participants, is that they realize “sitting in jail” was not a productive use of time. Regardless of what they were *supposed* to learn, their own experiences were that the jail did not have any formal education program to teach them. Alex summarized it this way: “My issue is there is no rehabilitation here. It’s like jail doesn’t help you. It doesn’t.”

Alex points out that making jail an uncomfortable environment is not the same as teaching someone. This frustration of having returned to the jail environment multiple times but not being served with rehabilitative services causes Alex to conclude that jail doesn’t teach you anything:

This jail shit’s for the birds. I mean, like, yeah, I hate it here and stuff like that, but this doesn’t teach me how to deal with life... Sending me to jail is not going to teach me to stay clean, you know what I mean? Therefore, when I get out, I know nothing about staying clean.

Don echoed Alex’s words nearly verbatim, adding that jail is “a joke.”

As mentioned earlier, some participants had specific educational goals, like the literacy goals explained by Ricky. Because of the lack of programs in a small county jail, Ricky wishes he were in a larger facility. He had committed a crime near Philadelphia, and was hoping to be transferred back to that urban facility so that he could pursue his education. First, he reminded me of his problem:

I got no education... like my handwriting's like a little kid's handwriting, but I'm trying... Like, I can do math—I'm good with a little bit of math, and on some registers the fucking math does itself, you know what I mean? I could do that, everything's there in front of your face.... I can do plus and like take away and a little bit of times tables. It's cause I was selling drugs—I was good with money.

Then, he explained what he thought was available in an urban facility and how motivated he is to earn an education, which he had already explained is crucial (in his eyes) to obtaining a job:

I want to try [to finish my GED] when I go to Philly—they got teachers down there. They can help you with that. Like they dedicate your time to help you, like, "We're going to do something with your life when you get outta here." Like, "We don't want to keep this cycle going: you coming in and out of jail." Like, I don't even want to keep this shit going.

Dewey (1938/1997) states that all experience results in learning, but that not all learning is educative: "Everything depends upon the *quality* of the experience which is had" (p. 27, emphasis in the original). The effect that one experience has upon later experiences is largely a measure of the experience's quality, and experiences further can be discriminated based on the direction in which they help one grow (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 36). As applied to this theme, the participants did not view their experiences prior to reentry as educative. They juxtaposed their lived experience that jail doesn't teach you anything with the perceived reality that jail *ought* to teach them something.

Participants often had a precise idea of what they wanted to learn, and yet they also expressed having no way of making it happen. Dewey (1938/1997) connected the most successful learning experiences as those in which the learner would have “power to frame purposes and to execute or carry into effect purposes so framed” (p. 67). Perhaps one of the most clear indications from any participant in this regard was when Alex said, “It’s not about *you* teaching me something; it’s about *me* learning.” All of the participants seemed frustrated by a common element: jail was not a productive use of time. The jail where the participants had been housed had no programs beyond GED, Alcoholics Anonymous and various church groups. The lack of a reentry program was described by several as a problem particular to small county jails, and it highlighted the rural aspect of this study.

While not observed in this study, Gehring (2012) refers to a set of examples of programs inside jails where the inmates are in charge of administering CE programs. One of the major reasons why the jail administration allowed for such practices in the past has been that it occupied prisoners’ time. An often quoted phrase in jail administration is that *a busy inmate is a good inmate*, and jail wardens surveyed in the past have been open to the idea of CE reentry programs being offered in conjunction with their facilities (Gee, 2011).

Theme 5: Jail is what you make it. The description of disorientation that jail engenders, coupled with the participants’ description that *jail doesn’t teach you anything*, stands in opposition to stories like Ricky’s, highlighting that something *other than jail* must be serving an educational function. I identified two subthemes that help describe how *jail is what you make it*. The first, *learning by losing*, was described most in depth by those who had been in jail multiple times, but there did not seem to be a pattern in how the second,

becoming mature, was described. The commonality of these sub-themes is the concept of personal responsibility for personal transformation.

Sub-theme 5a: Learning by losing. Participants lost both physical belongings and relationships when they came to jail. Some lost more than others. Loss prompted reflection amongst the participants, to varying degrees, depending on what they lost. The behavior of reflection also characterized this sub-theme. In this sub-theme, I present an extended example from Alex, who was particularly reflective on the subject of loss. He gave an overview of the subtheme by connecting loss to the subject of reflection:

I've had a lot of stuff, and I've lost it, and I've worked hard to get it back, and I've lost it again. And it's like that's in the aspect of everything, not just relationships, but like materialistic things, relationships, vehicles, girlfriends, all that stuff—and just like pissed it all away, took it for granted at that point in time. It's not until you end up with nothing *once again* that that feeling becomes, like, familiar again, you know what I mean? And it's like, "Ahhh, man, I remember the last time I felt like this. I was sitting in a jail cell."

When Alex described all that he had lost, his voice cracked as he stifled his speech and tried to hold back tears. At first, I was not sure what was happening when Alex's voice cracked. I gave him a minute, and then I asked, "What are you thinking right now?"

I put, like, put in so much effort into something for next to nothing, really. I guess letting people down, like, virtually everybody. I guess it's a psychological thing, knowing that you can lose everything and knowing that you're strong enough to gain everything that you had lost back, just to lose it. ...you just end up back in the same situation as you were when you started—with nothing. And then it's like you take one step forward and two steps back. That's exactly like what it is. Every time. And then the next thing you know, it's four years later and your right in the same spot.

Later, Alex described reentry as a time when, due to experiencing so much loss, he now visualizes his life a certain way. "It's like, there's this basket full of things," he said. He explains how some of the things in the basket should be done and some of the things should not. Every time he is released from jail, he purposefully tries to avoid doing some of

the things he knows he should not do. However, even if “there’s just one thing left” that he didn’t stop doing in the figurative basket, he will return to jail, which he called “double punishment” because he was punished even though he was trying:

To me it’s like a double punishment you know what I mean? ‘Cause it’s like, I have to bear my time, you know, whatever they give me, and it’s like I messed myself up in the head because of the fact that I’m, like, *I’m back here* after you know doing good and losing everything all over again—and then I punish myself because, like, I try to hold onto that desire to stay clean being surrounded by everybody that doesn’t want that.

So, loss was described as an impetus for reflection and could be described as a teacher, but the process of learning from loss was not likened unto a light switch. Below, Alex struggles with calling jail “good,” interrupting himself repeatedly, and he ultimately brings up how loss can help you reflect (“take it seriously”), giving examples from his life:

Jail’s what you make it. It can be a great experience. Not that, like, it’s good for— It can be good— in a lot of ways, you know what I mean? You use it to better yourself and realize: Once you been here, and you realize how bad it sucks, or, like, you lose things over and over again, and you realize how hard it is, the next time you get stuff back—whether it be relationships or time with your kids that you missed, or family members that have died and stuff like that, like all that stuff bunched up—like, you realize, like, it helps you grow. It helps you mature if you take it seriously, you know what I mean? It’s all about, like, having an open mind and really like having appreciation for stuff.

Sub-theme 5b: Becoming mature. Alex described how the experience of loss could lead to a desire to grow up, to become mature, and how this changed for him from the first time coming out of jail to the last time coming out of jail now that he is older and has more to lose. His first time reentering was

kinda like polar opposite compared to now. I guess it has to do with maturity, ‘cause as you get older, like, I have a son now which I didn’t have at the time, so like those are the things that are important to me: stuff like family... I’d say it’s completely different compared to the first time, and, like, I think that has to do with just growing up: like just maturing and, like, being sick of coming back in here.... If you come to jail and you don’t really lose anything,

then, you know what I mean, it doesn't— that has a lot to do with, like, your learning experience of like what you learn by coming back to jail.

The interview process proved to be an inherently reflective process for the participants, who at various times described being in jail as “having a lot of time on your hands to think.” I had asked them to describe the situations encountered during reentry, and some behaviors led them to their current situation of being back in jail. Participants were prone to reflect on their current situations as compared to what things were like when they were younger, which helped to build this sub-theme of “becoming mature.” Sid described realizing that what he had previously considered “just being a kid” was actually a serious matter:

I remember being young, even a juvenile—I never really gotten in trouble for anything significant, just little stuff like here and there, just being a kid—and having people tell me, “Listen,” knowing that I was in and out of the drug scene.

The way I looked at it was I was being a kid—it was normal, almost, right? So it was like people would tell me, “If you keep going in that direction, it's not going to be good. You're going to end up in jail. You're going to end up losing everything...”

But at the time them telling me.... I think they're exaggerating a little bit, it's not really that bad—but, you sit down and think about it here six years later, you're like like, “Shhiii—only if I'd listened!” Like, “They were right!” And, “They were wiser than I was.” And, “I shouldn'ta took em for granted. I shoulda took them more seriously.”

But you don't think about all that stuff until it's too late. That's the unfortunate part about it.

Sean was very detailed in his description of “growing up,” articulating how he realized that the changes he was making affected how people treated him:

After HS, I kinda cleaned up my act a little bit. I'm a country boy at heart. So, I started wearing cargo pants and jeans that fit right and t-shirts that weren't five sizes too big. Started wearing button-up shirts, polo shirts. You know, wearing nice little sweaters. Yeah, I got into the sweaters pretty heavy. And

the vests! And I started realizing—you know, I had my pants where they were supposed to be—and I started realizing, you know, people treat me so much better when I dress like that... It made me feel better about myself.

It was not that jail taught him to dress differently, Sean explained, but it was that he realized that he should not dress like the same person who had gone to jail. Sean felt so much better about himself that he also lost 90 pounds and stopped smoking during reentry. He explained that “in a small town there’s not much to do,” adding, “I was tired of living the way I was.” For Sean, this was all a part of “growing up.” He said of the jail experience: “I don’t want that again.”

Like Sean, each participant had a way of saying that they were taking responsibility to learn from their mistakes regardless of what help had not been available to them in jail. Don summarized how personal responsibility is an aspect of reentry by stating it this way: “You can’t force people to do it. Not really. Not if they don’t want help for themselves. They’re not gonna get it. You gotta want it for yourself first.”

Sid was specific in his description of things that he “picked up” in jail on his own despite the lack of resources provided by the jail. He considers self-control the biggest. Sid’s charge was for a high-profile sexual crime, and he described both jail and reentry as a time when he had to cope with “ignorant people” who he felt judged him based on the type of crime he had committed. “When they found out what I was in for, they were harassing me and stuff... People calling me names that are for my charges, like calling me ‘chester’ and stuff, but I learned how to ignore them.” (Chester is a derogatory term for a person accused of eliciting sex from a minor, constructed from the words “*child*” and “*molester*.”) Sid explained that he knew he had a temper problem, and that he had taught himself to control it when he was in jail. This proved to be helpful upon release. “I had to cope with it out

there, but it wasn't as bad as it was in here," he said about how society treated him when he was released.

Mezirow (1991, 1995) suggested that crisis moments could lead to transformative learning, which required that an individual revisit basic meaning schemes that inform perspectives. Participants seemed to anticipate that a change in meaning schemes was in order, but they did not know exactly which change to make or how to make that change permanent. When Alex broke down and started crying, his culminating observation was that it was four years later, and "he was right back in the same spot" of having lost everything that he owned and a girlfriend and family relationships. He had had all of those things, lost them, gained them back, and now lost them again. To qualify his situation as a crisis moment was straightforward using Mezirow's (1995) definition. It is through this crisis that maturity is gained. However, Alex did not describe anything beyond experiencing crisis. His crisis was the realization that he *had not* transformed.

Critical Reduction

As described in Chapter 3, my critical reduction focused on statements that described power relationships. In the critical reduction, I returned to the data to interpret it with the question of how power relationships were apparently affecting the participant's experiences during the phenomenon of reentry.

I anticipated data about power relationships in terms of the *jail* experience, and so I redirected probing questions to the *reentry* experience instead. After participants mentioned "being on paper" (i.e., probation or parole), I asked them, "What was that like?" They were apt to describe how the experience of being on paper fits in with the phenomenon of reentry, and these points during the interviews provided data that

described how the power relationships experienced during reentry affect the participants' abilities to make choices and, ultimately, affect the way the participants described perceiving their own identities and potential roles within their community. In Figure 9, I depicted this theme as a downward arrow to illustrate how participants described a power structure imposed on them that limited their ability to make choices.

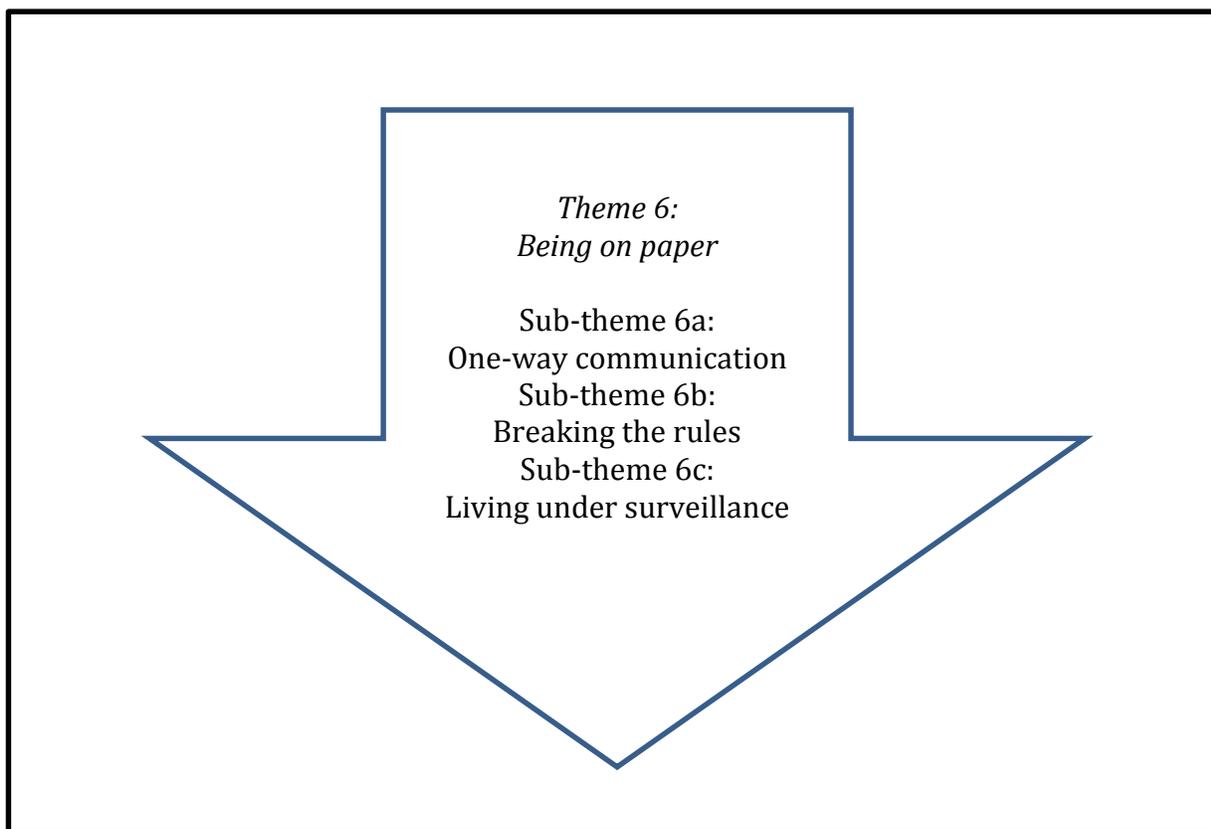


Figure 9. Diagram of the critical reduction.

Theme 6: Being on Paper. *Being on paper* was described as a “waiting game,” a “guessing game,” a “game of cat and mouse,” and a “game of cops and robbers.” When I worked with the data, it occurred to me that participants described something common to all games: rules and how they are communicated. In the case of reentry, participants

described communication as one-way (from probation and the courts to them), and they described “following the rules” as a voluntary process that they each broke for a variety of reasons. In addition to rules such as no use of alcohol or drugs, participants described reentry as a phenomenon during which their ability to make decisions as minor as changing a phone number or an address was highly restricted by the terms of their probation. Finally, the participants described “living under surveillance” as a new way of life, in which everything they did was subject to scrutiny by a government officer.

Sub-theme 6a: One-way communication. Communication from probation and parole came in paper form. I asked the participants if this paper was hard to understand, and all of them explained that it was “pretty simple.” Sid noted that sometimes there are forms that need to be filled out, but “the probation department fills it out for you.” Given that Ricky’s literacy level is low enough that he wouldn’t be able to read the forms, I asked what he does with them. He told me that he has someone (usually his “grandpop”) explain it to him. I asked all the participants if they had any input into determining the rules on their papers or appealing them. In one case, Sid mentioned that his restriction on being around minors was lifted by his probation officer (“He let me slide on that”) so that he could be around his immediate family, but that the actual papers did not change.

I chose the phrase *being on paper* for this theme’s title because the phrase is primarily only used by people who have experienced being on probation or parole. The paper referred to was a literal document with obligations had been issued by the court and were the purview of a probation officer to enforce. The penalty for violating the rules was a potential return to jail. When this occurred, participants referred to it as “being violated” or “being revoked.” Participants described their probation or parole officer (PO) as the

principal decision-maker in the sense that the PO is allowed to exercise discretion over whether or not he or she “violates” an individual. As Alex put it: “That’s who’s determining my fate.” The connection made by Alex and others between a piece of paper and one’s fate is an example of *documentary power* (Smith, 1974). Documents are the basis of knowledge because they document reality through a socially organized practice. The probation documentation in this study provided boundaries on freedom. As summarized by Sean: “It’s freedom, I guess.” During reentry, participants found out that they are not as free to affect their own circumstances as they thought they would be, and that all their actions were subject to being recorded as part of their permanent record. Sean explained that meetings with probation officers were mainly a barrage of questions to be answered about where he had been and what he had been doing:

Have you missed curfew? Have you had any contact with law? have you been doing drugs? Have you been drinking? Have you been doing what you’re supposed to do? Have you paid on your fines?

Explaining the situation similarly, Don referred to probation as being “like you’re fucking being babysat like 24/7.” Sean captured the friction between wanting to mature yet being treated like a juvenile: “It was more of the being told what to do that sucked. Especially as you’re getting older, you don’t want be told what you can and can’t do.” I interpreted the “baby-sitting” comment and others like it as participants feeling their maturity was being thwarted by surveillance. Some participants tried to explain to probation officers what they felt they needed, yet they experienced difficulty expressing what they needed during reentry even though they expressed having known at the time what they needed. Don explained what he felt was needed in the community:

There’s not very much programs around here, so they do need to start making programs in the jail to help people—we need some type of halfway-

house-type deals. They need to come up with some type of halfway program... give us some sort of help to get back out on to the streets.

Alex explained how he had tried to “level with” his PO and ask him for placement in a halfway-house or rehab for his own good, rather than being “out on the streets.” When he was arrested shortly thereafter, his prior attempt to change his situation by communicating his problems and his needs to his PO proved futile:

I said [to my PO], “I messed up. I talked to you on Tuesday! I leveled with you.” You know what I mean? Not saying, not trying to make an excuse or make it sound like it was okay what I did because I was, I mean, I messed up. But it was like, “I used last night.” And that was it. They handcuffed me and brought me to jail... When I came in for six weeks, like, I begged for rehab. I was like, “I need – send me to rehab. I want to go to rehab.” And they wouldn’t send me, for one reason or another.

The participants, overall, described neutral or negative experiences with their POs. The basis for my interpretation of the PO-participant relationship as neutral-to-negative is a comparison to Foucault’s (1977/2005) description of subjugated knowledge, which I apply to the participants’ knowledge about their own needs. My interpretation of participants’ experiences is informed by whether or not the PO was described as helping the participant carry out their goals; in some cases, negative explicit language was used to describe how negative the PO-participant relationship was. Solomon, et al. (2008), observed that rural communities had opportunities to readily connect reentry-related community services with the people who need them. However, it is not clear from this study how the PO-participant relationship would be described as leading to educative experiences (Dewey, 1938/1997). The affect of documentary power (Smith, 1974) on the participants was seen when, for example, Alex reappeared in front of a judge who was reading PO reports. Alex was particularly frustrated that his requests for rehabilitation services went unfilled by the judge, who only knew him by what was written in his record.

Alex's communications about his needs stand as juxtaposed against the official document that contains *the facts* about Alex. Anything else would be *his* burden to prove.

Sub-theme 6b: Breaking the rules. Participants had all returned to jail, which is where I interviewed them, and they each had a description of reentry that included breaking the rules of probation. Sometimes participants described probation as “not too bad” if you “followed the rules,” and then provided their own unique interpretation of the rules. For example, Sid gave his appraisal of the rule against doing drugs: “It’s no big deal for me because I don’t do much drugs. The main thing I do is smoke weed. I don’t consider that a drug.” Dean explained how he did not have a drinking problem because, while on probation, “most of the bars I go to aren’t around here.”

One of Dean’s stories of breaking the rules of probation was for a technical probation violation (TPV), a common reason why the participants returned to jail. He explained:

I got violated for moving up to my sister’s house and not letting them know that I moved up there. I tried calling ‘em and calling ‘em and calling ‘em, and just didn’t get no answer, so I just moved up there and just never got in touch with my probation officer.

Dean described the day he was arrested:

They showed right up to her house. I was actually riding bicycle, and I seen the cops there. I was like, *What’d I do now?* So, I just rode up past the house and stopped on the sidewalk and ate some Combos and looked behind me and this cop pulled up next to me and got out and he says, “Put your hands behind your back. You got a warrant.”

I’m like, “A warrant? They never sent me no papers or nothing.” It wouldn’t have been that hard. Probably could have taken care of it before that, you know?

Other participants broke the rules more boldly. When Ricky was on probation, he spent some time stealing televisions from Wal-Mart. He was caught, and yet he was not put in jail that very moment:

They just said, "Well, we're going to send you a court date. You're going to jail."

I was like, "Oh, alright. Fuck it. I'm not even gonna be around for that." You know what I mean? Take off running. I already had a warrant. Then I went back to Wal-Mart, tried taking another TV, and I got arrested.

Ricky described his PO as "cool" and said that their relationship was "tight" at first, even though he felt his PO had a low opinion of him. "He only gave me one month," Ricky said, explaining that his PO had told his family that his estimation was for Ricky to be back in jail within a month. Eventually, Ricky did lie to his PO about doing drugs, and Ricky described how the way his PO treated him then changed from his earlier days in his reentry: "The last [urinalysis], it was like, 'No, whatever the fuck you're doing, you're going to come here and piss in this cup for me. Fuck you.'" Ricky's response was, "Come catch me."

Participants sometimes carefully calculated what rules they could break, and when, without being caught by their PO. Sean explained how he learned to pattern his POs' behaviors:

One week he'd come to my house. The next week I would go to his office, and, like, when I went to his office, I knew I was getting piss tested. So, it was like, I knew that as soon as I left his office, I was good to smoke. So it was kinda like, you get into this routine where you learn: Okay, he's going to piss test me this week... After the first year, you kinda get it down-packed what he is going to do.

Don's experience was quantitatively different, with his PO administering a urinalysis twice a week minimum and up to four times a week total. When I asked why so often, he

explained that it was because his charges were all drug related. His calculation of breaking the rules took into account which drug he wanted to do, how long it stayed in his system, and when he estimated his next urinalysis to be administered:

I get piss tested two times a week, so, like, I could do, I could sneak away with coke or something that stays in your system for three days. So they do it every three days, so like Monday and Friday. So, then, like, it would be in my system regardless if I do it. They're going to catch it 'cause there's three days, with the weekend. Like, if I do it Friday at like 6 o'clock, I'd fail my piss test on Monday, more than likely, unless I drank like shitloads of bleach and, like, water.

Being in a small town affected the game of probation. For example, Sean had a story about being caught “around the local bar that’s known for serving minors” by his probation officer, who came to the bar by coincidence. His PO administered a Breathalyzer test, and he lied to the PO when the test came back slightly elevated, telling the PO he had recently used mouth wash. Sean explained:

He told me not to use mouthwash without calling in... I'm sure didn't believe me at all... There was nothing he could really do about it because he couldn't catch me doing it.

This type of “cat and mouse” activity (as Sean and Will both called it) sometimes worked in participants’ favor, as they perceived it, keeping them out of jail when they were slipping up (see Theme 2). Will explained:

It's trouble when they know you're messing up, and then—especially when you're messing up and they can't catch you—and then it's like a cat and mouse game. That's when it starts to get hard. You can drag it out as long as you want to drag it out. Like you clean your urine a hundred different ways, and like not get caught and play that cat and mouse game. Or lie to them, and say you're not going to treatment or whatever.

As summarized by Alex, the participants I spoke with “failed” at playing the game. Having already explained how probation prevented him from changing his situation to include rehabilitation or treatment, Alex saw failure as joint effort between himself and

probation: “It’s like I set myself up for failure, but it’s like they participate in setting me up for failure, too. It’s like we work together to work against me.”

The participants described a “game” and my interpretation based on Foucault’s (1977/2005) description of power in a panoptic arrangement is that *the game is rigged* in favor of the panoptic surveillance arrangement. This power differential results in the participant being unable to express their own ideas about their needs, as in Alex’s case, above. The inability to engage in the discourse of punishment locates the participants as subjugated individuals whose local knowledge about reentry was not going to be used in determining the rules of the *being on paper* game. For this reason, participants identified being on paper as an extension of jail into everyday life.

Critical adult education examines “how adults unlearn their adherence to unfreedom and learn to be enlightened, empowered, and transformed actors in particular times, places, and spaces” (Welton, 1995, p. 12). Using Dewey’s axes of continuity and interaction, the theoretical framework that guides this study asks whether a given experience is educative or miseducative; that is, whether one situation opens an individual to additional and more diverse situations or whether it narrows their future choices. It is not clear that any participant in this study experienced reentry as a set of entirely miseducative or entirely educative experiences; rather, a cycle of educative then miseducative was described. Although not described in this study, the opportunity exists, as the participants desire, that the reentry experience be a critical learning experience along Dewey’s (1938/1997) criteria that the participant have the “power to frame purposes and to execute or carry into effect purposes so framed” (p. 67).

In terms of the power relationships that helped shape experiences, no participant described being involved in a discussion about their future or in any formal educational experience significant enough to recall in any detail. In terms of Gehring's (2012) Integral Approach, it was as though the participants' reentry experience was devoid of the third quadrant, which describes the leadership of CE programs. With no clear leader of programming for reentry, participants were released from the jail with a host of expectations from the criminal justice system, to be enforced by POs, and yet without resources to meet those expectations. Whatever gains made while getting their feet underneath them were not enough to counteract for actions made while slipping up.

In terms of transformative learning, this study asks if there were "crisis moments" (Welton, 1995, p.20) that might have affected what Mezirow (1995) called meaning perspectives—"the specific set of beliefs, knowledge, judgment, attitude, and feeling which shape a particular interpretation" (p. 43). Although participants described crises, they did not necessarily describe making educative decisions throughout their reentry. This was described in terms of complacency and slipping up, which I interpreted as part of a power structure's effect when what the participants see as their needs is deemphasized.

Sub-theme 6c: Living under surveillance. Participants described being continually observed and monitored while under supervision. Playing the game of *being on paper* was often referenced in terms of "getting caught." Don colorfully described a surveillance system that he tried to avoid, as implemented by his PO: "Call you non-fucking-stop. Text you non-fucking-stop. Most of the time. My PO texted me *all* the time. I didn't answer him though."

Don felt as though his PO was “out to get him.” Adding some weight to Don’s assessment, Sean, whose PO saw him weekly, noted that “If he really wanted to violate somebody, he could see them three or four times a week.” This sentiment that POs can be “out to get” particular individuals was shared by Will, who experienced the flip-side of living under surveillance in a small town, meaning that he received information about something his PO said about him. This changed how he perceived his PO:

I know my probation officer for a fact had it out for me ‘cause he told—he was at a Christmas party—he told people when I was on probation that he would do anything he could to hammer me and my brother. Yeah, like, that came back to my stepmom because it was one of her friends. So it was like, *he’s a real dickhead.*

Summarizing what he perceived as his inability to address this situation, Will stated simply: “They have the power to do that.” Participants described POs as exercising their rights under the terms of probation to appear at participants’ homes and places of employment unannounced and to search their personal belongings, including anything in their home. In this sense, the PO was described as having the upper-hand in playing the game. Sean explained how ‘surprise’ was an element of surveillance:

Every day is kinda like a guessing game. Is he gonna come stop by today? Or, Is he gonna come to my work?... Every day was, “Is my PO gonna catch me doing something?” Is he gonna pop up all the sudden and decide, “Hey, Let’s go take a piss test!”

A consensus amongst the participants was that, when they were on paper, something was *being done to* them. They described, in passive terms, “winding up in the same spot again,” and when they used words like “violated” and “revoked” in regards to losing their probation and returning to jail, it was nearly always phrased as something the PO did to the participant: “I got violated,” “My PO violated me,” “He revoked me.” Also, when they talked about failing a urinalysis, they nearly always described the event as

reflecting on them as a person: “I was dirty,” “I’m dirty.” Participants agreed that the net effect of surveillance is that it “holds you back.” Alex explains how he “got violated” twice because he did not comply with the different check-points of reporting to his PO so that his PO could ask him questions similar to those described above:

I got violated before for not reporting, you know what I mean? Like: missing a phone call. I got violated for changing my address and not telling them... Whether you’re doing good or not, they’ll come pick you up and put you in jail.

Alex describes the conclusion to playing the game as recycling: “I would say 85% of the people that come in here come back or have been here before. It’s like they recycle the same people.” Alex is now in the position of that the experience of going to state prison might be right around the corner, and in so doing he draws a contrast between reentry and continued confinement:

It’s like: You [POs] didn’t do nothing for them except potentially make the situation worse. Like that’s as real as it gets... I’m not worried about going to state prison because I’m going to get beat up or killed or anything like that. I’m worried about going to state prison because I still, like, have a desire to try to get my life together—and by sending me down there, I might be going to lose that.

A critical study of CE can be framed theoretically as a study of the pursuit and enforcement of normalization by disciplines of ‘clinical knowledge’ in the human sciences. Foucault (1977/1995) defined panopticism in terms of the application of clinical disciplines in correctional facilities and extended his definition to describe how the “mechanisms” of discipline have permeated what has become “a disciplinary society” that is now constantly under surveillance—likening living in general society to living in a national panopticon (p. 209). The “infinitely minute web of panoptic techniques” described

by Foucault (1977/1995, p. 224) inside or outside of a correctional institution, is a means unto the end of rendering what Foucault calls “docile” individuals:

[T]hroughout the social body, procedures were being elaborated for distributing individuals, fixing them in space, classifying them, extracting from them the maximum in time and forces, training their bodies, coding their continuous behavior, maintaining them in perfect visibility forming around them an apparatus of observation, registration and recording, constituting on them a body of knowledge that is accumulated and centralized. The general form of an apparatus intended to render individuals docile and useful, by means of precise work upon their bodies, indicated the prison institution. (p. 231)

With this in mind, a theoretical basis for the participants being able to say something was *being done to them* becomes more evident. Participants were constantly under surveillance while experiencing reentry—or, at least, it *seemed* that way. This internalization of the surveillance by participants is the “interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer” (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 157). Further, when the participants knew they were not being watched, they often used those opportunities to behave in ways the surveillance system was designed to thwart. Participants’ descriptions of how physical interactions were monitored during reentry makes Foucault’s writings about the panoptic society seem less apocalyptic and more contemporary, as participants described how their movements, from phone numbers to choice of housing, were continuously monitored. In their use of the phrase *being on paper*, participants described a phenomenon in terms reminiscent of Heidegger’s. Beyond the awareness of *being in the world*, participants were continually aware of the power relations that affected the documentation of their lives.

In this final reduction of the data, the apparent theme was that the power relationships described by the participants focused on the role of the criminal justice system—specifically the parole/ probation officers (POs) who were characterized by their

one-way communication. Participants described breaking the rules while living under surveillance, thus violating parole or probation and returning to jail. Participants were sometimes told by POs to go to certain courses being offered in the community (e.g., anger management). The one-way communication from PO to participant resulted in assigned courses becoming part of the “cat and mouse game” described by several of the participants. When asked why he did not go to the courses being offered in the community that were assigned to him by a PO, Don simply said, “Didn’t feel like it.” Other times, participants knew what type of programming they wanted, but knew it would be far from the local county jail—for example, Alex wanted to go to rehab, but the county would not send him. Alex summarized how the relationship he has with his PO affected his ability to make choices about his own future, stating, “...it’s like they participate in setting me up for failure, too. It’s like we work together to work against me.”

Whether being told what to do or asking permission to do something, participants described inability to engage in the discourse about their own situations. Reentry as a learning experience in terms of transformation learning theory, which relies on Mezirow’s (1995) communicative learning, calls for “capacity to make meaning of one’s experience through equal opportunity to participate democratically in discourse” (p. 49). The one-way communication described by participants was far different from an *equal opportunity to participate democratically in discourse*, which may help account for the lack of anything reminiscent of Gehring’s (2012) fifth, most mature, level of correctional programming or Mezirow’s transformational learning.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, I summarize the findings of this study by presenting a general description of the reentry phenomenon, based on the transcendental reduction, as experienced by seven young men who had been incarcerated in a small county jail in Northcentral Pennsylvania and then released to the rural community. I present conclusions based on my application of this study's theoretical and conceptual framework while conducting the phenomenological reductions, and then I present this study's limitations and its potential implications.

I framed this study as an *instrumental collective case* of young adults at a small rural jail in Northcentral Pennsylvania to “get insight into the question [of what reentry is like] by studying a particular case” (Stake, 1995, p. 3). The selected case study design is *instrumental* because my “use of case study is to understand something else” beyond an *intrinsic* interest in only the phenomenon of leaving this particular jail and reentering this particular community (Stake, p. 3). My interest in this study revolved around providing local knowledge regarding community reentry from a rural county jail for the purpose of answering basic questions about local community reentry, defining local knowledge as flowing from the participants I interviewed. The questions I had about reentry were:

- What are the lived experiences of reentry for young adult men who reenter a rural community after being held at their local county jail?
- What types of learning are apparent in the descriptions of the participants' experiences?
- What types of power relationships are reflected in participants' descriptions of their experiences?

Lived Experience of Young Men Who Reentered a Rural Community

Participants did not speak about formal CE experiences very much, even when asked directly about, for example, GED class. However, the participants were apt to describe experiential learning in which it was up the individual to navigate the space between “jail doesn’t teach you anything” and “this is what you need to learn.” The factors influencing reentry as an educational experience included how long and for how many times one had been in jail, connecting to the subthemes of “learning by losing” and “becoming mature.” Experiences with probation and parole officers stuck out as indicating a power structure supported by a uniformly and comprehensively applied surveillance structure, with little flexibility for individuals to express control over their own experiences without their actions being subject to approval. These themes are set against the background, or structural, themes that describe reentry as an up-down cycle.

In presenting the data, I summarized each group of themes with a simple graphic. In analyzing how the themes present a big-picture description of the data, I realized that the graphics could easily be overlaid. The resulting figure, Figure 10, shows how each of the latter four themes influences the educative and miseducative trajectory of the participants’ experience during reentry.

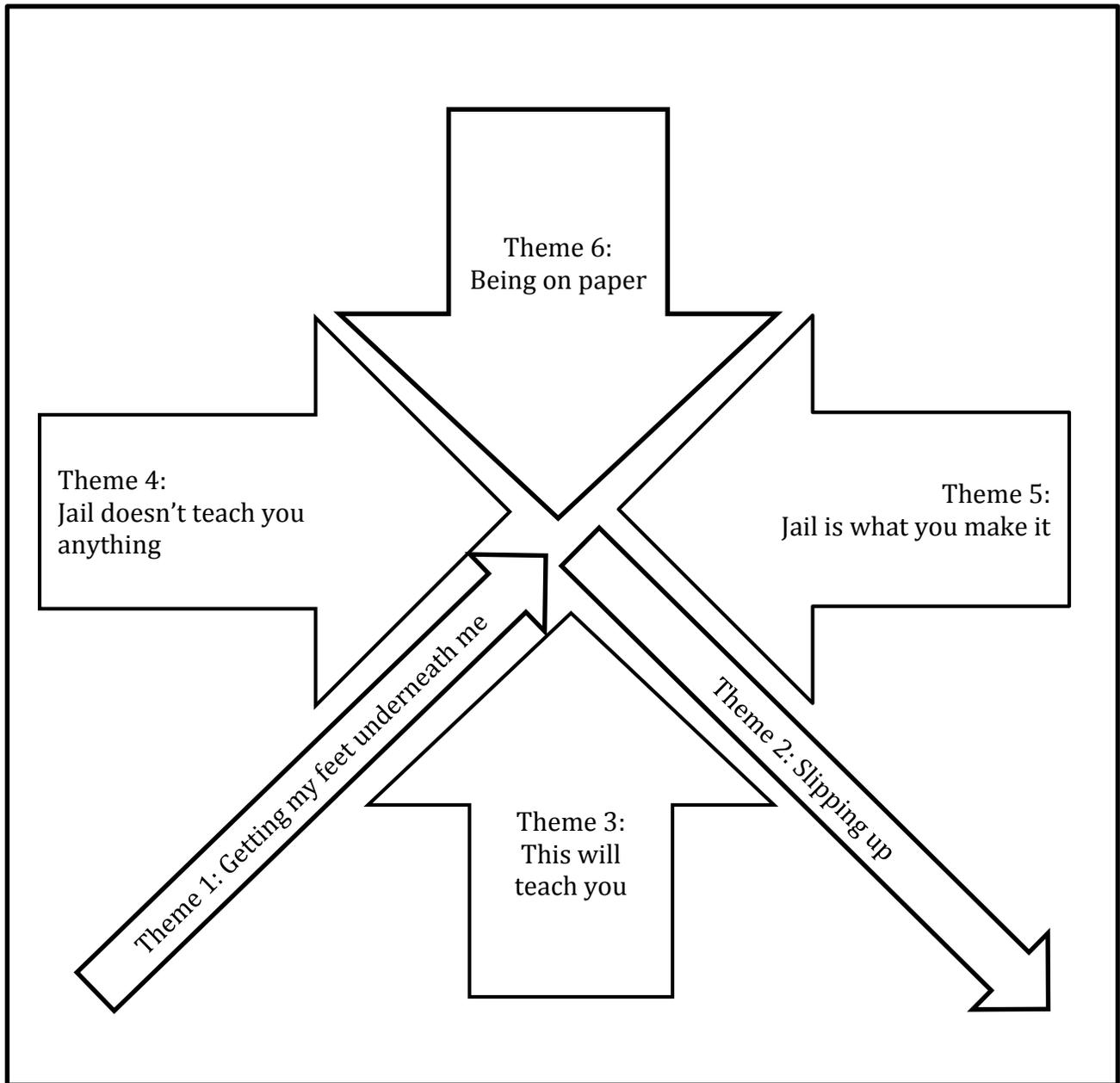


Figure 10. Diagram of themes describing the reentry experience.

I have used an arrow to represent each theme of the reentry experience. I arranged the arrows such that the individual can be visualized as following the “up-down” pathway described by the first two themes while the pressures from the other themes influence the degree to which the up and down are experienced. A unique visual depiction would have to be created for each participant if this figurative illustration were taken more literally, and each participant would have his own slope and trajectory for the first two themes. In a general diagram such as the one presented, nuances of each individual’s experience are washed out. For example, Don described a sharp fall after a quick, brief rise. Others, like Alex, described each theme occupying an extended amount of time and effort. Will even described straddling the two themes, suggesting there could be a zero-slope interval, when he talked about living his “split personalities.”

Theme 3 is positioned as coming up from the bottom of the diagram because it contrasts Theme 6, in which the concept of learning shifts from meaning “learn to get my head back on straight” (as desired by the participants, when it is not outwardly imposed, in Theme 3) to “learn the rules of the game” (as required by participants’ POs, who are virtually omnipresent, in Theme 6). Themes 4 and 5, coming in from the left and right, were also described in contrast to each other; in Theme 4, the institution of jail is described as miseducative, and in Theme 5, participants’ describe jail as a place to take personal responsibility for changing one’s circumstances.

Participants described this county jail experience as one that “doesn’t teach you anything” (Theme 4) even though the purpose of confinement was that “this will teach you” (Themes 3). Participants addressed this situation by interjecting their own personal responsibility, stating, “Jail is what you make it” (Theme 5). I interpreted the notion that ‘I

will decide how jail affects my life' as the participants' contribution to "playing the game" (Theme 6) of being on paper, noting that other chances at dialogue were described as limited.

This study upheld the description of county jails as places with "no designated community-based system in place to facilitate the transition process" resources (Solomon, et al., 2008, p. 21). A 'deep confluence' of systems facilitating any education seemed a long way off, whether the participants were describing the jail or the reentry experience. Solomon and colleagues added a caveat to their own conclusion, noting that the unique nature of rural communities provides an opportunity for local county jails to "facilitate 'in-reach' from community providers to maintain relationships or begin treatment...they are well-positioned to develop productive and long-standing partnerships with other community-based service agencies," thus providing a flow of services that follows the individual from jail through reentry (p. 22). The nature of a small town being that "everyone knows each other," in other words, might help facilitate reentry.

Description of Rural Community Reentry

My first research question asks what it is like to reenter the community from a rural county jail. To follow-up, I asked a sub-question about what the community reentry experience means to the participants. The following paragraph describes the essence of the young men's rural reentry phenomenon. The text is the result of writing and reflecting on my epoche; conducting interviews with participants; working with the data through coding, analysis, and reflection; gathering significant statements and potential sub-themes and themes; checking with the participants; and expressing the participants' description of each theme in words that capture the experience and its meaning.

To be reentering a rural community as a young man who has been incarcerated at the local county jail is to be negotiating a power structure in which there are few chances for dialogue regarding applying one's own lived experience to future experiences. Reentry is a disorienting time: People are put in jail for being caught making what society has labeled a bad choice; in jail, they are not allowed to practice making choices; upon reentry, they are expected to make the right choices, thus showing they have learned their lesson.

During reentry, meaning is made as past experiences being in jail become the basis for reflection on the origin of one's situation. My interpretation, above, of what it means to reenter from jail into the community, is based on how the participants described it to me; further, I acknowledge being in jail as "a life crisis or major transition" (Mezirow, 1995, p. 50). However, participants do not describe the crisis as the antecedent to transformation. Their crisis moments ground the reentry experience, which comprises the initial phase of *getting my feet underneath me*. In addition, the experience of community reentry is marked by frustration as getting my feet underneath me may prove beneficial for some time and lead to what participants described as *slipping up while being on paper*.

My second research question asked about what types of learning are reflected in the participants' descriptions of community reentry. Several factors influence the reentry experience as a learning opportunity, both in terms of *loss* being a learning opportunity and in terms jail itself not teaching you anything. The main influence on reentry as a learning experience seems to be *maturity*: individual responsibility for one's own learning while being in jail. The length and number of times served in jail and the type of crimes committed are additional factors in the maturity of those who reenter.

Although "education" (meaning formal classwork) was somewhat dismissed as a factor in reentry by those who already had their GEDs, experiential learning was not. As Alex put it: "It's not about teaching me; it's about me learning how to deal with life."

Learning—and not just learning, but specifically prior learning (in jail)—has a unique position within the phenomenon, congruent with Dewey’s (1938/1997) concept of continuity. Meaning is described as being made during reentry as individuals try to achieve goals and attempt to realize the expectations that they have for the experience, and they describe their success as *partially* dependent on what they were able to learn in jail before release, pointing out what was *not* available to learn.

During reentry, meaning was made as past experiences of losing everything and returning to jail become the basis for reflection on the origin of one’s situation, leading to becoming mature. This study did not seek to quantify the extent to which certain participants reflected on the loss that they encountered when in jail or how mature they were. However, some participants (Alex and Will, for example) seemed to reflect more between interviews and share more about their experiences. This may be an indication of how much either had reflected on their loss and what that meant to them.

In the last research question, I ask about how participants described power relations during reentry. In this study, participants talked about *slipping up* as it was related to their deficits and the deficits of the jail, but the language of deficits does not need to be employed to talk about needs as perceived by the participant. Participants who achieved their GED pointed out how their accomplishment did not lead to gainful employment.

Evaluative statements that participants made about their identity stood out as significant to me because I interpreted them as indications that participants had engaged significantly enough with the surveillance system so as to affect how they talked about their own identity. For example, when discussing failing a urinalysis, they had adopted the

use of *dirty* as a label for themselves. Also, when they described the act of going back to jail on a technical probation violation, they identified themselves as *having been violated*. Participants presented the question of whether “slipping up” was the result of their deficits as reinforced by parole officers. In this study, participants used words like “cat and mouse game” to capture the power relationships with POs. The game seemed to be one in which the participant would not escape. Some participants expressed being in the community after reentry and having a definitive inkling that they would be returning to jail based on their perception that the game was rigged in favor of the nearly omnipresent PO who could, for example, break your door in while you are sleeping. Participants described a paranoia that serves as an example of the internalization of the omnipresent gaze that characterizes the panoptic society. In this study, participants’ perception that game is rigged is partly captured by their description of *one-way communication* from a PO, whose documents constitute *facts* that are products of the social organization of knowledge and stand in contrast to the participant’s communication—his local knowledge (Foucault, 1997/2003)—which becomes, on the other hand *his* (Smith, 1974).

Limitations

This study had a limitation by design: This study’s participants had all recidivated and were all back in jail at the time of their interviews. Thus, this study does not answer what it’s like to get out, reenter, and not return to jail, which might be a situation that holds more hope for transformation learning theory. I was influenced by my desire to find transformative learning while I designed the theoretical framework that guides this study. There is no answer as to perhaps the most critical of questions, then: whether people who *stayed out of jail* were able to exercise control over their situations or whether they “played

the game,” using the terminology of this study. Although it would add depth to the description, this study did not include data from any participant who was not on probation when he recidivated. I was not surprised that all of my participants had been on probation because the national average for jail incarceration is very high, and the vast majority of recidivism is due to technical probation or parole violations (Solomon, et al., 2008).

I have previously mentioned some limitation to the act of transcendental reduction that I have undertaken. This was an attempt to look at the essence of the phenomenon as objectively as possible; I realized it is not actually possible to remove my presuppositions from my awareness, no matter how much I attempt to bracket my thoughts. The reduction that resulted is limited in the sense that, when taken alone, the themes of *getting my feet underneath me* and *slipping up* do not adequately describe the essence of the phenomenon.

Recommendations

This study’s findings can inform rural county planning commissions and jail administrations who are developing CE reentry programs in their communities. By knowing more about the cycle of reentry and having a description of the factors affecting the reentry experience, people who are in charge of planning can consider how best to create educative experiences that include the viewpoints of people who will reenter as partners in the curricular design process. Addressing needs as described by participants in this study can be accomplished from a perspective that emphasizes strengths rather than deficits, and experiences can build upon each other for the sake of continuity.

Several factors affecting rural community reentry should be taken into consideration when planning CE programs focused on reentry. Particular to lived experiences in rural communities, participants in this study outlined obstacles that

contributed to their *slipping up*: there were few opportunities for drug and alcohol rehabilitative services; transportation to and from work was cost prohibitive; rents were expensive, leading to frequent moves and staying with relatives or friends; social relationships with old friends were difficult to avoid, as was making new friends; one's past reputation seemed to be known by the entire community; and finding gainful employment was more difficult than could be solved by obtaining a GED alone. Also in a rural community, the interaction between people who reenter and the surveillance system to which they are released may have the ability to influence experiences as more or less educative. Probation and parole officers have been identified in this study as authority figures who have the attention of the participant and, in some cases, have been petitioned to help the participant enroll in a particular educational experience.

For future CE administration and practice, I recommend that the language of deficits, as I identified it in the data and in the literature, should be used only with caution, as such language seemed to set expectations that education is a panacea or that literacy skills result in empowerment that results in people being able to set expectations and then ensure the resources and abilities to meet them. Participants had reported obtaining their GED, but they seemed more disappointed than empowered by their achievement. It is as though participants in this study experienced *tokenistic empowerment* (Prins & Drayton, 2010, p.209), not the radical adult education tradition of empowerment that leads to a positive change. Educational goals are evidently only one component in the overall picture of empowerment as a means to getting out of jail and staying out of jail. This implies the need for CE reentry programs in the tradition of radical adult education, the "best adult education traditions" (Gehring, 2012), which for a rural county jail might need to focus on

secondary and post-secondary education in conjunction with vocational education, drug and alcohol rehabilitation services, housing and employment assistance, financial literacy coursework, and other reentry-oriented educational opportunities. Thus, the findings of this study support the need for further research into *rural community reentry* as a distinct phenomenon. Needs assessments conducted at the local county level might help design reentry-focused CE programs that will help young adults in rural communities “frame purposes and... carry into effect purposes so framed” (Dewey 1938/1997, p. 67).

REFERENCES

- Ardley, B. (2005). Marketing managers and their life world: Explorations in strategic planning using the phenomenological interview. *The Marketing Review*, 5, 111-127.
- Austin, J. & Irwin, J. (2001). *It's about time: America's imprisonment binge* (3rd ed.). Toronto: Wadsworth.
- Baker, J.E. (1985). *Prisoner participation in prison power*. Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press. (Out of print).
- Brooks, L. E., Solomon, A. L., Kohl, R. K., Osborne, J. W. L., Reid, J., McDonald, M., & Hoover, H. M. (2008). *Reincarcerated: The experiences of men returning to Massachusetts prisons*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Justice Policy Center.
- Campbell, J. R. (2001). Participatory rural appraisal as qualitative research: Distinguishing methodological issues from participatory claims. *Human Organization*, (60)4, 380-389.
- Campbell, M. (2003). Dorothy Smith and knowing the world we live in. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, (30)1, 3-22.
- Chandler, M. (2005). Frequent fliers: The high demand user in local corrections. *Californian Journal of Health Promotion*, 3, 61-71.
- Chambers, R. (1994). The origins and practice of participatory rural appraisal. *World Development*, (22)7, 953-969. Retrieved from <http://entwicklungspolitik.uni-hohenheim.de>
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Choudry, A. (2010). Education, participatory action research, and social change: International perspectives. *International Education, (39)2*, 72-76.
- Clark, M. (1997). Strength-based practice: The new paradigm. *Corrections Today, (59)2*, 201-201.
- Comings, J. (2001). How literacy research can help correctional educators. *Journal of Correctional Education, (52)2*, 52-56.
- Corbett, M. (2007). *Learning to leave: The irony of schooling in a coastal community*. Halifax: Fernwood.
- Costelloe, A. (2007). Researching correctional education: Why we must advance from "research on," to "research on and for," and ultimately to "research on, for and with". *Journal of Correctional Education, (58)2*, 205-212.
- Costelloe, A. (2008). The issue of voice and validity in prison education research. In R. Wright (Ed.), *In the Borderlands: Learning to Teach in Prisons and Alternative Settings* (3rd ed.) (pp. 157-163). San Bernardino, CA: California State Univ. San Bernardino.
- Courtright, K.E., Packard, S.H., Hannan, M.J., & Brennan, E.T. (2006). *Prisons and rural Pennsylvania communities: Exploring economic impact and community satisfaction* (Final Report). Harrisburg, PA: Center for Rural Pennsylvania.
- Cranton, P. & Kasl E. (2012). A response to Michael Newman's "Calling transformative learning into question: Some Mutinous Thoughts." *Adult Education Quarterly, 62(4)*, 393-398.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Creswell, J. W. (2003). The purpose statement. In *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches* (2nd ed.) (pp. 87-104). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crime and Justice Institute. (2004). *Implementing evidence-based practices in community corrections: The principles of effective intervention*. Boston, MA: Crime and Justice Institute/National Institute of Corrections.
- Dewey, J. (1937). Democracy and Educational Administration. In J. Boydston (Ed.), *John Dewey: The Later Works: 1925-1953, Vol. 11* (pp. 217-225). Carbondale, IL: Southern IL Univ. Press.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience & Education*. New York, NY: Touchstone.
- Dewey, J. (1994). *Democracy & Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/dewey.html>.
- Englander, M. (2012). The interview: Data collection in descriptive phenomenological human scientific research. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, 43*, 13-35.
- Erlandson, D., Harris, E., Skipper, B. & Allen, S. (1993). *Doing Naturalistic Inquiry: A Guide to Methods*. Newbury Park, Ca: Sage.
- Fisher, B. (2001). Teaching literacy for lifelong learning: A new look. *The Journal of Correctional Education, 52*(2), 57-61.
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language*. New York, NY: Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1978) *The history of sexuality, vol. 1: An introduction*. New York, NY: Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline & punish: The birth of the prison*. New York, NY: Vintage

- Foucault, M. (2003). *Society must be defended: Lectures at the College de France, 1975-1976*. New York, NY: Picador.
- Freire, P. (2001). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Freire, P. (2010). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th Anniversary ed.). New York, NY: Continuum.
- Freudenberg, N., Daniels, J., Crum, M., Perkins, T., & Richie, B. (2008). Coming home from jail: the social and health consequences of community reentry for women, male adolescents, and their families and communities. *American Journal of Public Health*, 95(10), 191-202.
- Gee, J. C. (2006). Education in the rural county jail: Need versus opportunity. *The Journal of Correctional Education*, 57(4), 312-325.
- Gee, J.C. (2011). Past, present, and future programming in rural jails: A snapshot of Pennsylvania. In R. Mattucci (Ed.), *The Anthology of Vocational Education in Correctional Facilities: A Personal Perspective* (pp. 1-12). San Bernardino, CA: California State Univ. San Bernardino.
- Gehring, T. (2007). *Handbook for Correctional Education Leaders*. San Bernardino, CA: California State University.
- Gehring, T. & Eggleston, C. (2000). Democracy in prison and prison education. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 51(3), 306-310.
- Gehring, T. (2000). Recidivism as a measure of correctional education program success. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 57, 197-205.

Gehring, T. (Ed.) (2012). *Educational change in correctional institutions: An integral approach*. San Bernardino, CA: California State University.

Gehring, T., Eggleston, C., & Muth, W., (2012) Some social and cultural elements of literacy. In T. Gehring (Ed.), *Educational change in correctional institutions: An integral approach* (pp. 392-422). San Bernardino, CA: California State Univ. San Bernardino.

Gehring, T., & Eggleston, C. (2006). *Correctional education chronology*. San Bernardino, CA: California State University.

Gehring, T. & Eggleston, C. (2007). *Teaching within prison walls: A thematic history*. San Bernardino, CA: California State University.

Gehring, T. & Rennie, S. (n.d.) *What works, and why? and what doesn't work, and why?: The search for best practices in correctional education*. Retrieved from <http://coe.csusb.edu/programs/correctionalEd/documents/WhatWorks.short.pdf>

Gendreau, P. (1996). The principles of effective intervention with offenders. In A. Hartland (Ed.), *Choosing Correctional Options that Work*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Gibb, J. (1978). *Trust: A new view of personal and organizational development*. Los Angeles: Astron.

Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.

Glover, K.S., Curtis, C., & Henry, S. (2010). Preface to the special issue: Discourse, race and the state. *Western Criminology Review*, 11(1), 1-2. Retrieved from <http://wcr.sonoma.edu/v11n1/Preface.pdf>

- Golden, L., Gatchel, R., & Cahill, M. (2006). Evaluation the effectiveness of the national institute of corrections' "thinking for change" program among probationers. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 43(2), 55-73.
- Greenberg, E., Dunleavy, E., Kutner, M. & White, S. (2007). Literacy behind bars: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy Prison Survey. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1), Retrieved 01 May 2013 from http://www.ualberta.ca/~-iiqm/backissues/3_1/pdf/groenewald.pdf
- Habermas, J. (1970). *Toward a rational society: Student protest, science, and politics*. Boston: Beacon Press [German text, 1968].
- Habermas, J. (1987). *The theory of communicative action (vol. II)*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Harding, B.G. & Clem, C. (2001). *NIC research on small jail issues: Summary of findings*. Longmont, Co: National Institute of Corrections Information Center.
- Haas, S.M., Hamilton, C.A. Hanley, D. (2007). *Preparing prisoners for returning home: A process evaluation of West Virginia's offender reentry initiative*. Charleston, WV: Mountain State Criminal Justice Research Services.
- Holloway, I. (1997). *Basic concepts for qualitative research*. Oxford. Blackwell Science.
- Hycner, R. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human Studies*, 8, p. 270-303.
- Hycner, R. H. (1999). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. In A. Bryman & R. .G. Burgess (Eds.), *Qualitative research* (Vol. 3, pp. 143-164). London: Sage.

- Katsiyannis, A., Zhang, D., Barrett, D., & Flaska, T. (2004). Background and psychosocial variables associated with recidivism among adolescent males: a 3-year investigation. *Journal of emotional and behavioral disorders, 12*(1), 23-29.
- Kapoor, D. & Jordan, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Education, Participatory Action Research, and Social Change: International Perspectives*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kaiser, A. & Lewitzke, B. (2010). The attitudes of male inmates towards recidivism. *Journal of Student Research, IX*, 68-85. Retrieved from http://www.uwstout.edu/rs/upload/GCP29914A_JSR_body-2.pdf
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development: Moral stages and the idea of justice*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.
- Labov, W. (1988). Natural Narrative. In R. Scholes, N.R. Comley, & G.L. Ulmer. *Textbook* (pp. 7-11). New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Latessa, E., Smith, P., Schweitzer, M., & Lovins, L. (2009). *Evaluation of selected institutional offender treatment programs for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections*. University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice. UUID: FF3DCC79-E782-A93E-6DDA-59839714D002
- Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 2*(3). Article 3. Retrieved from http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/2_3final/html/laverty.html
- Lemert, E. (1951). *Social pathology*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Lemert, E. (1972). *Human deviance, social problems, and social control*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Luke, A. (1994). Genres of power? Literacy education and the production of capital. In R. Hansan & G. Williams (Eds.), *Literacy in Society* (308-337). London: Longview.
- Lyman, M. & LoBuglio, S. (2006). "Whys and hows" of measuring jail recidivism. Paper submitted for Jail Reentry Roundtable, Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- MacCormick, A. (1931). *The education of adult prisoners, A survey and a program*. New York: The National Society of Penal Information.
- Marsh, J.L. (1987) From immediacy to mediation: The emergence of dialectical phenomenology. In D. Weilton, & H. J. Silverman (Eds.), *Critical and Dialectical Phenomenology*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Marshall, C. and Rossman, G.B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Mattucci, R. (Ed.). (2011). *The anthology of vocational education in correctional facilities: A personal perspective*. San Bernardino, CA: California State Univ. San Bernardino.
- Mezirow, J. (1981). A Critical Theory of Adult Learning And Education. *Adult Education*, 32(1), pp. 3-24.
- Mezirow, J. (1990). *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood: A guide to transformative and emancipatory learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1995). A transformation theory of adult learning. In M. Welton, (Ed.), *In defense of the lifeworld* (p. 39 - 70). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education. (2006). *Characteristics of Excellence*. Philadelphia, PA: Author. Available at <http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX06060320124919.pdf>
- Miller v. Alabama, 132 U. S. 2455 Supreme Court of the United States. 2012. <http://www.supremecourt.gov/> Web. 22 Apr. 2014
- Morse, J.M. (1994). Designing funded qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.) (pp.220-35). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Newman, M. (2012). Calling transformative learning into question: Some mutinous thoughts. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 62(1), 36-55.
- Newman, M. (2012). Michael Newman's final comments in the forum on his article "Calling Transformative Learning Into Question: Some mutinous thoughts." *Adult Education Quarterly*, 62(4), 406-411.
- Newman, M. (2014). Calling transformative learning into question: Some mutinous thoughts revisited. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 64(4), 345-355.
- Osborne, T.M. (1924). *Prisons and common sense*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lipincott. (Out of print).
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patchin, J. W. & Keveles, G. N. (November, 2004). Alternatives to incarceration: an evidenced-based research review. Paper presented at the Northwest Wisconsin Criminal Justice Management Conference. Cable, WI. Retrieved from

http://fyi.uwex.edu/familiesandcommunities/files/2011/06/alternativesto_jailsresearchreview.pdf

Pew Center on the States. (2008) *One in One Hundred: Behind Bars in America 2008*.

Washington, DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts. Retrieved from

www.pewcenteronthestates.org/-uploadedFiles/8015PCTS_Prison08_FINAL_2-1-1_FORWEB.pdf

Pfohl, S. (1994). *Images of deviance and social change: A sociological history* (2nd ed.)

McGraw Hill: New York.

Pittman, V. (2009) Correspondence Study and the "Crime of the Century": Helen Williams,

Nathan Leopold, and the Stateville Correspondence School. *Vitae Scholasticae*, 26(2). 5-28.

Prins, E., & Drayton, B. (2010). Adult education for the empowerment of individuals and

communities. In C. E. Kasworm, A. D. Rose, & J. M. Ross-Gordon (Eds.), *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education* (pp 209-219). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Prins, E. (2010). Participatory photography: A tool for empowerment or surveillance?

Action Research, (8)4, 426-443.

Prins, E. (2005). The contradiction of the Freirean lecturer: Bridging the gap between

educational philosophy and practice. In R. J. Hill & R. Kiely (Eds.), *Proceedings of the*

46th Annual Adult Education Research Conference, pp. 351-356. Athens: University of

Georgia. Retrieved April 4, 2012, from <http://www.adulterc.org/Proceedings/2005/Proceedings/Prins.PDF>.

Raegan, M. & Stoughton, D. Eds. (1976). *School behind bars: A descriptive overview of*

correctional education in the American prison system. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.

- Reissman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Ruddell, R. & Mays, L. G. (2006). Expand or expire: Jails in rural America. *Corrections Compendium, (31)6*, 1-27.
- Ruddell, R. & Mays, L. G. (2007). Rural jails: Problematic inmates, overcrowded cells, and cash-strapped counties. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 35*, 251-260.
- Ruddell, R. & Mays, L. G. (2011). Trouble in the heartland: Challenges confronting rural jails. *International Journal of Rural Criminology, (1)1*, 105-131.
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and social sciences* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Shippen, M.E., Patterson, D., Dunn, C., Derzis, N. C., Nelson, D. J. & Houchins, D. E. (2010). An examination of the written expression skills of incarcerated males. *Journal of Correctional Education, (61)3*, 189-202.
- Scudder, K. (1952). *Prisoners are People*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday
- Smith, D. (1974). The social construction of documentary reality. *Sociological Inquiry, (44)4*, 257-268.
- Solomon, A.L., Osborne, J., LoBuglio, S., Mellow, J., & Mukamal, D. (2008). *Life After Lock-Up: Improving Reentry from Jail to the Community*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Justice Policy Center. Retrieved from www.jjay.cuny.edu/Final_Life_After_Lockup.

- St.Clair, R. & Sandlin, J. A. (2004). Incompetence and intrusion: On the metaphorical use of illiteracy in U.S. political discourse. *Adult Basic Education*, 14(1), 45-59.
- Stinchcomb, J. B. & McCampbell, S. W. (2008). *Jail leaders speak: Current and Future Challenges to Jail Administration and Operations*. Naples, FL: Center for Innovative Public Policies.
- Steurer, S. J. (2001). Historical Development of a Model for Correctional Education and Literacy. *Journal of Correctional Education*, (52)2, 47-51.
- Steurer, S.J., Smith, L,& Tracy, A. (2001). *Three state recidivism study*. Lanham, MD: Correctional Education Association.
- Vacca, J. (2004). Educated prisoners are less likely to return to jail. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 55(4), 297-305.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Canada: The Althouse Press.
- van Manen, M. (1997). *Method and meaning in human sciences*. Paper presented at Newcastle University, England.
- van Manen, M. (2007). Phenomenology of Practice. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 1, 11 – 30. Retrieved from <http://www.maxvanmanen.com/files/2011/04/2007-Phenomenology-of-Practice.pdf>
- Welton, M.R. (Ed.). (1995). *In defense of the lifeworld*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Werner, D. (1990). *Correctional education: Theory and practice*. Danville, IL: Interstate Pub.
- Wodahl, E. (2006). The challenges of prisoner reentry from a rural perspective. *Western Criminology Review*, (7)2, 32-47.

- Waters-Bayer, A. & Bayer, W. (1994). *Planning with pastoralists: PRA and More*. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit: Göttingen. Retrieved April 4, 2012, from <http://www2.gtz.de/dokumente/bib/95-0400.pdf>
- Warner, K. (1998) The "Prisoners Are People" perspective—And the problems of promoting learning where this outlook is rejected. *Journal of Correctional Education* (49)3, 118-132.
- Wilber, K. (2000a). *Integral psychology: Consciousness, spirit, psychology, therapy*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Wilber, K. (2000b). *A theory of everything: An integral vision for business, politics, science, and spirituality*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Wright, R. (2001). What the students are saying: Literacy as dwelling. *Journal of Correctional Education*, (52)2, 84-89.
- Wright, R. (Ed.) (2008). *In the Borderlands: Learning to Teach in Prisons and Alternative Settings* (3rd ed.). San Bernardino, CA: California State Univ. San Bernardino.
- Zahavi, D. (2008). *Phenomenology*. In Moran, D. (Ed.). *Routledge Companion to Twentieth-Century Philosophy* (pp. 661-692). London: Routledge. Retrieved from <http://cfs.ku.dk/staff/zahavi-publications/routledge-phenomenology.pdf/>

Appendix A – Invitational Flyer

Attention, please:

IF YOU ARE 18-24 YEARS OLD *AND* HAVE BEEN IN JAIL BEFORE
THEN I AM ASKING YOU TO BE IN A RESEARCH STUDY.
THIS STUDY IS APPROVED BY PENN STATE FOR USE TOWARD MY
PHD.

Researcher Name: Jeremiah C. Gee

Name of Research Project: A Study of Reentry from County Jails to Rural
Communities

Next week, I will call the 18-24 year-old men off the block so that they can ask me questions and learn about this research study. If any of you have been in jail before, then I will ask you to volunteer to participate in the study.

The purpose of this research is to describe what young men say it is like to leave a rural county jail and return to the community. Any 18-24 year-old men who have already been in jail are being asked to volunteer for Mr. Gee to interview them. This research is being used by Mr. Gee to fulfill his dissertation requirements for a PhD from Penn State. Mr. Gee used to be the GED teacher here at TCP. He has also researched at this jail before and published it in *American Jails* magazine, among other places.

If anyone would like more information or would like to talk to Jeremiah Gee, then you can also print your name below and he will call you off the block.

[SPACE FOR SIGNATURES]

I will try to call every 18-24 year-old male off the block next week to confirm that you had the opportunity to sign up for this research study. All men in this age have the opportunity to participate. If you have not heard from me, then please fill out a request form or ask one of the COs to let me know you want to see me. Thank you.

Appendix B – Invitational Letter

Hello,

My name is Jeremiah Gee. From time to time, I teach GED classes here at TCP. When I was getting my master's degree at Mansfield University, I conducted a research study at TCP. Now I am a PhD candidate at Penn State, and I would like to do another research study.

If you're willing, I'd like you to participate in this study. You would need to come off the block four times and talk to me about your experiences going back and forth between the jail and the community. My research question simply asks "What is it like to leave jail around here?"

I'd like you to tell me what it is like. I am specifically asking young men what it is like because you are left out of the research literature. This means that people designing learning experiences for you don't know your story. I believe that the best education is based on local knowledge, and that's why the purpose of my research is to explain the experiences you've lived through.

If you'd like to talk to me, all you need to do is come off the block when I call you down a couple days from now. You can also write back to me to let me know a good time. I will pick up any notes from the front desk when I come in to meet with folks.

Thank you,

Jeremiah Gee

Appendix C – Bracketing Manifest

I believe...

- That all people change all the time.
- “Development” (socially, psychologically, educationally, etc.) is a wholistic process that cannot be “paused”; however, it can be “shifted” because it occurs on a continuum from increasingly *pro-social* to increasingly *anti-social*, with “benign” somewhere in an elusive middle. The use of the word *benign* is salient because I equate “pro” and “anti” social with helpfulness on one hand and harmfulness on the other. That is, “pro-social” would be defined as the extent to which one behaves in a way that helps the greatest amount of community members. Certainly, using the word “help” denotes my assumptions that selfishness can be harmful and that altruism is an ideal.
- We can talk about development within all sorts of contexts... e.g., fostering community capacity is an indicator of prosocial development at the level of an entire community.
- A person’s development affects their continually evolving identity in the community. People affect their communities’ development. [Reference role theories, later.] The corollary is true: A community’s development affects its constituents’ (stakeholders’) ability to develop.
- Furthermore, because development cannot be stopped, it is dependant on time. Over the course of a lifetime, “personal epochs” of development occur.
- One’s identity in the community, then, is dependent on (a) one’s communal environment’s level of development, and (b) the personal epoch, which breaks down according to various elements of time—age, length of time in community, length of time expected to be in a given community, etc.
- [Example of link between development and environment, take a minute to think about a particularly important period in your life: you will most likely have set the parameter for that period by a place you lived or a person you knew, (or, for some people, a period of personal growth).]
- Because development of identity is dependent on one’s environment (and vice versa) and time, people who experience unique environments are bound to have unique experiences.
- For example, in an “antisocial” environment, one will have more antisocial experiences, and one may develop more “antisocial” behaviors. (This reasoning is based on classic social psychologists’ work (Bandura, e.g.).
- The occurrence of incarceration gives an opportunity to internalize the identity of “inmate”, which carries with it a pre-defined expectation for behavior, coupled with profound differentials in social “power” and social “capital”.
- These differentials foster an adoption of an identity (i.e., e.g., “inmate” or “CO”) that is reinforced by an environment where one’s locus of control is largely subservient to a higher, external locus of control.

- This situation causes a profound opportunity for fostering future antisocial behavior.
- However, corrections is based on a critical assumption that—somehow—incarceration is “good” or “works” [this is based on our society’s fascination with incarcerating people, use Life after Lockup stats]
- If corrections is NOT based on an assumption that it is “good” or that it “works”, then why do we do it? [answer could be that it is embedded within our national-through-local community systems & structures... answer could also be that somebody is making money, somewhere, and can cite the luzerne co judges as an example.]
- Because development is also time-dependent, we find unique points in the time sequence of the corrections process, usually marked by questions, (first time in? for how long?)...
- Comparing these questions across age groups yields subcategories of age by point in time in corrections process.
- That those with less “social capital” are exploited by the criminal justice system and incarcerated at rates above those with higher social “standing”.
- That education is one way to increase social capital.
- That education is not a panacea for remedying criminal behavior; people who are educated commit crimes that are just as egregious as those who are uneducated—and perhaps even worse because they “know better”.
- That “program” is one piece of the complicated puzzle referred to as “successful reentry” and any reentry attempt focused solely on one aspect of reentry is bound to have limited success.
- That, even if a person has all of the motivation in the world, the current structure of systems in our rural communities does not foster an environment where change can readily occur.
- That administering programs inside the “revolving doors” of county jails is logistically more difficult than administering them in state facilities where populations are more static.
- That, despite this increase in logistical difficulty, county jails do not receive funding/support from state or federal corrections systems.
- That reentry is a process, not a one-shot occurrence.
- that rural counties’ constituents are more susceptible to negative effects of incarceration due to their comparative lack of resources;
- for this reason, community stakeholders need to be able to make effective and efficient decisions about program opportunities. [could sidetrack to talk about the using stakeholder input into design of study]
- reliance on “recidivism rate” comparisons for primary program analysis is problematic, given the lack of standardization for the term.
- that attainment of goals of service (or “service goals”) should serve as a metric of “successful” reentry programs.

- Service goals should be defined by inquiries into needs and opportunities, both “perceived” and “observed”.
- This process would include identifying the needs of stakeholders, both quantitatively and qualitatively; it would include structural analyses of community systems & structures.
- The process would therefore involve stakeholders, and stakeholders would effectively define the “service goals.”
- Stakeholders for county corrections:
 - that community support upon release is vital to successful reentry;
 - programs that “begin” or make “first contact” inside a correctional facility meet their service goals at higher rates than extant reliance on human services agencies (using that term in a very generic sense).
- Therefore, jails should partner with community members who have the resources to continue serving those who have been incarcerated upon their release.
- Pre-release programming that is focused on sustainable post-release continuation has proven to be an effective programming structure in non-rural jails.

I want to believe...

- that those who receive an education while incarcerated in county jails are less likely to recidivate;
- that positive outside community involvement before, during, and after reentry will lead to lower recidivism rates;
- that people who are motivated to minimize their criminal behavior because they become incarcerated are capable of maintaining that motivation upon reentry;
- that holistic reentry programs can be developed, and that understanding the phenomenon of programming’s effect on reentry will be useful in developing such programs.
- that unrevealed and untapped resources for building community capacity currently exist in rural counties.

I do not want to believe:

- that any person is “beyond” the point where success is not possible; we all can make gains.
- that incarceration is an inescapable cycle.
- that there is a “culture” of incarceration, meaning that there is something about one’s culture that “draws” them to jail.

Appendix D – Interview Materials

Interview Scripts and Protocol

Overview: There are four meetings minimum to complete the interview process for each participant. The first is the preliminary meeting. The next two are the reentry interviews. The fourth is a participant check. Each interview is described below with a script for beginning and ending the interviews. The scripts and questions below refer to additional documents that have been uploaded: “journal/writing/drawing protocol” and “interview data gathering forms.”

Preliminary Meeting

The researcher calls the potential participant off the block as per the letter written in the recruitment protocol. Potential participants are called down one-by-one by providing the Central Control with the person’s name. Then, the researcher waits in the interview room until the person arrives. The first meeting is divided into three parts, as follows:

1. Introduction and Informed Consent

- Introduction of researcher and explain interest in correctional education.
- After explaining the research purpose, goals, and methodology, obtain informed consent.

2. Current Situation

- Obtain a sense of for how long the participant will be in jail and outside contact details for follow-up.
- Ask basic demographic information, hometown, family, and social relationships.
- Ask for abbreviated life history; probe questions to focus on educational experiences.
- Ask for description of what life what like immediately to arrest and circumstances of arrest.

3. Next Meeting

- Explain purpose of next meeting: the reentry interview.
- Ask participant to prepare for the interview by reflecting on the question: In what sorts of situations did you find yourself when you reentered?
- Provide participant with pencil and paper to use for diagraming thoughts, drawing, writing creatively, or any other activity that would help describe what reentry was like for them.

Script for each part above:

Preliminary Meeting, Part 1.

Hi, I'm Jeremiah, the guy from Penn State that sent you a letter about participating in a research study. Is now a good time to talk to you for a little while?

I'd like to tell you about the study and walk through a form with you that I would ask you to sign to show you are willing to participate in the study. Then, we'd set up three more meetings. This might take up to an hour. Okay?

First, a little bit about me... [provide basic information like name, prior research in correctional education, prior work teaching at this jail, and the educational and professional background that appear on my vitae].

Any questions?

Next, a little bit about this research study. I'd like to walk through the form I mentioned that I will ask you to sign. It is called an informed consent form. It explains the research I am doing, and you can ask questions at any time. I will review it quickly, and then we will go back through each section, okay?

[Using the informed consent form, explain that I am specifically asking young men what it is like to reenter a community, specifically a rural community, after having been in jail. Explain that the purpose of my research is to inform people who designing learning experiences for correctional education programs in county jails, specifically reentry programs. Explain that I want to use a video recorder to record our interviews, which will be more like conversations, and that I will provide pencil and paper for any writing that the participant would like to do about the topic of reentry between our meetings.

Explain the contents of the IRB application, how the confidentiality of the participant's story will be protected, and how it will be described alongside the stories of others in publications and educational sessions (if the participant consents). Finally, explain that there is no benefit other than receiving paper and pencils, and no benefit as far as parole or court cases are concerned, and that the commitment involves four meetings total, including this meeting.]

Do you want to participate in this study?

If you would please check the boxes that describe how you feel about this study, then I would appreciate it. [Walk through the check-boxes on informed consent form.]

Preliminary Meeting, Part 2.

Over the next few minutes, I want to ask you a series of questions to get a sense of how we might be able to set up our next meetings based on what your experiences have been so far.

Would you mind telling me where you are from?

What family relationships do you have?

What friends do you have?

Where did you go to school?

What is a brief timeline of how you ended up in jail in the first place?

What happened when you were let out of jail?

How long have you been here? How long will you be here?

It's important for me to tell you now that in addition to receiving a copy of the informed consent form, I am also going to give you my contact information in case you are released. That way, we can continue our conversations. Getting out neither helps nor hurts the research. Also, participating in the research neither helps nor hurts you. It is important that I ask you not to use your participating in this study as way to try to impress a judge or a probation officer. I can't force you not to do that, but I can ask that you respect this as one request I make of you. Is that okay?

Do you have any questions?

Preliminary Meeting, Part 3

Now I'd like to thank you for your time and wrap up this meeting. I want you to know that I am seriously thankful for your participating in this study. I have a lot of respect for people who are willing to share their experiences with someone else, and I imagine it feels a bit like being in a documentary. I don't want you to worry about giving the "right" answer or a "good" answer. I promise I will respect your story at all times, and I encourage you to tell me what is important to you.

Over the next two meetings, I will ask you to focus on your experiences when you reentered the community. I will then interview other people and also do some writing. Our final meeting will be for you to read and review what I wrote so far.

So, when would be a good time for us to schedule the next two interviews? Are there certain times of the day or certain days we should avoid? [Conversation about schedules.]

Reentry Interview #1 will be at _____.

Reentry Interview #2 will be at _____.

For the next meeting, I wanted to leave you with some paper and a pencil. Of course, you can do whatever you want with the paper, but I was wondering if you would use it to sketch some ideas about the types of situations you encountered when you left jail the first time. Anything that comes to mind will give us a starting point for our conversation next time. In past research, I've had participants who draw pictures instead of write. I've also had participants

who show me lyrics or poetry or other creative writing as a way to answer some questions. So, you can use this paper for whatever you want in that regard. You could also suggest topics for us, or list any sorts of important events that you recall. And if you don't use it for anything, that's fine, too.

Do you have any questions?

Okay, then, thanks again. See you on _____.

[End of Preliminary Meeting]

The First and Second Reentry Interviews

These interviews follow the same pattern. The interview questions will consist of main questions and probing questions. (See below.) After the participant is called from the block each time, there is small talk. Each begins with a reintroduction and a check for understanding of this interview's purpose.

Script for Reentry Interviews:

Hello, [small talk].

So, we're here to discuss what reentry from the jail to the community is like. Did you happen to write/draw/sketch anything since we last saw each other?

[Use any materials constructed by the participant to generate probing questions regarding meaningful experiences in order to more fully describe the phenomenon. Follow up on factors that are relevant to education, either as needs or opportunities. Typical questions are listed below.]

What are some of the meaningful experiences that you had when you reentered? What happened?

[Ask probing questions to follow up on the dimensions of the situations being described such as:]

What sorts of opportunities did you have?

What happened? [If applicable: Do you want to draw a picture/map?]

Who was involved? [If applicable: Do you want to diagram who knows who?]

Where was that? [If applicable: Do you want to draw a picture/map?]

When was that? [If applicable: Do you want to make a timeline?]

Could you tell me more about...? Do you want paper?

[Ask additional probing questions to investigate factors that affect the phenomenon:]

What did you do when... ?

*What was it like when...?
How did you know how to...?
What do you mean by that?*

[Near end of interview:]

[For First Reentry Interviews: *So, we are about out of time. I'd like to end this interview the way that we did last time, with me giving you some paper and a pencil so that you can use it to record any thoughts that you have about this conversation or the topic of reentry. How does that sound?*

[For Second Reentry Interviews: *So, we are about out of time. I'd like to end this interview the same way that we have ended our other ones. I will give you some paper and a pencil, and you can write down anything that comes to mind. I have also given you my contact information in case you are released. I will still be around the jail for interviews, so please do not hesitate to let me know if you think of something important, and we can plan our last interview. In the last interview, you will look at the first draft of what I am writing for my final paper.*]

Thanks again for your time. I have you down for finishing up on _____. Does that still work?

Okay. See you then. Thank you.

[End of Reentry Interview]

Participant Check Interviews

[Participant checks are one meeting, minimum, dedicated to partnering with the participant in a conversation about the interpretations that I am beginning to draw from the descriptions.]

Script:

So, we're here to discuss how I've written the description what it's like to reenter the community from a county jail. It's been _____ weeks since we last saw each other. I have done some writing, but I wanted to first let you have an opportunity to share anything that you wanted to beforehand.

[Conversation about whether or not the participant has anything to share.]

[Review the writing, asking the following probing questions:]

Does this sound like what you were saying?

Did that affect you later on? / Was that memorable? (How so?/Why not?)

Did you always act/think/feel that way?/ Has this changed over time?

[If the participant has more feedback than an hour, the researcher will then schedule a follow-up to repeat this interview. Interviews can occur through May, when the writing is complete.]

Thanks again for your participation in this study. Please contact me if you have any follow-up thoughts.

Appendix E – Informed Consent


Informed Consent Form for Social S
 The Pennsylvania State University

ORP OFFICE USE ONLY	
DO NOT REMOVE OR MODIFY	
IRB#44292 Doc. #1001	
The Pennsylvania State University	
Institutional Review Board	
Office for Research Protections	
Approval Date:	12/16/13 TLK
Expiration Date:	11/20/14 TLK

Title of Project: *A Study of Reentry from C
to Rural Communities*

Principal Investigator: *Mr. Jeremiah Gee*
363 Cummings Creek Road
Wellsboro, PA 16935
(570) 439-9429 (Cell)
(570) 376-2838 (Home)
schoolaintsobad@yahoo.com

Advisor: *Dr. Melody Thompson*
409E Keller Building
Penn State University
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 863-0614
mmt2@psu.edu

- 1. What is this research study about? Purpose of the Study:** You are being asked to take part in a research study. The purpose of this research is to describe what young men say it has been like to leave a rural county jail and return to the surrounding the community. Any men who have already been at this jail are being asked to take part in this study if they are between the ages of 18 and 24. This research is a part of the school work that is required for the researcher (Mr. Gee) to receive his PhD from Penn State. Mr. Gee will share the results of the study with his advisor and some of the professors at Penn State. He might also publish the research so that others can find out what it is like to leave a jail and go back to the community. This research might help to create programs that help people stay out of jail after they return to their community.
- 2. What will happen? Research Procedures:** This research uses interviews to find out what it is like to leave jail and go back to the community. The interviews will be like conversations between you and the researcher (Mr. Gee). You will be asked to talk about what your life was like before, during, and after you were in jail. Then, Mr. Gee will think about what you said, and he will write about it. Mr. Gee will then show you what he wrote and give you a chance to tell him your thoughts about his writing.

Also, Mr. Gee will give you some paper and a pencil after each interview in case you think of anything else that you want to share with him. You can write or draw on this paper as a way of telling what it is like to leave jail and go back to the community. Mr. Gee will ask you questions about what you write or draw, and you will have time to explain it during your next meeting. You can also write or draw during the interviews to help answer Mr. Gee's questions or to explain a story that you might tell. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to Mr. Gee's questions.

Mr. Gee will be taking notes during the interview. These are notes that Mr. Gee writes to himself to help him remember what the interview was like. You may look at Mr. Gee's notes at any time if you would like to.

Mr. Gee will never use your name when telling others about this research. You will be able to make your own code name, and Mr. Gee will use the code name that you choose instead of your real name.

Mr. Gee would like to record the interviews so that he does not forget what you say. After he leaves, he will type what you said during the interview because it will help him pay close attention to what you said. Mr. Gee will keep the audio visual recordings until this study is completed, and then he will destroy them. Mr. Gee will not keep the recordings for more than five years after you sign this form, and the only other person that he will let see the recordings is his advisor. He will keep the recordings on his computer in folder that is protected by a password.

Below are some questions for you to answer. These questions tell Mr. Gee that you either do or do not give him your permission to record the interviews using a digital camera. Please place an X in the box that matches how you want to take part in this research study.

Do you give Mr. Gee permission to make recordings of the interviews using a digital camera?

- I agree** that recordings may be made of my participation in this research study.
- I do not want** recordings to be made of my participation in this research study.

Mr. Gee might want to use a part of your interview during presentations. For example, Mr. Gee might go to a conference and give a presentation where people talk about jail, prison, or education research.

Do you give Mr. Gee permission to use parts of your interview recordings at educational presentations?

- I agree** that segments of my interview recordings may be used for conference presentations.
- I do not want** segments of my interview recordings to be used for conference presentations.

3. **Discomforts and Risks:** There are no known risks to participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Some of the questions are personal or might cause discomfort, but you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.
4. **Benefits:** You are not expected to benefit from participating in this research, but it may make you feel better by telling your story or by having time away from the cell block.

Taking part in this study will not help you with probation or parole, and you will not receive any special treatment if you take part in this study.

Society may benefit from your participation in this research because the research might be used to help create programs for people leaving jail. Most criminal justice research is about prisons,

not county jails, so this research study might also lead to more research that is focused specifically on county jails.

5. **Duration/Time:** The first meeting (today) will last about an hour. At the end of this meeting, Mr. Gee will schedule a time to come back for the first and second interviews. These interviews will last about an hour, but they can be longer if you would like to talk more than that. After these two interviews, Mr. Gee will write about what you said and schedule a time to come back and show you what he wrote. That meeting will also last about an hour. All meetings should be finished within about one month.

If you get out of jail before the meetings are finished, then you can still take part in the research. Please contact Mr. Gee using the address, phone numbers, or email on the first page of this form.

If the jail is on lockdown or if Mr. Gee misses an appointment because he cannot access the jail or because you do not come off the block when called, then Mr. Gee will attempt to contact you the following day.

6. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Your participation in this research is confidential. This means that Mr. Gee will not talk about your interview with anyone in a way that identifies who you are. Your name will not be written on any documents or research reports or used in any presentations. You may choose a code name of your own, and Mr. Gee will use your code name when talking about your interviews. The interview recordings will be stored and secured on his laptop in a file that is protected by a password. Any writing or drawing that you do or that Mr. Gee does will be kept in a filing cabinet in Mr. Gee's locked home office. The Pennsylvania State University's Office for Research Protections, the Institutional Review Board and the Office for Human Research Protections in the Department of Health and Human Services may review records related to this research study. Mr. Gee's advisor may ask to see any of his records. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared. Jail staff does not have access to your interview recordings or anything that you write.

It is understood that confidentiality DOES NOT extend to actions that would lead to an escape or to physical harm of the inmate or of another person. The researcher, if told during the interviews of an escape, suicide, assault or drug use, MUST pass this on to the prison administration.

7. **Right to Ask Questions:** If you have any questions, then you may ask Mr. Gee at any time. You may contact Mr. Gee on his cell phone at (570) 439-9429 with questions, complaints or concerns about this research. You may use an Inmate Request Form to contact Mr. Gee if you are unable to make a phone call. You may also contact Mr. Gee's advisor and/or the warden of this jail if you have any questions, complaints, or concerns. You can also let the warden know if you feel this study has harmed you by filling out an Inmate Request Form according to the policy of Tioga County's jail. If you have any questions, concerns, or problems about your rights as a research participant or if you would like to offer input, please contact The Pennsylvania State University's Office for Research Protections (ORP) at (814) 865-1775. The ORP cannot answer questions about research procedures. Questions about research procedures can be answered by Mr. Gee.
8. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to be in this research is 100% voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise. No one will hold it against you if you want to drop out of this study.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, then please sign your name and indicate the date below.

Mr. Gee will make a photocopy of this consent form and bring it back to you for your records. He will also keep a copy for his own records. If you lose your copy, Mr. Gee can provide you with a new copy. If you lose Mr. Gee's contact information, then Tioga County's jail can provide you with that information because Mr. Gee has given the jail permission to give out his cell phone number.

Participant Signature

Today's Date

Person Obtaining Consent

Today's Date

Appendix F – Memo Template
Interview Data Gathering Forms (Used by the Researcher)

During each interview, the researcher will take notes as follows:

Observational notes (ON) — 'what happened notes' deemed important enough to the researcher to make. Bailey (1996) emphasises the use of all the senses in making observations.

Theoretical notes (TN) — 'attempts to derive meaning' as the researcher thinks or reflects on experiences.

Methodological notes (MN) — 'reminders, instructions or critique' to oneself on the process.

Analytical memos (AM) — end-of-a-field-day summary or progress reviews.

Note-taking form:

	Observational	Theoretical	Methodological	Analytical
Hearing:		The meaning of the description	Reminders:	End of interview— Summary of progress:
Feeling:			Instructions:	
Seeing:			Critique:	
Smelling:				
Tasting:				

VITA
JEREMIAH COMPTON GEE

EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania State University PhD, Adult Education; State College, PA; May, 2015
Dissertation: *Here and back again: Reentry from a rural county jail as a learning experience*
Mansfield University of Pennsylvania MS, Education; Mansfield, PA; May, 2006; Thesis: *Rural correctional education: A look at education in rural PA county correctional facilities*
Nyack College Manhattan Center BS, Psychology; New York, NY; May, 2004

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Mansfield University, Mansfield, PA (Nov 2014–Present)
Interim Director of Assessment and Academic Program Development
Mansfield University, Education and Special Education Department (2012–14)
Assistant Professor and Education Accreditation Coordinator
Pennsylvania College of Technology, Williamsport, PA (2006–2010)
Outcomes Assessment Specialist and Adjunct Instructor

SELECTED RECOGNITIONS & COMMUNITY SERVICE

David H. Nicholson Fellow, Pennsylvania State University, (2010-11 & 2011-12)
Member, Board of Directors, Transition Living Center, Inc., Williamsport, PA (2008-2010)
GED Instructor, Tioga County Prison, Wellsboro, PA (2006-Present)
Member, The Correctional Education Association, Region I (2004-2010)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Gee, J.C. (2011). Past, present, and future programming in rural jails: A snapshot of Pennsylvania. In B. Matucci (Ed.), *The anthology of vocational education in correctional facilities: A personal perspective* (pp. 1-28). San Bernardino: CSU.

Gee, J. C. (2010, 09 January). *The impact of education in correctional facilities*. Presentation at the International Conference on Education. Honolulu, HI.

Gee, J. C. (2009, 27 February). *Streamline and sustain assessment at all institutional levels*. Presentation at the Association of American Colleges and Universities Network for Academic Renewal. Baltimore, MD.

Close, B. J. & Gee, J. C. (2009, January/February). Unlocking correctional education for jails: Step 1. *American Jails*, 22, 34-37.

Gee, J.C. (2008, December). *Education and county corrections: The community connection*. CREC Works. Center on Rural Education and Communities. University Park, PA.

Gee, J.C. (2008, 10 Sept.). *Reentry strategies for urban and rural counties*. Presentation at PA Department of Corrections Reentry Seminar for County Officials. State College, PA.

Gee, J.C. (2008, 20-21 April). *The matrix: A big picture perspective on continuous improvement*. Presentation at the University of Indianapolis. Indianapolis, IN.

Gee, J.C. (2008, 17 April). Education and programming in PA's rural county correctional facilities—A broad overview. Presentation at the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Bureau of Education Annual Correctional Education Conference. Altoona, PA.

Gee, J. C. (2007, May/June). Last name last. *American Jails*, 21, 29-31.

Gee, J. C. (2006). Education in the rural county jail: Need versus opportunity. *The Journal of Correctional Education*, 57(4). 312-325.