

PUNISHMENT, LABOR AND SOCIETY:

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF PRISON INDUSTRIES IN MICHIGAN



Michael Durfey
Advisor: Richard Perry

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Abstract

Scholarship on prison labor has typically been limited to broad historical analyses and the role of convict leasing, privatization, and the early 19th and mid 20th-century. In an attempt to respond to the lack of analysis in shifts in more contemporary labor practices in United States prisons, this paper addresses shifting trends in labor practices in Michigan during brief periods in the early 20th, late 20th, and early 21st-Centuries. It examines how penal labor practices have evolved over time in Michigan, particularly Michigan State Prison of Southern Michigan, and compares these findings to demographic and economic trends. Looking at these shifts in the context of certain incarcerative ideals provides an opportunity to investigate shifting rationalities for punishment practices and the rehabilitative justification for prison labor. The theories of Wauquant, Foucault, Durkheim and Marx, are utilized as a framework through which to help explain shifting trends in labor practices.

I plan to first analyze the historical socioeconomic foundation of labor as an essential component in citizenship. Next, institutional records, secondary sources, and legal records related to issues of labor will be used to investigate shifts in labor trends and racial demographics in Michigan. I then plan to investigate if the leading theoretical works I have mentioned can help explain these shifts. Investigating the effect of early 21st-century deindustrialization lends an insightful point on which to draw out and explain contemporary trends in punishment.

Introduction

Prisons across the US are above actual capacity. Prisons have increased in incarceration rate by eight times since the 1980s, while at the same time the violent crime rate has remained relatively steady since 1972 and has dropped significantly since the early 1990s. The property crime rate, has in a similar fashion, dropped significantly since the early 1970s. As the FBI's most recent publication on crime rates has shown, violent and property crime rates on the whole have dropped for the 8th straight year and have had a declining trend previously.

A trend of mass incarceration coupled with declining crime rates can similarly be seen in Michigan, where the total number of crimes committed has dropped from 630,640 in 1981 to 316,661 in 2010. While Michigan has had a drop in its inmate population by more than 7,000 inmates since 2007, its inmate population is still about 300% of what it was in 1981. Yet, Michigan's population as a whole has increased only by about 9% since 1981—from 9.2 million in 1981 to 9.8 million currently.¹

Why has there been such an increase in the incarceration rate, despite drops in crime rates, and why has this been able to continue despite having little effect on crime? What role does labor, as a practice of imprisonment, play in the shift to mass incarceration? How does shifting labor practices interact with shifting demographics and economic trends? What role does the rehabilitative ideal, as part of the purpose of labor, have in these shifts? In this paper, I intend to elaborate on these questions. I will focus on the topic of labor as a method of punishment in Michigan, using the theories of Wacquant, Durkheim, Marx and Foucault as a theoretical framework to aid me in explaining these shifts.

¹ <http://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/mi190090.txt>

Investigating shifts in labor, in relation to demographic and economic shifts, will lend insight into the extent to which Michigan's penal system mirrors, as Marx termed it, "modes of production." The original model of Big House prisons, which I will explain, was based on the internal dynamics of the prison mirroring the economic model on the outside. This was seen as necessary to provide an opportunity for inmates to find employment upon release. To what extent are elements of this mode of incarceration still with us today?

Most Americans know little about the prison system. Prisons are located in remote, rural areas that are far removed from everyday life. Part of the explanation, as contemporary scholars have shown, comes from constitutive theories of law—that law defines social categories, such as criminals, and this shapes perceptions of criminals. This labeling mechanism can help explain why prisoners are at the outskirts of the consideration of the general public in terms of humane prison conditions.

However, politicians may also frame criminals, as Jonathan Simon has shown. The Reagan era "tough on crime" movement and the appeal of long sentences can attest to the classification of criminals as simply part of a separate category—not as normal persons. From the moment suspected criminals are picked up by law enforcement they are subject to a process that has been described as a punishment itself (Feeley, *The Process...*). Framed as criminals, the "prisoner label," they are subject to what is referred to as "civic death"—an exile from society, a subjection to a subordinate status, and a system of punishment that has been increasingly inhumane and punitive (Alexander, *The New...*).

Despite the extension of aspects of the civil rights movement into the penal realm, what James B. Jacobs refers to as a movement of prisons from "society's periphery toward its center"

in the 1970s, as many penal scholars have pointed out, the U.S. prison system is still today ineffective, costly, and inhumane. Michigan is no exception to these notions.

Many sources point to the brutal environment of prison systems in Michigan. For example, a recent study done in 2010 at the University of Michigan found that more than 20% of the state's prisoners, or about 10,000 inmates of a total of 45,000 had severe mental disabilities and 65% of those receive no treatment. Furthermore, the use of tasers has just been authorized in December of 2011 in 5 prisons and is subsequently being expanded across the prison system as a whole.² In 2006, the use of solitary confinement resulted in the death of a 21 year old mentally ill inmate at the Southern Michigan Correctional Facility in Jackson, a division of the State Prison of Southern Michigan. He was found under four point restraints in a cell lying naked in his own urine with temperatures rising higher than 100 degrees.

While Michigan prisons do have their fair share of cruel tendencies, it is, on the other hand, generally considered representative of a Northern region variation in punishment that is more progressive and lenient than the South, such as the "Sunbelt," which Mona Lynch points out in her research. Lynch, in her work, finds that Arizona acts as a leader of a penal movement with "deeply held roots of penal harshness and less eligibility" (Lynch, 216). Perkinsons, in his work, similarly finds that Southern traditions of punishment, particularly Texas, stand in sharp contrast to Northern ones. Northern penitentiaries were influenced by 19th-century idealists such as Benjamin Rush, who noted that penitentiaries were "designed to restore the vicious part of mankind to virtue and happiness," largely through the minimization of idleness (Perkinsons).

² <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2012/mar2012/tase-m10.shtml>

Texas is by far more punitive and extracts more labor from its prisoners than Michigan. Texas is the leader of incarceration in the South with the highest prison population in the United States at 176,000, while Michigan has 43,225 prisoners as of September 23rd, 2011.³ Texas also leads Michigan in prison industries. Texas has the highest number of private prisons in all the United States at more than seventy, while Michigan has avoided private prisons since the failure of the Baldwin prison in the mid 1990s—however, one is under construction today.⁴ In 2009, Texas had forty-three factories in its state prisons that produced a total of \$95 million in total sales—more than double that of Michigan in both the number of factories and sales. While Michigan may seem like an extreme form of using prison industries for profit, clearly other states have far outpaced it.

The Development of Jackson Prison

Labor has been used as a method of punishment since the development of the first modern prisons in the early 1800s. Big House prisons, developed in the 1920s, represent a 20th-century peak of industrial prisons. Jackson prison, the precursor to the State Prison of Southern Michigan, is considered a quintessential Big House prison of the early 19th-century. The idea behind the Big House prison was that the industrial model on the inside would mirror the industrial model on the outside, supplementing it in production at low costs, generating revenue for the state, and disciplining inmates—making them ready for “success on the outside.” The model for Jackson prison, and Big House prisons like it, came from one of first modern prisons.

³ <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p09.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.texasprisonbidness.org/map>, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/eric-lotke/private-prisons_b_1307376.html

The first modern prisons emerged in the 1820s. Auburn State Prison and Eastern State Penitentiary are generally considered to be the first modern prisons in the United States. The legacy of the American Revolution produced an environment in which practices found to be inefficient were reconceptualized and redesigned with new rationalizations. These prisons were a product of the integration of a newfound rationality into the failing institutions of the early 19th-century. Both prisons utilized solitary confinement, but Eastern State Penitentiary more so (Rubin, Lec. Spr, '10). Auburn featured collective, productive and factory style labor that had to be done without speaking a word, while Eastern State Penitentiary featured isolated, workshop-style labor. The working of prisoners in the Auburn style quickly became a central aspect in early reformation of prisons (Walker). The first prison in Michigan, Jackson prison, was based on the Auburn style penitentiary.

The contract system of prison labor, the most popular form of prison labor in the early 19th-century, allowed private contractors to employ the work of prison inmates within the prison walls and under the direction and supervision of private contractors. The fact that prison administrators could contract out the labor of prisoners, instilling discipline and hard work on the convict, while reforming the convict and easing the financial burdens of prisons, became sought-after by public officials in 19th-century prison management (Bright).

Later, a form of prison labor referred to as “piece price” developed, which shifted the supervision of prison laborers back to prison officials. However, prison labor was still being exploited from prisoners in order to ease the cost of prisons. Thus, both the Eastern and Auburn systems, as well as the southern convict lease system functioned through forced labor. “Prisons were seen as a black box, controlled by labor,” notes Jonathan Simon (Lec. Spr, 2010).

Mass production of prison-made goods for sale on the free market was a major form of profit for state institutions in Michigan as early as the 1840s (Bright, 73). In the early 20th-century, private contractors were brought into prisons to more efficiently manage prison industry, and they indeed succeeded. This was a contested issue, however, ever since the 1850s because the exploitation of cheap prison labor to manufacture goods for a competitive free market presented unfair competition for many private industries. Eventually, when construction began at Jackson prison in 1924, at the height of the “big house” era, industry was limited to state management. At a time when Michigan was both at the leading edge of the post-war economic boom in the country and when increasing crime rates, mainly as a result of prohibition and a “get tuff attitude,” in tandem with the overhaul of the parole system in 1921, lead to dramatically increased imprisonment rates (Bright, 43).

When construction was completed, Jackson prison was the largest prison in the world. It covered an area of fifty-seven acres and contained enough cell space for around 5,500 inmates (43). Originally Michigan authorities had planned to build only 1,500 cells, but noticed that prisoners everywhere were filling up with violators of the prohibition laws. Furthermore, officials calculated that the larger the prison, the cheaper it would be to house each prisoner, thus creating a larger prison population.⁵

Not only was Jackson prison the largest in the world, but it was also built to be economically profitable. By 1926 Jackson prison was at the leading edge of innovation in prisons. It generated its own heat and electricity, operated its own water and sewage treatment facilities, and offered a variety of amenities to its inmates such as a post office, newspaper, and

⁵ Martin, John Bartlow. *Break down the Walls; American Prisons: Present, Past, and Future*. New York: Ballantine, 1954. Print.

radio station; a hospital, dentist, library, theater, bank, telephone system, bakery, garage, laundry, dairy, barber shop, tailors, printers, carpenters, retail stores, school and churches (Bright, 33). It also had several farms on either state owned or leased land, raising most of its own vegetables and meat (33).

The Depression made it increasingly difficult for prison officials to defend the model of industrial penology against the weight of the rising number of unemployed. Industry in prisons was limited to in-state commerce in 1929 with the passage of the Federal Hawes Cooper Act. Still, Harry Hulbert, the warden at Jackson prison through the 1920s, poured energy and funding into developing new efficient models of production that stressed high labor and low costs of materials in order to make state management of industrial production profitable. “It was the restless pursuit of profits and profitability that was to characterize Harry Hulbert’s management of the prison during the 1920s” (Bright, 90).

Leading up to the 1930s, Harry Hulbert would characterize Michigan State Prison of Southern Michigan as an institution with the possibility for profit in the prisons annual reports. His restless pursuit of further profits for the Michigan prison system would lead him to the promotion of the head of prison industries in the late 1920s (Bright). Hulbert expanded almost all of the industries that were in production in this decade, including the brush shop, chair factory, cannery, and the license plate and road sign stamping plant. He added a cot factory, developed an aluminum stamping operation, started a textile factory, a brick and tile work at Onondaga, and took control of the Chelsea Cement Plant.

The prohibition era lead to a drastic increase in the population of Michigan prisons, and

from 1924 to 1932, the population of Michigan prisons increased by 325%,⁶ with most of those increases happening in Jackson prison, to put the Michigan incarceration rate at 50 more per 100,000 thousand imprisoned than the United States as a whole. The population from 1930 to 1931 increased by almost 600, a year that an additional cell block was opened to house more prisoners. The years before that, while construction on a bigger and better prison had already begun in 1925, State Prison of southern Michigan, Jackson prison was so above capacity that Hulbert resorted to housing prisoners on farms, new dormitory annexes, road camps, and factories outside the walls, increasing the supervisory and feeding costs.⁷

State Prison of Southern Michigan was largely constructed by the prisoners themselves (900 inmates were assigned to this daily in 1929 and 1930). It took seven years to build, and The Depression forced an early completion. When it was built, both Jackson prison and State Prison of Southern Michigan were in use. Peak prison population for the 1930s was reached in 1932, right after the introduction of inmates into the new prison. Factories were also in use in both prisons at this time, until Jackson prison was disintegrated and all prisoners transferred to the new prison, which was named in 1935: the State Prison of Southern Michigan.

⁶ Michigan State Prisons Statistical Report. State Welfare Department. p. 1936

⁷ Bright, Charles. *The Powers That Punish: Prison and Politics in the Era of the "Big House," 1920-1955*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1996. Print.

The Shift to Mass Incarceration: A Shift of Ideals?

The contemporary scholarly view of punishment is that punishment in the U.S. serves as a combination of several rationales—some having more influence than the others: deterrence, retribution, incapacitation, and rehabilitation. It is generally understood among criminologists that a rehabilitative ideal predominated in the middle of the 20th-century up until the 1970s and 1980s, when a decline in this ideal results in a shift in the rationales of incarceration. However, the most widely cited rationales of punishment in contemporary penology are based in utilitarian theory: deterrence and incapacitation.

Jonathan Simon explores the way changes in the political or legal realm lead to a change of mass incarceration. Simon notes that the rise in crime in the late '60s and '70s has led to a rise in the portrayal of the average citizen as a potential crime victim, which is used as a “strategic device to advance the exercise of power by legitimizing policies that can be closely analogized as confronting crime.” Simon traces the emergence of the use of crime, fear of crime, or forms of knowledge about crime to legitimate the conduct of politicians (*Governing Through...*, p. 22). The rise of an exposure to crime in conjunction with the implementation of laws that suggest that individuals—predominantly white, middle class, and suburban—are potential crime victims “fuels a culture of fear” and makes America less democratic by making the needs of the crime victim representative of the average citizen, according to Simon (75, 7). “Governing through crime,” as Simon puts it, led to the “tough on crime” movement that began in the 1970s and resulted in drastic changes to the criminal justice system in the 1970s and 1980s.

Among the changes Simon notes are first, new punishments, such as the three strikes law and sex offender registry. Second, increases in sentencing, such as The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of

1986, which created mandatory minimum penalties for drug offenses, such as a five year minimum sentence for the sale of five grams of crack cocaine. This act also allocated large amounts of money for prison expansion, drug education and treatment. Third, the ridding of the indeterminate sentence and the decline in discretionary power of parole officers to release prisoners from the parole system. These changes in the political field all resulted in a drastic increase in the prison population.

What further exemplifies a change in incarcerative philosophy during this time period is the rebirth and skyrocketing uses of the death penalty in the late 1970s, after it was abolished by the Supreme Court in the early 1970s in the case *Furman v. Georgia* (408 U.S. 238). It was originally abolished due to racial disparities that indicated that capital punishment in the US was “arbitrary and capricious.” Next, the erosion of the Juvenile Justice system—the lowering of the age at which individuals are tried as juveniles and the increasing discretionary ability of judges to try individuals under the age of 18 as adults. Some states allow minors as young as 13 to be subject to a waiver petition, which would transfer them to an adult court.⁸

The place that labor had throughout this shift in the 1970s and 1980s is generally agreed upon in contemporary scholarship: industrial or vocational labor served a rehabilitative function, in order to reintegrate the offender back into society with skills that would facilitate employment.

A decline in the Big House, due to riots, internal corruption of “patronage politics,” the decline of industrial type work, and racial struggle, had already begun in the 1950s and prisons across the United State begun to move to a Correctional model, which reflected the ascendance of the behavioral sciences into punishment. Correctional prisons stressed individual treatment

⁸ "Get Informed." *When Juveniles Are Tried in Adult Criminal Court*. Web. 15 Mar. 2012. <<http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/juveniles-youth-adult-criminal-court-32226.html>>.

methods, categorization, and the importance of education in “correcting” inmates. After a growing mistrust in public institutions crystallized, as Jonathan Simon notes, with the Attica Correctional Facility prison riot, a move to post rehabilitation commenced (Lec. Fall ’11).

After the Attica prison riot, prisoners were seen as violent animals. Rehabilitation was seen as disgraceful to inmates, and prisoner’s rights began to decline. Eventually the ideal of rehabilitation would fade and the correctional model would transition into the warehouse model, which coexists with the Supermax model of today. These prisons reflect contemporary mass incarceration. They emphasize custody and internal order, rather than rehabilitation—a downscaling of treatment/educational techniques and an emphasis on discipline (Lec, Spr. ’11). Though labor is still pointed out as a modest feature in contemporary imprisonment, scholars agree that its emphasis in punishment, along with the rehabilitative ideal, has largely declined.

The Function of Labor in Society

This goes without saying, labor is the basic foundation for any economic system. High levels of manual labor is the basis for success in any organized society. In order to develop an economy that will encourage workers to generate surplus value, individuals must be motivated to labor past the point at which they attain a comfortable living. First, a system of trade, and more so, a monetary system, serves as a way to motivate individuals to labor past this point. Many influential political theorists have stressed the idea of work and independence as the basis for a successful polity.

John Locke elaborates on the function of labor in *The Second Treatises of Government* when he stresses that labor serves as a foundation for citizenship within the social contract.

“Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property” (Sec. 27). According to Locke, it is through labor that individuals attain and make objects personal property and the social contract that protects the personal property that is attained. Thus, individual labor serves as a ground on which to motivate consent to the social contract. Furthermore, for Locke, labor indicates that individuals are rational and self-disciplined individuals, both needed characteristics in a liberal government, as he explains. Labor is an essential factor in the stability of liberal forms of government.

Judith Shklar, in *American Citizenship*, points out that Locke’s conception of labor in the development of liberal society was fundamental to the development of the United States. Democratic citizenship has largely been based on labor and economic independence since the Enlightenment, according to Shklar (68). “Both the dignity of work and the public obligation to work are almost universally preached” (92). Unemployment in America, according to Shklar, is feared not because of the fear of starvation or survival, which Marx noted as a primary motivator, but because of the violation of a kind of public duty and social disgrace.

Furthermore, as Alice Kessler-Harris points out, today the conditions of citizenship are largely tied to wage labor and have been since the 1930s when a welfare government begins to develop. Social security, unemployment insurance, pensions, and health care, are linked to wage labor in the United States. As Alice Kessler-Harris has pointed out, this practice is unlike many other industrialized countries that link social benefits to residence. Thus, a certain class of individuals was not deemed citizens—those who did not work.⁹

Andrew Jackson has also had remnants of his ideas leave a lasting legacy. Among them is the Jacksonian confrontation against the idle, aristocratic rich and the promise of equal opportunities for work, education, and access to public goods. Both Jackson, and his opposition, like Frederick Douglass, who stressed governmental equality among all races and classes, stressed the value of work as the primary source of all success. Idleness was associated with slavery or aristocracy, both positions which were seen as socially disgraceful in the 19th-Century. Frederick Douglass' famous speech entitled "Self Made Men," lends an insight into the beginning of the development of what is termed "The American Dream," which James Truslow Adams coined in his book *The Epic of America*. The American dream is:

That dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement...It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.

as McBride notes, with the rise of unemployment and the poor condition of the economy, unemployment is largely seen as a social condition, rather than a stigma today, but even in periods of rising unemployment rates, long welfare dependence is seen as a kind of second-class citizenship. The public obligation to work has strong influences and those that don't work, if they can, are subject to social stigma. This is a testament to the influence of Locke, Jackson, and others that have stressed labor as central to the development of American society, community, and independence.

The Shift to a Neoliberal Economic System

The stressing of labor that is found in early American political theory reaches a tension over the course of the transformation of economic policy of the United States in the late 20th-Century. The poor fiscal policy of the 1970s, as a result of the Vietnam war, and the resultant stagflation, urban unemployment, and high cost of living, resulted in a recession and the eventual degradation of the Keynesian safety net in the 1970s and '80s.

Furthermore, reduced market regulation results in industries offshoring production. The degradation of the federal social safety net and the shifting of financial responsibility to cities, results in what is termed “Urban Entrepreneurialism” in the 1990s, which is a term used by scholars to describe the effect of the new economic policies and the flourishing of localized, competitive economic zones (Harvey). Cities must compete to attract affluent individuals and attract big business. Thus, cities redevelop urban areas that were previously abandoned due to white flight and minority populations are largely forced to the outskirts of urban areas because of an increase in housing and unemployment, thus concentrating poverty at the outskirts of urban areas—gentrification.

Shifting notions of the function of labor in society, from one of the conversion of natural resources into property, to one of an opportunity to participate in a flourishing economy and achieve the “America Dream,” shifted the relationship of the notion of citizenship and labor. As McBride notes, It is no longer personal property, attained through some form of the conversion of natural resources into private property, that defines citizenship, but the decision to labor itself. Thus, there is an appeal to rehabilitation as a purpose of labor in punishment.

An old, widely known proverb is “an idle mind is the devil’s workshop.” This rationale

for frequent labor, which has a predominately religious overtone, has been noted as a main rationale for the use of labor in punishment since the early 19th-century and until the mid twentieth, with a resurgence in the 2000s.¹⁰ Indeed, the current mission statement of the Federal Prison Industries is “to provide job skills training to the greatest practicable number of inmates confined...”¹¹ and likewise, Michigan State Industries current mission statement is “training inside for success outside.”¹²

The shifting of economic responsibility to individual cities, the degradation of the Keynesian safety net, and the loss of manufacturing sector jobs, has resulted in a tension in the economy that has been increased in recent years. The government backing down from economic regulations reenforced the opportunity for the “American dream” and the emphasis on labor as the basis for success. Although there has been the largest drop in the U.S. economy since the Great Depression in 2008, neoliberal ideology reinforced the notion of the American dream. However, the loss of urban working class jobs presented a basic tension with the stressing of labor and limitless possibility in America.

Michigan serves as an ideal place to showcase the effects of the shift to Neoliberal Urbanism. The economy in Michigan thrived in the early 20th-century. In 1905, Michigan took the lead in car manufacturing and only five years later did the number of automobiles manufactured expand by eleven times in Michigan. By 1929, Michigan, particularly the Detroit area, accounted for about half of the five million automobiles produced in the United States and half of the 448,000 autoworkers (Mclaughlin, 97). This was largely due to the fact that Michigan

¹⁰ See the Biennial Reports of Michigan State Prison (1920 & 1956)

¹¹ UNICOR online: <http://www.unicor.gov/about/organization/history/index.cfm>

¹² Michigan State Industries: <http://www.michigan.gov/msi>

had an abundant supply of iron deposits, transportation benefits of the Great Lakes, and also plentiful lumber and copper supplies, which made Michigan a center for steel and metalworking plants.

The Depression, that began in 1929, was devastating to the auto industry and therefore to Michigan as well. Production dropped from 5 million cars in 1929 to 1.3 million three years later. The industry cut its work force almost in half during these years. However, with the rise of war industries in the 1940s, Michigan's economy took a turn as automobile factories were converted to help with the war effort. After World War II, the United States entered what is referred to as a golden age in American capitalism. The middle class swelled in growth. Michigan's steel and auto industry began to dominate Michigan's economy. In the late 1970s, the oil embargo, the offshoring of automobile production, and a national recession resulted in a depression in Michigan. The auto industry made a fair comeback in the next two decades, but again suffered major losses in the early 21st-century due to rising gasoline prices and another nationwide depression.

Conventional Views of the Function of Labor in Punishment

Loic Wacquant brings together the theories of Durkheim, Marx, and Foucault in his analysis of the rise of incarceration, presenting an argument for how changes in the social realm can effect the penal realm. For Wacquant, this is a socioeconomic theory about how prisons function as a racial caste system and a way to control a particular class of individuals, given a changing value of labor, within a class divided society. He argues that the reason for the increase of punitiveness in America was to replace the function of slavery, the Jim Crow system, and the

Northern Ghetto in the post-Civil Rights era after the “crisis of the ghetto,” by extracting labor and/or segregating African Americans in prisons (Deadly... 95, 99).

He argues that there is a progressively less and less comprehensive control on African Americans and that race control becomes steadily more class specific throughout the four institutions he notes and into today (99). Due to the postindustrial shift in the economy from a manufacturing sector economy to a knowledge-based and business sector, there was a loss of a productive function for proletariat African Americans. Those that are uneducated and unable to find work become stuck in the mesh of hyperghetto and prison, which work together to warehouse a surplus labor force (95, 105, 112).

Wacquant, in supporting his argument, cites the fact that prison populations are now predominately African American (70%), while the same prisons were 70% Caucasian at midcentury. Furthermore, he points out that minority populations, particularly African Americans, are increasingly concentrated in certain urban areas of poverty. His explanation for this shift isn't about general social cohesion, but the social cohesion associated with racial domination, in a Durkheimian sense.

Durkheim famously suggests that crime tears at the moral fabric of society and that it is through punishment that the moral fabric is repaired, strengthening it in the process. This moral fabric, or collective sentiment is referred to as the “collective conscious” by Durkheim. The law, for Durkheim, is an inventory of social solidarity—the glue that holds society together. There are different types of solidarity for Durkheim, such as domestic, occupational, and national solidarities, but what is most fundamentally reflected through the law is repressive (penal) and restitutory (civil) solidarity. Repressive law, or solidarity, represents the most deeply rooted and

strongly felt center of the common conscious, which functions to expiate a past wrong.

Restitutory law, on the other hand represents less strongly felt collective sentiments and grows as society becomes more complex. Restitutory sanctions serve to return things to the state they were before (49).

The division of labor for Durkheim functions not only to improve the skill of the worker and improve economic and technological conditions in society, but more importantly, to strengthen the common consciousness through the differences between people. The economic services rendered by the division of labor are trivial compared with the moral effect that is produced, which strengthens the common consciousness.

Finally, Durkheim thinks of labor as reflecting the nature of society. If society places a high value on industrial type labor or industrial labor is essential for the working of society, then industrial type labor is to be likely included as punishment. Durkheim, as a structuralist, advocated that the material structure of society would determine forms of punishment. For instance, the type of penal labor would be correlated with what is needed in a particular society. This is one theory that characterizes labor as part of the nature of material society (Durkheim, Divison of...).

While Wacquant presents a socioeconomic theory, Jonathan Simon explains the political mechanism that allows changes in the social realm to effect changes in the penal realm. Durkheim, who I will analyze later, conceptualized punishment as a direct response to society, but Jonathan Simon presents an update to Durkheim's theory, which takes account of modern societies penal field—regulated by government and law. Durkheim doesn't mention the way that social agreement gets transmitted to the penal field and Jonathan Simon provides this.

An explanation of penal labor in contemporary prisons, using Foucault as a theoretical framework, would cite penal labor as a political economy of the body—a form of power exploited on the body that aims to discipline. For example, at the root of the factory model, as Jonathan Simon notes, is “social technology,” the ability to discipline workers in order to render them profitable (Lec. 15). Penal labor, for Foucault, reflects the power of the state, which now uses the economy of the mind as a political tactic in order to control bodies (*The Body...*, 11). Penal labor, as a form of rehabilitation, would correspond to Foucault’s idea of disciplining inmates in order to control them. It is a reflection of new tactics of power—a graduation from former practices of imprisonment. The body is now used, as a political tactic, to mold the mind.

Foucault, from his concept of power from the 1970s, described power as consisting of “non-egalitarian and mobile relations” that “take shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions” (*Hist...*, 92). These relations generate “wide-ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole” (*Hist...*, 92). Furthermore, there is no way that these power relations can function without the use of a discourse, which is a form of knowledge or attitude that shapes our own knowledge or understanding of our position within these non-egalitarian relations (*Hist...*, 93).

These relations can be described as coordinating together and forming a comprehensive system, which is where these power relations crystallize to form an institution. Still, there is no one person, or group that can be said to be responsible for a relation of power (95). He described the state as the strategies from which these force relations crystallize and take effect. Penal labor is a tactic that these force relations utilize on the body to mold the mind.

Marx believed that in a capitalist mode of production, society consists of a division of classes. If we contrast this with Durkheim we can see right away the difference in the structure of society. Durkheim thought of society as an organic whole. There is a division of labor for Durkheim that develops out of modern society, however, he does not characterize society in terms of such a structurally separated configuration.

The main actors in the economy, for Marx—the ruling-class citizens—determine all other forms of society, including penalty and legality. However, what ultimately determines the form of all other institutions in society is the economic base or “modes of production.” Law and punishments reflect, reinforce, and reproduce the economic base. Marx believed that lower class society is oppressed by the ruling class and that criminal law, through some kind of hegemonic ideal, serves the interest of the ruling classes while enhancing its legitimacy. Penal labor, for Marx, is a way for the ruling class to extract labor from the lower classes at low cost. The rehabilitative ideal, in a Marxist sense, serves as a hegemonic ideal concerning punishment, which enhances the legitimacy of the ruling class, while advocating the punishment they have chosen.

Methodology

In order to find out what change in the function of labor occurred in Michigan prisons, I looked at the annual reports of Michigan State Prison of Southern Michigan, Statistical Reports of the State of Michigan published by the Department of Corrections, annual reports done by the Department of Corrections, Formal Laws, such as federal and state statutes, and also secondary sources. I also investigated prison demographics and the percentage of African American prisoners through a historical perspective, as well as demographics of Michigan as a whole. Although the data is fragmented, and I am limited in my access of data relevant to Michigan State Prison, my analysis leads me to uncover what I believe is an accurate understanding of the trends in prison labor in Michigan.

Data on the number of employees in State Prison of Southern Michigan is spotty and inconsistent. I have only been able to find data from the two decades of the 1930s and 1970s. Although data on the total number of employees is available in the 2000s, the number in specific prison factories is no longer detailed in the annual reports of what is now called The Bureau of Correctional Industries in Michigan. Nevertheless, the data for prison industries across the state of Michigan can accurately illustrate the trend in prison labor in the State Prison of Southern Michigan's contemporary divisions, two of which have active factories today, because State Prison of Southern Michigan and its subsequent divisions has maintained the production of a majority of goods and services offered by Michigan State Industries—close to 75%.

Findings

1930s

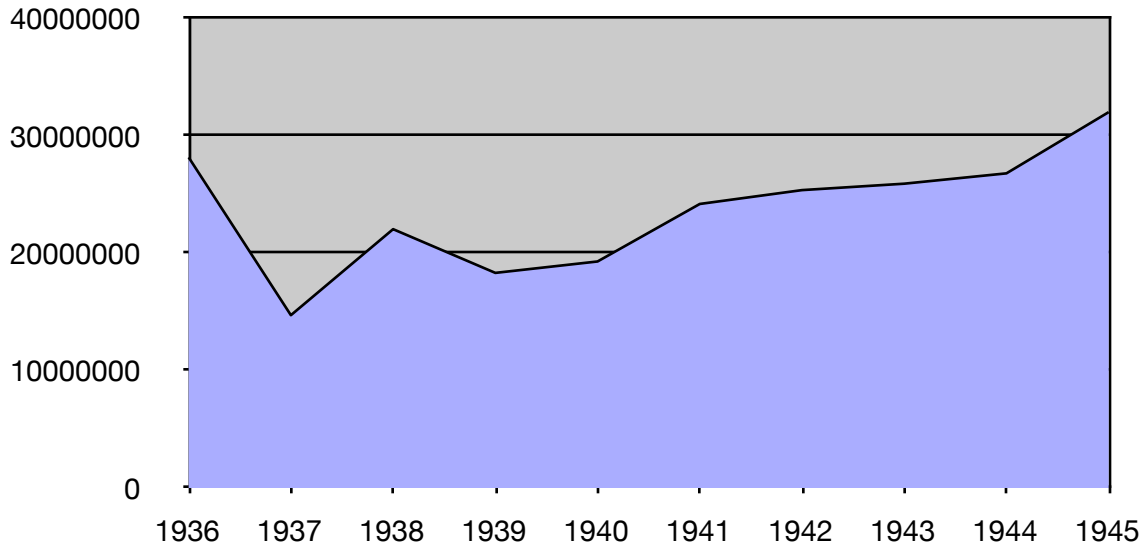


Figure 1: Total Sales in Michigan State Industries (adjusted for inflation)

In the year 1932, three new industrial operations began, as part of the new prison in Jackson, Michigan: a textile and dye plant, novelty factory, and a new canning factory were added during this year. In this year there were also five industries in the old prison—a monument shop, brush shop, binder twine mill, metal stamping and enamel plant. Peak prison population was reached in 1932, when both the old prison and the new prison were used in production. However, The Depression decreased industrial output in Michigan Prison industries.

During one of the beginning years of The Depression, 1932, The Chelsea Cement Plant was dismantled and construction on the new prison, which would be named State Prison of Southern Michigan, was declared complete. The federal ban on prison-made goods for interstate commerce in 1935¹³ resulted in state action that also limited prison made goods in 1935, except

¹³ The Ashurst-Sumners Act, Pub. L. No. 74-215, 49 Stat. 494 (1935), codified at 18 U.S.C. §§1761-62

binder twine, “only to penal, charitable or custodial institutions, or to departments of the state.”¹⁴ Because these limitations were designed “mostly in reaction to Depression conditions to protect free industry and labor,” the production of binder twine was not seen as in direct competition with free industry and labor, and so was exempt from the State Munshaw-Frey act.

As a result of the Depression and the subsequent Federal and State statutes that limited prison commerce, in December 1936 and 1937 there were only about six hundred employed in all Michigan prison industries as a whole. As illustrated in Figure 1, total sales at the beginning of 1937 was around one million, which equals about 15 million today. Around 2 years later, in December 1938, there were 1,385 employed and total sales were at 1.5 million. Part of this increase is due to the fact that the Munshaw-Frey Act was amended in 1937 to allow for the sale of prison made goods to “counties and lesser political subdivisions of the state.”¹⁵

From 1938 to 1940 alone there was a huge increase in the number of prisoner-employees in prison industries in Michigan. In between these two years, the prison population also increased its population by nearly five hundred inmates. This correlates with a steady increase throughout the early 1940s in total sales.

In 1938, there were 790 inmates assigned to industries at State Prison of Southern Michigan (SPSM) alone. 2,424 were employed as a whole, including institutional work, such as working in the kitchen, cleaning, and assisting at the hospital, and 729 inmates were unemployed in State Prison of Southern Michigan.

A year later there was a gain of 134 prisoner employees in Michigan prison industries, to bring the number to 924 total inmates employed in prison industries at SPSM. In all prisons in

¹⁴ the Munshaw-Frey Act of 1935

¹⁵ Michigan’s Correctional System First Biennial Report. 1937-1938

Michigan, 1,283 were employed in industrial work. SPSM had by far the majority of prison industries and employees. I found that prison industries had also expanded in terms of equipment and physical space.

1970s

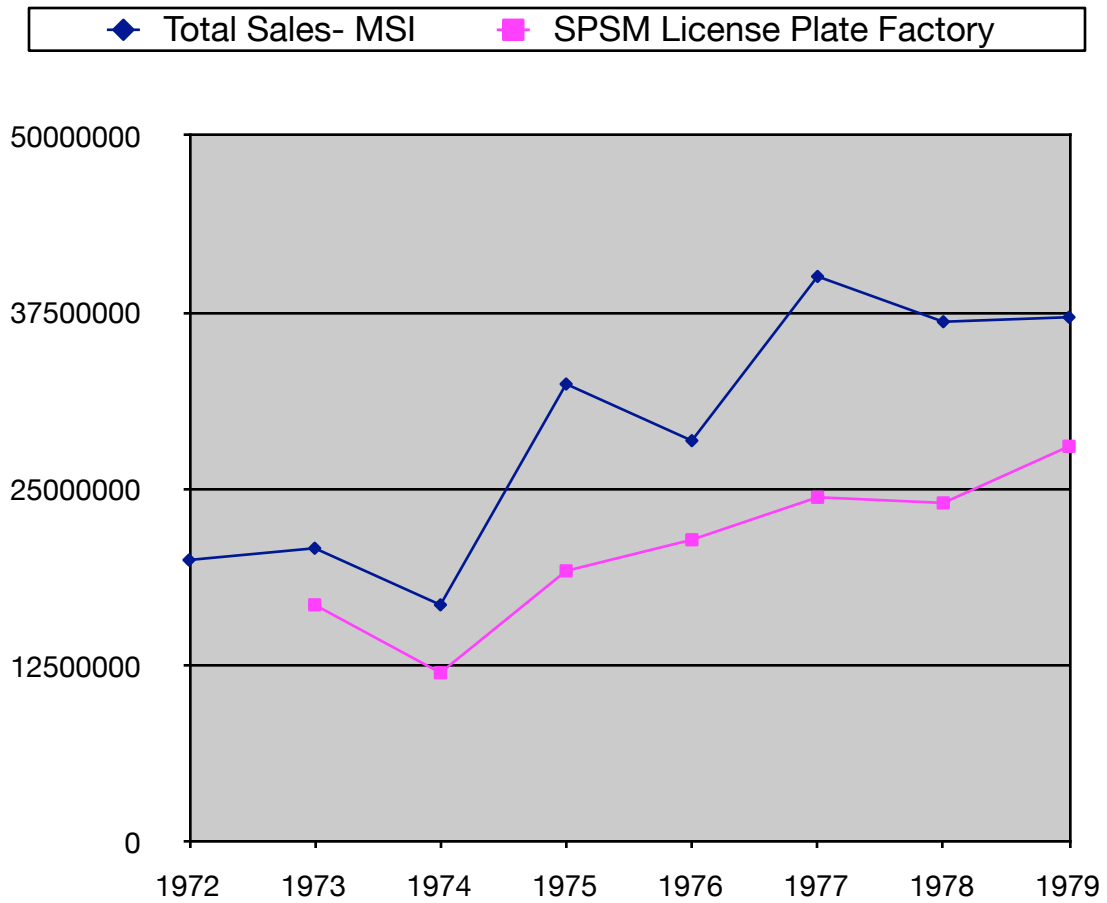


Figure 2: Total Sales of Michigan State Industries and SPSM

A little over three decades later in 1972, there was an increase in the number of inmates doing institutional work and a decrease in industrial employment. In this year, 2,845 inmates were employed in State Prison of Southern Michigan, including institutional work (74.8% of population), 669 were employed in industrial work, 800 in academic training, and 180 in a new area of vocational training, which trained inmates in some type of vocational trade, which was hoped to increase their chances for employment upon release. No inmates were classified as unemployed.

In 1975 through 1977, an average of 625 inmates were employed in SPSM's prison industries. In 1977-1978, the prison population grew by 2,500, while capacity expanded by 1,300. Two new prisons were built and industries expanded, which allowed for a slight increase in the employment rate in Michigan State Industries as a whole. However, SPSM saw a decline during this time to 624 employed inmates in prison industries.

What contributes to the rise in total sales, adjusting for inflation, with a decrease in the number of prisoner-employees is an increase in production and a relaxation of the legal restraints on prison industries across the country. In 1968, the Correctional Industries Act reduced the limitations of the federal and state statutes that limited interstate commerce of prison made goods and allowed inmates to earn minimal wages for support of their families and to provide restitution for crime victims.

An act to provide for the employment of inmate labor in the correctional institutions of this state; to provide for the employment of inmate labor in certain private enterprises under certain conditions; to provide for certain powers and duties of the department of corrections, the governor, and other officers and

agencies in relation to correctional institutions; to provide for the requisitioning and disbursement of correctional industries products.

Expanding Michigan State Industries is a constant theme throughout the 1970s. Although there is a decrease in the total number of prisoner employees throughout the 1970s, this correlates with an increase in production and the relaxation of legal restraints in 1968. This rise in production with a drop in the number of employees is due, in part, to an increase in efficiency as a result of (1) technological developments that increased efficiency (2) incentive programs that were developed that allocated a small share of all surplus revenue to prisoner-employees on top of their low wages, and (3) an increase in prisoner wages. However, the small share of surplus revenue and wages paid, as a part of this incentive program, would be allocated not only to the prisoner-employees themselves or their families, but to crime victims as well, which showcases the use of restitution in its early stages in Michigan.

What also explains the drop in the number of employees, is the beginning of a decline in the faith in the effectiveness of prisons in 1971. A 1971 study, done by the Department of Labor and cited in the annual report of the Michigan Department of Corrections, which investigated the effect of industrial labor and certification programs on future chances of employment, found that only one in seven inmates was eventually employed in a job related to his institutional training. Although employment mildly increased during the later part of the 1970s, as I will see later in my investigation of the 1990s, again the number of employees had significantly dropped.

Although the overcrowding of prisons was a problem in 1975 and 1976 and the department of corrections stressed the release of prisoners, 1975-1976 Michigan prison industries had a record total sales of 10.5 million, largely due to the license plate factory at SPSM—in

Figure 2 the sales has been corrected to reflect a four quarter year. Even though there was a slight decrease in the number of prisoner-employees from 1975 to 1976 in SPSM—including a decrease of about fifty inmates in the license plate factory at SPSM—efficiency in production resulted in close to one million license plates produced, up from 50,000 plates the year before.¹⁶

While the number of prisoner-employees shrunk to close to one thousand employed at Michigan State Prison of Southern Michigan in the late 1970s, total sales and production has increased. In 1976-1977, there was a slight drop in total sales and production, as it was an “off year in the production of license plates.” However, a new steel office chair factory was being constructed in a new northern unit, to ease overcrowding, and a new tenter-dryer system would begin to be developed, expanding industries. In 1978, again total sales increased once again to achieve a new record. As the Michigan Department of Corrections reports in the year 1976-1977:

Expansion is always an ongoing goal of Michigan State Industries; some institutions lack of physical space has prevented this, but the development of more prisons has provided for the expansion of industries and plans are underway to expand....A new northern unit will provide the manufacture of steel office chairs...The tailor garments factory at State Prison of Southern Michigan will be phased out next year (as the result of a loss of economic value) and a new tender-dryer system at the textile factory, costing \$300,000 will be developed there. This is the single biggest expense made by Michigan State Industries.

With the passage of the Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Program, created by congress in 1979, which exempted certain departments of corrections from normal restrictions on

¹⁶ Michigan Department of corrections. “Dimensions.” 1975-76

prisoner-made goods in interstate commerce, and the 1980 amendment to the state Correctional Industries Act, which allowed Michigan State Industries to sell its products to “nonprofit organizations, to governmental institutions in other states, and to the federal government,” industrial expansion was ensured. The 1980 amendment to the state Correctional Industries act allowed goods to be bought from prison industries by these organizations if they were sold at a “comparable price and quality” to those produced on the free market. With the ability to sell across boarders, to non-profit organizations, and to the federal government, Michigan State Industries became self-supporting in 1985, in the middle of a boom in prisoner population, which allowed further expansion of industries throughout the 1990s, while reducing the number of those employed.

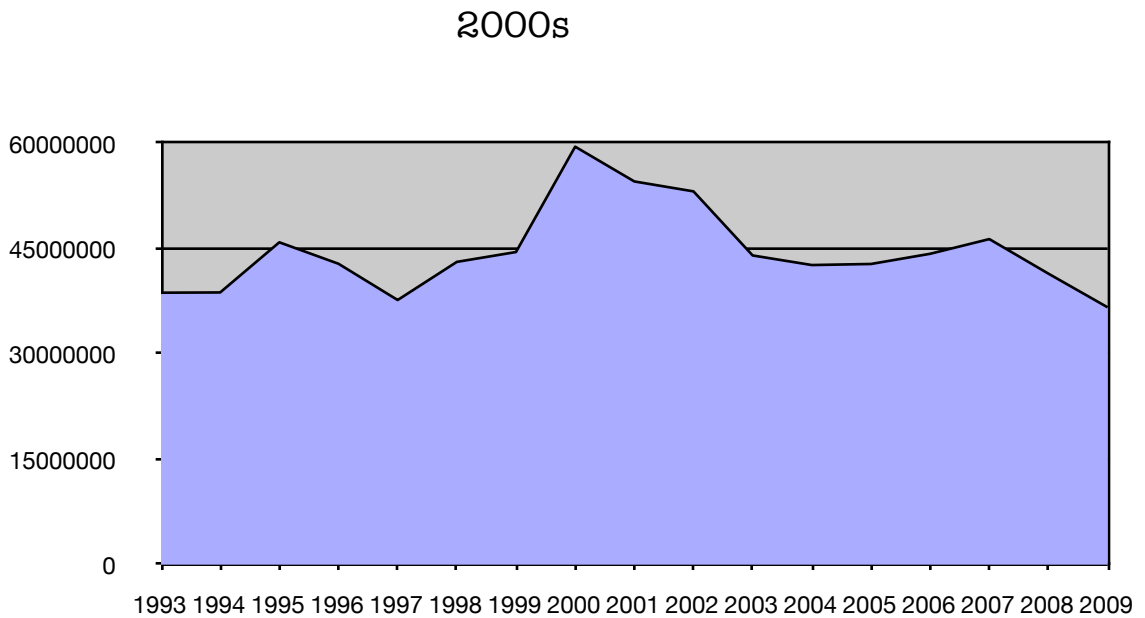


Figure 3: Total Sales in Michigan State Industries ('93-'09)

As shown in *Figure 3*, total sales reaches its highest point of sixty million in the year 2000 and hovers around forty million from 1993 to 2009. Although, there is what looks to be the

beginning of a declining trend in total sales since the year 2007, when Governor Granholm was elected for her second term.

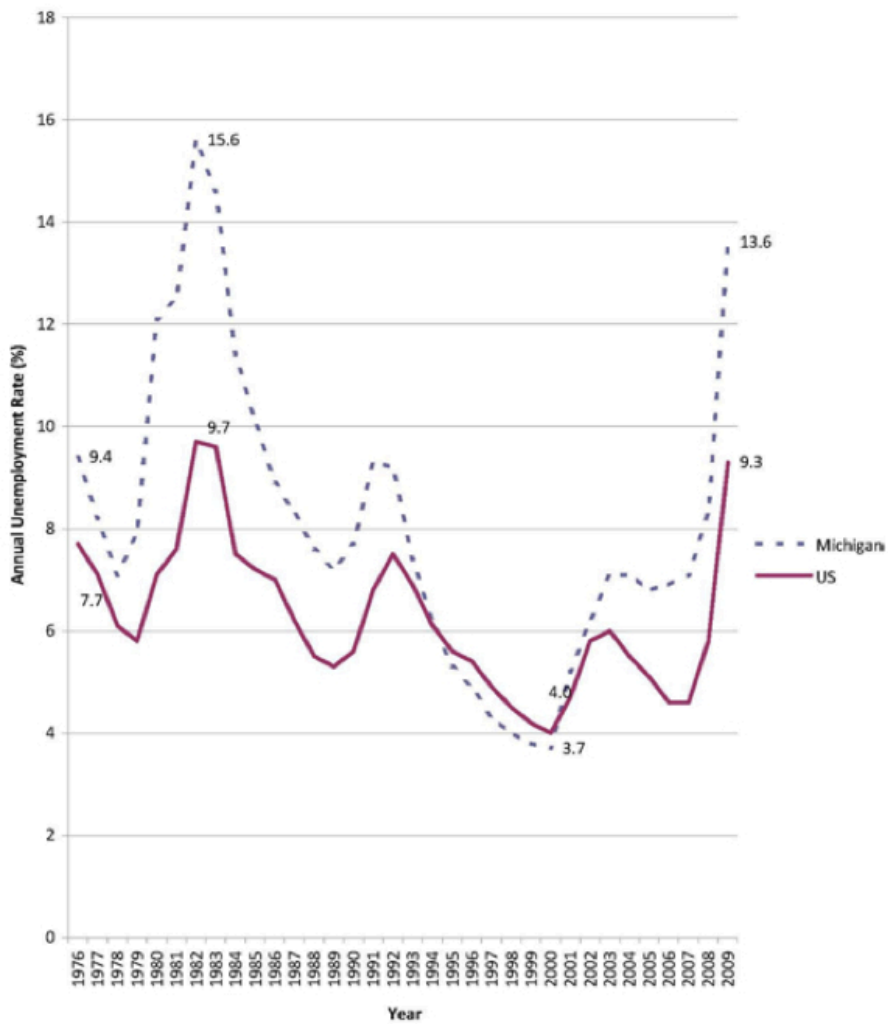
In 1998, Michigan State Industries employed only 1,192 inmates with permanent assignments and had around 42 million in total sales utilizing 28 factories. In this year, service sector jobs such as conversion of blue prints and drafting engineering tracings to electronic format were among the services offered by Michigan State Industries. During this time frame, Michigan was towards the end of a rising trend in the prisoner population—a 500% increase from the mid 1970s to 2006, when the prisoner population reached a peak of over 50,000 inmates (as shown in Figure 3). The population of Michigan prisons was over 44,000 in 1998. Still, the new prisons that have divided off from the original State Prison of Southern Michigan, when it was dissolved in the early 1980s, Parnall correctional institution and G Robert Cotton Correctional Institution, produced about half of the total sales from 1998 at about 16 million.

In 2000, when a record number of total sales was reached, there was a raise in the number of permanent assignments in the prison industries by about three hundred inmates to 1,475 and the addition of one more factory to make it 29 factories. The number of factories would peak this year. After this peak in total sales, three factories are phased out, and the number of employees continued to drop to around 1,000.

In late 2007, Senate Bill 632 of the State of Michigan, was signed into law by governor Granholm, which further relaxed the limitations on the sale of prison made goods—allowing Michigan State Industries to sell products to private parties or businesses certain goods if there is no private business in the state that makes a similar product (SB 632). This means that Michigan State Industries can now produce products for general sale for private businesses. Still, since

2007, industries in Michigan have lost seven million in total sales.

Finally, when the unemployment rate in Michigan is contrasted to the trends in total sales that I have found, I find that high unemployment rates correlate with low total sales in Michigan Prison Industries, as you can see in Figure 4. Although scholars, such as Alessandro Di Giorgi, have noted that rising unemployment rates often correlate with rising incarcerative trends, this finding presents another avenue for further research.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics web site

Figure 4: Michigan and US Annual Unemployment Rate (1976-2009)

Michigan Prison Demographics

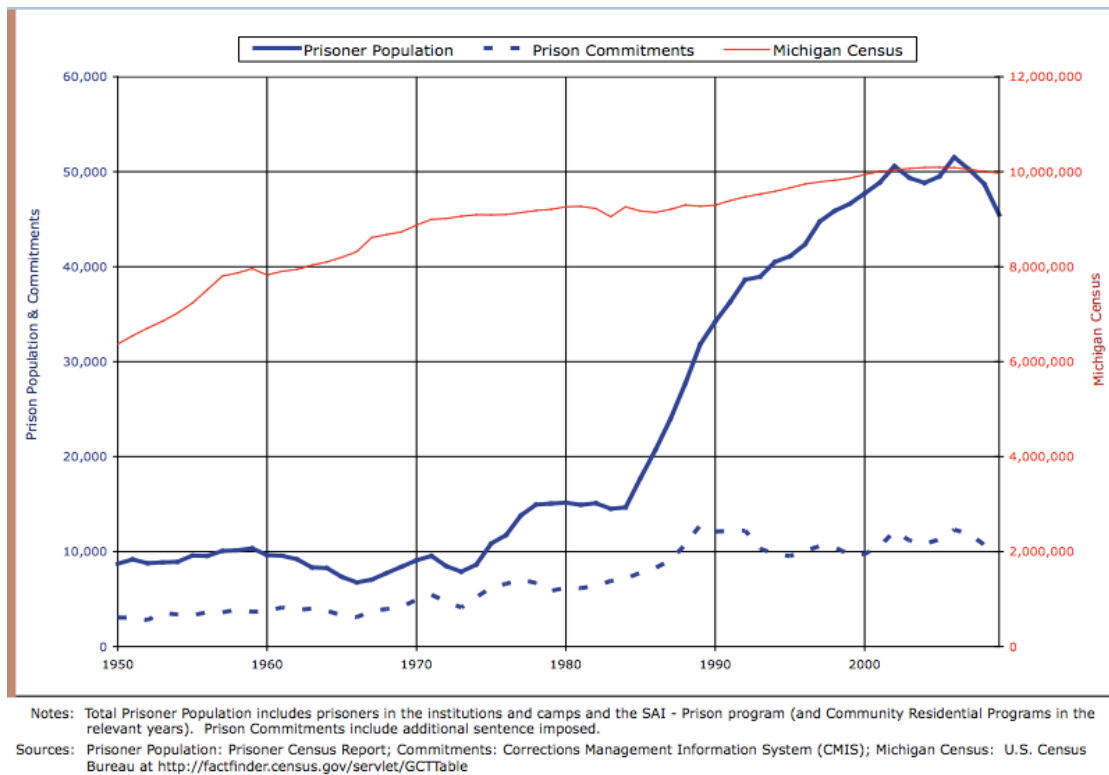


Figure 5: Michigan Prison Population and Census in Michigan

In 1930, Michigan State Prison had a population of 5,280 which was 78% Caucasian. In the 5 year period from 1931 to 1935, the African American population in Michigan prisons increased by 2,700 and the white population increased by 11,000, maintaining a more proportionate incarceration rate related to demographic trends. African Americans represented about 3.5% of the population at this time. At the beginning of 1940, the prisoner population at Michigan state prison was 5541, 79.2% of which was white. The prison population in Michigan prisons stayed predominantly white until the late 1960s.

Beginning in the late '60s and '70s, I find that the commitment of African Americans

began to exceed that of Caucasians. In 1977, the number of African American commitments exceeded that of Caucasians by over one thousand in Michigan State Prisons. In the late 1970s, I find that Michigan state prison had a population of 60% African Americans. Today I found that the prisoner demographics have decreased its African American population to around 52%,¹⁷ but the population in Michigan itself is only 14% African American today.¹⁸

Michigan State Demographics

According to the Center for Urban Studies , the population of African Americans in Michigan is heavily concentrated in three metropolitan cities in Michigan—Highland Park (93.1% Black), Benton Harbor city (92.1% Black), and Detroit City (81.2% black) as of 2000. In 2011, Detroit’s Black population has continued to climb to 82.7% African American, Highland Park’s Black population was at 93.5%, and Benton Harbor City had the only decrease by 2.9% to 89.2% in 2010.

Following the 2nd world war, Michigan had a mass suburbanization of the Detroit metropolitan area, often referred to as the “Tri-County Area,” which consists of the most urbanized areas in Michigan and covers parts of the counties of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb. Between 1940 and 1950, the population grew by more than 600,000 in the tri-county area and blacks accounted for nearly one-third of that growth. Thus, Detroit’s black population grew. Michigan’s black population increased 6% from 3.5% to 9.2% from 1930 to 1960. In 1970 that number had climbed to 11% African American and in 1980, that number had climbed again to

¹⁷ Michigan Department of Correction. *Annual Report 2006*. http://www.michigan.gov/documents/corrections/2006_Annual_Report_255078_7.pdf

¹⁸ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/26000.html>

12% African American.¹⁹ The period from 1970 through 2000, as a result of gentrification, represents the suburbanization of blacks in Tri-County Areas, when an increase in the population of blacks in suburban areas accounted for 34% of total suburban growth. A drastic decline in Detroit's population, has recently been enforced by a new upsurge of gentrification, which is when urban areas are redeveloped, raising housing costs and forcing poor populations to leave (Contesting the City....).

Analysis

To Summarize, my findings reveal firstly, a retaining, if not increase, in the number of total sales in Michigan State Industries, as well as SPSM, from the 1930s into the 2000s, coupled with a decrease in the number of prisoner-employees. This has been shown to be a result of rising efficiency, relaxations on formal state and federal limitations on prison industry commerce, fiscal incentives bestowed on prisoners, and the adoption of new industries based on economic vitality. It was only in the 2000s that there was a slight increase in the number of prison-employees, but the number of industrial workers was already far below what it was in the 1930s and '70s and has dropped again in recent years. Furthermore, I find that this drop in the number of prisoner-employees has also correlated with a post-industrial economic shift, which caused a loss of industrial type labor and forced Michigan to shift its prison industries to service sector work. I also find that high unemployment rates correlate with low total sales in Michigan State Industries.

¹⁹ Center for Urban Studies-February 2002 Working Paper Series, No. 8. African Americans in the United States, Michigan and Metropolitan Detroit.

Concerning demographic shifts, I find that prisons in Michigan shifted from close to 80% Caucasian in the 1930s to 60% African American in the late 1970s, while the population of African Americans in Michigan as a whole was only around 4% in the 1930s, and 12% in 1980. Furthermore, I find that the African American population is highly concentrated in three metropolitan cities in Michigan: Highland Park, Benton Harbor, and Detroit.

Discussion

Despite the notion that a rehabilitative ideal developed in the middle of the 20th-century that emphasized vocational type labor, which then began to fade away in the 1970s, and continued to die out into the 1980s and '90s during the fruition of an incapacitative ideal, longer sentences, new punishments, and the resurrection of the death penalty, I found that productive labor, as punishment, was still used with the same purpose as it was in earlier periods in Michigan—to reduce the costs of prisons—and with the same, if not higher total sales.

Despite the increasing prevalence of other programs that are thought to rehabilitate criminals, such as educational programs, training in vocational trades, and also therapy programs, industrial expansion is still stressed as a policy preference. The fact that industries could expand, despite a drop in the number of prisoner-employees, is a clear indication that the role of rehabilitation in utilizing prison labor as punishment is declining further than it had in the 1970s and 1980s, even though a rehabilitative ideology is still cited in the prison reports throughout the history of Michigan State Industries.

The shift to a service sector and knowledge based economy took place at a time when an influx of African American prisoners were committed to prisons in Michigan. The prison demographics shifted from mostly Caucasian to mostly African American during the “war on

drugs,” but a recent study has pointed out that African Americans are less likely than Caucasians to abuse drugs—4% less likely.²⁰ Still today, prisons in Michigan are mostly African American, though African Americans represented about 11% of the population in Michigan in the 1970s and 14% today. These notions, together with fact that African American populations are highly concentrated in three metropolitan cities in Michigan, substantiates the theory of Loïc Wacquant. However, I have shown that an increase in total sales is a constant theme for Michigan State Industries, thus suggesting that there is more of a value in labor than Wacquant argues and that labor extraction is still a function of Michigan prisons.

Michigan prisons, as well as others such as Texas, are still extracting as much labor as possible from inmates—even training them in new fields in order to do so. Given the risk prison industries face of degrading the national economy, and taking into consideration the series of relaxations that have been initiated on the 1929 Hawes-Cooper act, prison industries seem to relax the law regulating prison industries whenever a significant drop in total sales occurs. Furthermore, the increasing use of education programs, in tandem with the use of prison industries, could hint at an increasing effort to extract labor from African Americans—that prisons are providing training to utilize service sector labor, which is needed in a post industrial economy. This could be a subject of further research.

Wacquant’s theory ties together the theory of Marx, Durkheim, and Foucault. In a Marxist sense, the changing value of labor has resulted in government efforts to maintain stability in a class divided society by incarcerating African Americans. The evidence certainly validates this point. Furthermore, to add to a Marxist conceptualization of this transition of

²⁰ <http://healthland.time.com/2011/11/07/study-whites-more-likely-to-abuse-drugs-than-blacks/>

prison labor, these increases in production and relaxations of laws which govern the potentials for prison industry sales, despite a loss in the economic vitality of manufacturing sector jobs, hints at a kind of ruling class struggle to keep prisons productive despite a shift in the economic base. The ideology of rehabilitation would merely act as a hegemonic ideal for Marx, strengthening the legitimacy of the ruling class effort to extract labor in a society with a changing value of manufacturing sector work. The evidence I have presented does support this point. Furthermore, in a Marxist tradition, prison labor is now utilized, largely, if not solely, to reduce the tremendous costs of imprisonment on the ruling class, in order to control the proletariat.

Durkheim, rather than perceiving of society as divided into classes that are constantly in conflict, thought of society as an organic whole. Imprisonment communicated a kind of morality that told prisoners about normality and public obligation. In this sense, Durkheim would characterize the shifts in labor trends in Michigan prisons as an expression of social solidarity—society would speak to itself in this manner through imprisonment, communicating normality. The evidence does not favor this point as much as it does the socioeconomic point of Marx and Wacquant. Furthermore, Durkheim's framework explains the increase in African American populations as social cohesion associated with racial domination, which is supported by the evidence. The prison system is an alternative method to isolate African Americans as a result of the civil rights movement.

Finally, the Foucaultian tradition illustrates the shift in labor practices in punishment in terms of a new form of power that has materialized in the prison. Disciplinary technology, in this case prison labor, is utilized in order to exploit prisoners, using bodies as an instrument into minds in order to mold them and normalize behavior. The increases in production despite a drop

in employment, in Foucault's eyes, could point to a kind of diffuse transition from the correctional institution to warehouse prisons, with elements of penal labor still not completely exhausted.

The incentive program that was developed in the early 1970s in Michigan State Prisons presents a clear picture of disciplinary measures utilized to control bodies. A system of incentives and disincentives, such as wages and longer sentences, are utilized in order to control bodies. The increase in production, despite a drop in the number of employees, hints at a new political tactic, in Foucault's eyes. The discourse of incarceration, since the late 1970s and 80s has been about warehousing convicts, removing them from society. This increase in exploitation, in a Foucaultian framework, may be an example of the exploitation of as much capital as possible while avoiding public scrutiny concerning labor exploitation—reaffirming legitimacy. The declining trust in penal institutions in the 1970s and decline in rehabilitation speaks to this point. On the other hand, what penal labor that is economically viable is pursued, while other disciplinary measures, such as solitary confinement, are pursued for others, perhaps.

Conclusion

I have found that penal labor, as a system of punishment, tends to mirror economic trends. As manufacturing sector jobs were lost in Michigan and the value of industrial labor dropped, a decline in the number of prisoner-employees occurred in tandem with relaxations on State and Federal limitations on prison industry commerce, new fiscal incentives, and the adoption of new industries. These changes provided an opportunity for prison industries to adopt to changing economic conditions and to maintain, if not increase, total sales.

These findings also suggests an undermining of the rehabilitative ideal, as a decrease in the number of prisoner-employees leads to a decrease in the amount of rehabilitation through industrial work. Furthermore, this indicates that prisons are still utilized for the same purposes they were in the 1930s in Michigan, that is, to reduce the costs of prisons. Michigan State Industries is still today under a state mandate to be self-sufficient and for the past five years, it has been struggling to raise revenues. There has just been an initiative passed in Michigan earlier this year to have a private prison built by G.E.O, formerly known as Wackenhut, in Baldwin Michigan, in order to combat costs. Today in Michigan, and across the country, prison industries are contracting with private businesses in order to bail out massive debts. This speaks to a shift away from prisoners rights and to the pursuit of profit, which can be a topic for future research. Michigan, with the election of Rick Snyder, has shifted the industry of punishment once again.

I have also shown to what extent my findings substantiate the theory of Loïc Wacquant, Marx, Foucault, and Durkheim. I have shown that there is still the opportunity for prison labor in Michigan today and prisons in Michigan today do not solely operate to isolate a surplus labor force, but also to extract labor, which differentiates from Wacquant's argument slightly. It may be that prisons do not need or are not able to utilize as much labor as they once did, so prisoner-employment is falling, but industrial labor still produces a large amount of revenue for Michigan. Furthermore, Durkheim talked about social cohesion determining shifts in punishment practices, but I find the socioeconomic basis that Wacquant provides more convincing. The shifts in the political or legal field that accompany shifts in economic trends, relaxing Federal and State constraints on industry commerce speak to the influence of the economic base on forms of labor as a mode of punishment.

In closing, I would like to say that my suggestions are based from a historical analysis of trends in penal labor in one state, particularly SPSM. Is a more widespread analysis needed in order to explain shifts in labor trends? Is Michigan not a progressive case, but an extreme case in prison labor that is much different than other states? I leave these questions as areas of additional research.

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