Doing archaeology implies the right, the power, and the ability to investigate the past, and in many parts of the world, this involves other peoples’ pasts. As an academic discipline, archaeology has its own performative rules and regulations. The outcome is a disciplined, and more or less elitist (academic) approach to how our own and other peoples’ histories come to be understood. Simply put, knowledge of the past tends to be sanitized by what scientific procedures permit, at the expense of other ways of understanding history (for example, religious faiths, oral traditions). History makes us who we are, and archaeologists play a privileged role in creating a sense of history. People thus come to know themselves at least in part by how others (in this context, archaeologists) construct their histories. The challenge is, as Ian McNiven (1998: 47) aptly puts it, that writing the past “is more than a clash of belief systems—it is a clash of powers to control constructions of identity.” This clash of powers expresses itself in varied aspects of social life, including education (for example, the cultural, social, political, and economic circumstances that limit or encourage people to take up archaeology at university), cultural choice (for example, the way we engage with our own cultural preunderstandings), employment (for example, the social forces that lead one person to obtain a historicising job over another), and representation (for instance, in Western society, the social prioritizing of professional archaeological versions of the past and the marginalization of Indigenous notions of history).

The chapters in this section explore varied dimensions of this clash, negotiation, and accommodation of powers as they concern the ways we come to construct meaningful notions of past lived landscapes. They discuss key aspects of landscape archaeology, from ethical questions of how “others” are represented in discourses of past and ancestral archaeological landscapes, to the positioning of the self in historical space, to imaginative renderings of the historical and always—at least in part—mysterious world in which we all live.

Reference

How do people experience confinement? With scholars, reformists, philanthropists, social engineers, clinicians, and politicians writing about incarceration since the late 18th century, a vast interdisciplinary literature exists on the institutional landscape. While historians and architects have examined how early communal forms of social welfare and punishment transformed into the stark penitentiaries and fortified compounds of the 20th century (Evans 1982; Ignatieff 1978), criminologists, legal theorists, and philosophers have debated the relative civic effects of imprisonment as a mode of punishment, deterrence, and retribution (Garland 1990; Howe 1994).

Others from sociology, anthropology, and culture studies have considered the lived experience of institutionalization by exploring the psychological impact of the custodial environment on inmates (Clemmer 1940; Goffman 1961), staff (Liebling and Price 2001), dependent children and families (Owen 1998), and even the researchers themselves (Fleisher 1989). Finally, archaeological perspectives have illuminated the material and spatial conditions of the modern institution. This work has revealed a profound dissonance between ideal designed landscapes of disciplinary intention and embodied landscapes of insubordination and compromise. Ultimately, places of confinement are fabricated through the interplay of three distinct modes of social power: domination, resistance, and negotiation.

Disciplinary Space

The years between 1770 and 1850 witnessed a rapid emergence of institutional confinement as a uniquely modern form of social management (Casella 2007; Foucault 1977; Markus 1993). The movement began with John Howard, an English county sheriff who conducted inspection tours of existing jails and debtor’s houses across England, Wales, and Ireland. His influential 1792 report *The State of the Prisons* offered a meticulous account of the scandalous conditions behind the perimeter walls of Britain’s prisons: subterranean dungeons contaminated with human filth; male and female prisoners freely associating in a state of perpetual drunkenness; desperate paupers starving in chains, unable to earn the bribes required by corrupt jailers. Governed primarily by local customs and medieval laws, the vast majority of traditional civic punishments assumed a corporeal form—involving periods of public humiliation administered through the stocks or pillory, or sanguinary retribution such as flogging, branding, and, increasingly over the 18th century, public hanging.

Howard’s relentless exposure of these penal horrors to Parliamentary Committees eventually
generated a new “reformed” penitentiary architecture. Working in close collaboration with Howard, the English architect William Blackburn perfected four “reformed” designs intended not only to improve the ventilation and sanitation of prisons but also to introduce a strict regime of spatial order, classification, and segregation on all inmates (Figure 60.1). A decade later, the early industrialist and utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham published his radical designs for the Panopticon—a cylindrical model devised to emphasize a disciplinary self-reform of the prisoner’s soul over corporal punishment of his flesh. Based on new the spatial medium of architecture, the Panopticon subjected the male inmate to constant (yet unverifiable) judgmental observation. Encased within a ring of cells around a central observational hub, prisoners were exposed to “a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (Foucault 1977: 201). Further, Bentham’s penitentiary introduced the solitary cell as a primary mechanism for both isolating inmates from contaminating associations and encouraging rehabilitative moral self-reflection. By the 1790s, Bentham’s fearful design offered a rational, humane, and yet entirely brutal machine
When Bentham’s principles of surveillance and isolation were merged with Blackburn’s radial plan, a dreadful carceral landscape was born. Consisting of a series of cellblock wings arranged around a centralized custodial hub, penitentiaries of the early 19th century were open internally from ground floor to skylight roof, thereby providing unhindered visual and auditory surveillance over all inhabitants. As guards perambulated the cast-iron balconies of these silent wards, their footfalls muted by the soft leather soles of their specially designed boots, all stray noises were amplified along the long empty corridors. Spy holes were installed into each cell door. Covered by a hinged metal flap on the external side, the mechanism exposed the cell interior to routine inspection while limiting views of the adjoining corridor. Walls and grated windows circumscribed all sensory experiences of the external world. A perpetual disciplinary regime choreographed all movement throughout the institution, with segmented stalls and enclosed exercise yards maintaining inmate solitude even during daily periods of recreation and chapel attendance.

Textures remained similarly prescribed. To both humiliate and discipline the male inmate, expressions of self-identity were restricted through the provision of an identity number and institutional uniform of coarse wool and cotton. Sparsely furnished with an identical set of artifacts, prisoner cells each contained a tin cup, bowl and spoon, an iron or wooden cot, a wool blanket, a white earthenware chamber pot, a broom, a Bible, and a framed list of institutional rules and regulations.

Over the 1820s, as a “carceral enthusiasm” swept the young American Republic (Hirsch 1992), two distinct and competing models of penal organization achieved international acclaim. The “Separate System” of the Eastern State Penitentiary at Cherry Hill, Pennsylvania (1829), assigned inmates to solitary labor at leather boot manufacture within their isolated cells. Conversely, the “Congregate System” of New York’s Auburn State Penitentiary (1823) collected inmates into communal workshops for silent assembly-line work. Two decades later, Imperial Britain established its own infamous “Separate System” penitentiaries for men at Pentonville, England (1842), Port Arthur, Tasmania (1847), and Mountjoy, Ireland (1850). Thus, by the 1850s, the institution had emerged as a rehabilitative landscape, one designed to forge a progressive and internalized transformation of the male criminal.

Britain retained its Victorian era prisons throughout the 20th century (Brodie et al. 2002). Reflecting social rationale behind “imprisonment,” penal facilities have been periodically updated with new security features (reinforced skylight and window glazing, CCTV cameras, high-tension wire mesh between floors) and social amenities (expanded visitation rooms, gymnasiums, multifaith chapels). Nonetheless, as the prison population reached crisis levels over the 1990s, incarceration all too frequently transformed into a daily routine of 23 hours of lock-down within a dangerously overcrowded cell.

In the United States, as state authority became increasingly centralized over the early 20th century, modern technologies of imprisonment continued to perfect the construction of disciplinary space (Friedman 1993). Established under the Department of Justice in 1891, the federal prison system developed a particularly severe form of penitentiary architecture. These forbidding monuments consisted of two separate structures: a three-to-five-storey block of adjoining rows of individual cells, all encased within a massive stone, steel, and concrete façade (Figure 60.2). A landscape of complete surveillance, iron bars (and later, clear reinforced plastic) replaced solid cell doors, and free-standing watch towers guarded the fortified perimeter boundaries. In a stark departure from the optimistic rehabilitative philosophies of the 19th century, these “total institutions” (Goffman 1961) were designed to enforce imprisonment as a painful form of civic retribution. Currently in operation, Leavenworth Penitentiary, Kansas (1895), continues to serve as the largest American maximum-security facility, with approximately 2,000 inmates incarcerated.

Resistance and Insubordination

Despite the disciplinary weight of this carceral landscape, not all inhabitants yield to institutional conditions. Since power exists as both forces of compliance and forces of action, resistance is born at the same moment as domination (Foucault 1977). Further, the shared experience of incarceration frequently cultivates a unique social cohesion among inmates, with various studies revealing a distinct “society of captives” within the penal environment (Clemmer 1940; Fleisher 1989; Giallombardo 1966; Owen 1998; Sykes 1958). Through these alternative social worlds, inmates actively challenge the penal order by materially deploying acts of both individual and collective resistance.

Although recalcitrance does take the extreme form of riots and open rebellions, typical expressions are carefully designed to thwart, rather than
Providing means for a gradual erosion of authority, resistance operates as a loose constellation of daily activities undertaken by inmates for "working the system to their minimum disadvantage" (Hobsbawm 1973: 7). As a result, insubordination tends to address the worst "pains" of imprisonment: deprivation of liberty and freedom of movement, deprivation of goods and services, deprivation of personal identity, deprivation of autonomy, and deprivation of personal security (Sykes 1958).

Archaeological studies have observed that institutional zones related to "unfree labor" (Nicholas 1988) frequently provide a focal site for inmate subversion (Casella 2007). Originally established in 1838, the first Rhode Island State Prison adopted the "Congregate System," with the 1845 addition of a communal industrial workshop to its fortified compound. Through archival research, James Garman linked the failure of an ambitious scheme for the prison manufacture of decorative ladies' fans to intentional inefficiencies, or "foot-dragging strategies," adopted by inmate workers along the assembly line (Garman 2005: 146). Additionally, his work mapped collective patterns of resisting "intra-institutional" offenses from 1872 through 1877 according to specific activity zone. Results demonstrated a clear focus of recalcitrance. Ranging from challenges to the code of silence and refusing to work, to outright destruction of prison property, approximately 60% of the infractions occurred within the penitentiary workshops—that exact institutional space, in other words, specifically designated for inmate congregation and communal labor.

Of course, the most admired form of spatial resistance entails a total rejection of the penal landscape. Material evidence of escape attempts can be found throughout places of confinement. At Johnson’s Island (1862–1865), an American Civil War prison camp for captured Confederate Army officers, archaeological excavation of the latrine features revealed numerous escape tunnels dug into the rear of privy vaults, particularly those nearest the stockade’s western perimeter wall. Probable escape tools were additionally recovered in association with some latrine tunnels, these objects including a large iron bar, a table knife, and the worn distal end of a bovine long bone.

Figure 60.2 Cell Block “A,” Alcatraz Island Federal Penitentiary, California (Library of Congress, HABS CAL, 38-ALCA, 1-A-17).
A similar escape attempt was recovered from Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin. With the incarceration of anti-Treaty and Irish Republican Army (IRA) activists during Ireland’s Civil War (1922–1923), female political prisoners were confined within the recently decommissioned prison on the western edge of Dublin (McCoole 2004). By March 1923, “B” Wing inmates developed plans for an escape tunnel. After establishing a roster, and disguising their digging activities with noisy handball games in the adjoining exercise yard, the women commenced excavation with spoons stolen from the prison kitchen (McCoole 1997: 50). When a matron discovered their plot one month later, the inmates had created a hole 1.2 m—an “archaeological” feature still preserved within the Kilmainham Gaol museum. To pass on the benefits of their stymied efforts to future prisoners, inmate and dedicated nationalist Sighle Humphreys inscribed the plaster at the base of her cell wall with a penciled message (Figure 60.3):

Tunnel begun  
in basement laundry  
inside door on left  
may be of use to successors  
good luck, S.

Requiring a substantial degree of organization and subterfuge on the part of inmates, these escape attempts materially represented a fermentation of collective resistance and inmate solidarity, as communicated through the dramatic rejection of the institutional landscape.

**Negotiated Space**

The experience of incarceration cannot be reduced to a simple oppositional struggle between “staff” and “inmates.” Recognizing the limits of traditional binary models, an increasing number of scholars have interpreted power as a social relationship characterized by plural, varying, and circumstantial moments of opportunity. Offering the term *heterarchy* (Ehrenreich et al. 1995) to emphasize the lateral, nested, and transient structures of power, this theoretical approach supports an exploration of how the austere penal landscape itself becomes negotiated, modified, and compromised (Casella 2007).

Within the carcerel setting, a primary arena of negotiation involves the architecture and basic layout of the institution. As extensively demonstrated by Michel Foucault (1977), disciplinary technologies function by standardizing institutional inhabitants—separating them into isolated, yet fully identical, units. Thus, elements of the built environment that deviate from the standard institutional template represent a form of compromise, an acknowledgment of diversity, and a limit to disciplinary power. The presence of “Secure Wards” within modern penitentiaries demonstrates one such architectural negotiation. Established for the “protective custody” of disenfranchised inmates...
items demonstrated that a covert manufacture of bone dice occurred within the prison workshops. Providing a mechanism for both personal amusement and prohibited gaming activities among inmates, these illicit objects suggested that alternative social networks cut across the disciplinary landscape.

Similar contraband was recovered from Hyde Park Barracks (1819), an early Australian accommodation and administrative facility for male felons in the British penal colony of New South Wales. This assemblage consisted of handcrafted bone and ceramic gaming tokens (Figure 60.4) excavated from underfloor deposits located below the stairway landings. While gaming served as a recreational diversion, it also provided a structured functional mechanism for the illicit circulation of desired goods and services throughout the penal environment.

A distinct spatial focus of these clandestine activities was archaeologically revealed during excavations at the Ross Female Factory (1848), an Australian female prison established in the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). Although contraband appeared throughout the inmate dormitories of the main penal compound, the greatest concentrations of illicit artifacts (coins, olive glass alcohol bottles, and tobacco pipes) were recovered from the earthen floors of the Solitary Cells (Casella 2000, 2002). As places of ultimate punishment, these isolation cells were architecturally fabricated to discipline repeat offenders—those women located at the apex of the “subrosa” economy who were best able to exploit its operation to their own benefit. Thus, the high frequencies of contraband indicated the shadowy dynamics of an alternative inmate landscape within this institution, with covert pathways of internal trade negotiating the disciplinary force of incarceration.
Conclusions

A uniquely modern human experience, incarceration reveals the simultaneous operation of three spatial forms of social power. From the 18th century, penal architecture has sought to elaborate, if not perfect, the imposition of self-discipline and social control. Institutional inmates have responded in kind, undertaking spatially located acts of insubordination designed to reject the penal landscape. But binary models of domination and resistance limit our understandings of incarceration. With the ideal disciplinary template architecturally modified to accommodate a myriad of diverse inhabitants, inmates further negotiate penitential structures by forging their own alternative landscapes of collusion, exploitation, obligation, and material exchange. Analysis of both architectural and archaeological elements of these penal sites has exposed how dynamics of spatial order, social practice, and subordinate agency shape these landscapes of incarceration. Thus, the carceral landscape ultimately represents a complex world of built intention perpetually negotiated by lived compromise.

References