



Against Care: Abolition and the Progressive Jail Assemblage

JUSTIN A. K. HELEPOLOLEI

Colgate University, USA

ABSTRACT *This article uses the concept of a progressive jail assemblage to think about the focus on jails as both a target of social justice organizing and a tool for advancing social justice goals. Drawing on ethnographic research conducted among formerly incarcerated organizers and their allies in Western Massachusetts (New England), I explore how the sheriffs who operate jails in this region, along with their collaborators, have increasingly sought to redefine the figure of the criminal as not just a danger to others but also a danger to themselves, someone in need of rehabilitative treatment and even care. In doing so, these sheriffs have attempted to reinvent their role, from the quintessentially American crime fighting figure, to one who is also a provider of care. Social justice activism has helped to expand the “caring” role of the jail, through increased addiction treatment, re-entry support, and community outreach – even to the extent of incarcerating individuals dealing with addiction who have not been charged with a crime. As progressive jails have been reconfigured as providers of care, abolitionists are confronted with the ongoing dilemma of how to remain a figure opposed to the use of prisons and jails without being seen as against care.*

KEYWORDS abolition; care; assemblage; jail; community organizing; sheriff

Social Justice, Criminal Justice Reform and Prison Abolition

In recent decades, a growing number of social justice activists in the United States have organized in opposition to what has been decried as mass incarceration (Davis, 2003; Gilmore, 2007) or even hyper-incarceration (Wacquant, 2009). Some activists have pushed for reforms to curb the massive expansion of prison construction and use, and to address discrimination and abuse within it, while others have called for the full abolition of prisons, jails, and police (Black Visions Collective, 2020; Davis, 2003; Gilmore, 2022; Kaba & Ritchie, 2022; Maher, 2021; Purnell, 2021). Black Lives Matter protests in 2014, and again in 2020, pushed calls for prison abolition into mainstream political discourse, with debates taking place across social media platforms and

Correspondence Address: Justin A. K. Helepololei, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Colgate University, Hamilton, NY, 13346 USA; email: jhelepololei@colgate.edu

ISSN: 1911-4788



discussions of prison abolition appearing in outlets like *The New York Times* (Kushner, 2019) and *Teen Vogue* (Law, 2021). Campaigns for reform and abolition have tended to emphasize the abject violence within prisons and jails, and the forms of racial, class and gender discrimination that have been endemic to the criminal legal system throughout its existence. Less frequently have abolitionist or reform campaigns highlighted the ways in which social justice activism has helped to produce incarceration as it exists, from the long history of progressive reforms that produced the prison (Foucault, 1995; Rothman, 1980) to the impact of activist movements demanding more policing and prosecution for misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic and racist violence (Murakawa, 2014; Thuma, 2019).

In this article, I draw on ethnographic research in New England to analyze a context in which sheriffs who operate local, county jails and their collaborators see themselves as reformers in what I describe as a “progressive jail assemblage.” I focus on care as one of the distinguishing elements of this assemblage. Care in the progressive jail assemblage is enacted through things like drug addiction treatment, mental and behavioral health programming, peer mentoring and re-entry resources for post-incarceration. Many of these caring elements are the outcomes of social justice campaigns that sought to expand the amount and types of public resources available to incarcerated people. In this context, activists working to abolish jails, as sites of discrimination, coercion, trauma and paternalistic intervention, are put into a position of having to oppose other activists’ efforts to expand the jail’s care. To be in support of abolition, in this context, is to be against care – at least the care promised by sheriffs and demanded by jail reformers. This is not a popular position in communities where resources for drug addiction treatment and mental health are not easily accessible, and where those who work within jails see these sites as critical places for enacting progressive social change. As I explore in this article, a focus on the ways that criminality is reconfigured within a progressive, political context, can help us to better understand how figures of incarceration and criminality reflect the times and places in which they are embedded, as well as how pliant concepts like progress, care, and social justice can be.

Methods

This article draws on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Western Massachusetts, in the New England region of the United States between 2018 and 2021. This research was approved by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Institutional Review Board. I recorded 14 formal interviews with individuals situated within the fields of criminal justice reform and prison abolition, including formerly incarcerated community organizers, prison abolition activists, local politicians, and social service providers. These interviews supplemented hundreds of hours I spent as an active participant in

criminal justice reform campaigns and abolitionist mutual aid projects, in addition to conducting informal observations in courtrooms, jail waiting rooms, public hearings and other points of contact between local jails and surrounding communities. My perspectives are informed by my long-term involvement in prison abolition activism, and by experiences volunteering as a mentor for a re-entry program and as a co-facilitator of a jail-based think tank within local, county jails beginning in 2014. As an activist, educator, and volunteer, I interacted with local jails in various capacities, and these multiple angles and modes of interaction have come to shape my analysis of the jail and its relationship to social justice.

The Progressive Jail Assemblage

The institution of the jail came to North America through European settler colonization. In the region known today as New England, jails were introduced by Puritan colonists who established theocratic communities in the 1600s. Puritan authorities utilized fines, corporal punishment, and in some cases, execution, to respond to acts of interpersonal harm and to reinforce religious codes of behavior (Manion, 2015). Jails were operated at the town level, and used to detain individuals who were awaiting judgment, and sometimes punishment, by town authorities. Puritan town leaders concerned themselves with the moral comportment of town residents, and especially those who failed to uphold religious and civic norms. Individuals deemed sexual deviants, women who rejected expected gender roles, members of other religious sects, members of the Indigenous communities that had been displaced by colonies and had so far survived genocide, and enslaved or formerly enslaved Africans and their descendants were all subjected to high degrees of surveillance and discipline (Mofford, 2011).

In their current-day form, jails in Massachusetts are run by local, county sheriffs. All Massachusetts jails are publicly funded institutions, and the sheriffs who run them are elected officials. Officially, sheriffs operate two distinct institutions that are combined within a shared physical structure: a “jail” and a “house of corrections.” Jails are operated with the primary function of detaining those awaiting trial, and houses of corrections are where those sentenced to 2.5 years of imprisonment or less are incarcerated. In practice, these combined institutions are referred to as the “jail and house of corrections,” but more commonly, as simply “the jail.” Reflecting this common usage, I refer to these combined sites as the jail. In Massachusetts, individuals who are sentenced by a state court to more than 2.5 years of incarceration are incarcerated in prisons, which are run by the Massachusetts state government. In addition to running county jails, sheriffs are charged with the responsibility of transporting prisoners to and from courthouses and with enforcing orders of eviction for landlords.

County jails are important sites to study the cultural, political and economic dynamics that shape incarceration because of the ways they are embedded in local, regional and national contexts (Irwin, 1985). Jails tend to be smaller than state-operated prisons and are more likely to be located near population centers. The sheriffs who run them must appeal to voters in the region for election and re-election, to state legislators for annual funding, and to local, regional and national agencies and private foundations for grant funding for specific programs. Jails contract with local and national vendors for commissary and cafeteria food, phone and internet access, healthcare and various other essential needs. Jails employ local community members as paid staff and as volunteers. And in many places, jails collaborate with local non-profit organizations, including churches and colleges, as well as state health and welfare agencies. In these and other ways, jails shape and are shaped by the interests and priorities of the communities in which they are situated (Schept, 2013).

In Western Massachusetts, the location of my ethnographic research, there are four counties: Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, and Berkshire. In each county, residents elect a separate sheriff who oversees the operation of their respective county jail. In the case of Hampden County, the largest, the sheriff oversees a men's and a women's jail, in addition to an addiction treatment facility, and a post-incarceration re-entry program. Within these counties, incarceration takes the form of what I describe above as a progressive jail assemblage. I use the term progressive to reflect the ways sheriffs and the individuals and agencies they collaborate with describe the jails in which they are engaged, although as I describe below these claims are contested. In using the term progressive, I also draw on scholarship from similar contexts, including Hackett's (2013) analysis of gender responsive, prisoner re-entry programming, Schept's (2015) ethnography of campaigns to build and to oppose a progressive "justice campus," Arutunyan's (2017) analysis of jail renovations and programming expansions, and Shange's (2019) analysis of anti-Black disciplinary practices in a progressive, social justice-oriented high school. In the context of Western Massachusetts, progressive jailing is characterized by an active orientation towards reform, an emphasis on treatment and rehabilitation, an investment in intensive community engagement, the acknowledgment of systemic inequalities, and an overarching framework of care.

I use the notion of an assemblage to draw attention to the jail as a project that exceeds the physical structure of the institution itself and that involves more than the formal staff of the sheriff's department. The concept of an assemblage has been used by Tsing (2015) and others to describe these kinds of contingent, heterogeneous convergences of actors. Rather than using terms like network, apparatus, or collectif, which suggest a more stable structure, Murray Li (2007) argues that an analytic of assemblage helps to highlight process and contingency in governmental and non-governmental interventions, making more apparent: (a) the agency involved in the ongoing act of

assembling; (b) the range of practices through which different elements are assembled; and (c) the diverse set of situated actors that produce the assemblage and all of the varied rationalities they bring to it. Lancione (2014) uses “assemblages of care” to describe the city of Turin’s responses to homelessness, implemented through a barrage of policies, institutions, discourses, spaces and technological actants, such as bunk beds, waiting lists, and ID cards (Lancione, 2014, p. 36).

Lopez (2020) uses the concept of a “necropolitical care assemblage” to describe the patchwork of community organizations, non-profit social services, hospitals, jails and shelters that women who use drugs and who do not have stable housing are forced to navigate in San Francisco, another progressive political context. Lopez describes this assemblage as the result of neoliberal disinvestment from a robust social welfare state, which has resulted in a safety net that itself produces acute physical and psychological suffering and prolonged proximity to death (Lopez, 2020, p. 4). Lopez’ conceptualization of a necropolitical care assemblage is particularly relevant in that it accounts for the potential costs and harmful outcomes of care-oriented interventions, which require individuals to demonstrate that they are suffering in order to receive care. In Western Massachusetts, jailing appears to operate under more expansive dynamics, wherein care is imposed as a means of tough love, to stop the figure of the criminal-as-patient from harming themselves or causing harm to others.

Scholars have noted that care can be the intended focus of an assemblage, or it can be an object of contestation between different actors. Routon (2021), documenting the provision of legal assistance to migrant families within detention centers in the United States, describes a friction between legal advocates who support migrant children and parents, and the administrators of the detention centers where families are detained. Routon argues that “administrative authorities repeatedly deploy putative care in ways that reinforce oppressive orders,” while legal advocates enacted their own forms of care for detained families, sometimes exceeding their expected role as legal advocates (Routon, 2021, p. 332). This kind of contestation over care is apparent in the progressive jail assemblage, in which diverse actors draw on competing notions of reform while insisting on why their reforms are better (i.e., more effective, more liberatory, more urgent).

Beckett and Murakawa’s concept of a “shadow carceral state” is relevant in this context, especially in naming the ways that progressive jailing extends the carceral state apparatus into more sectors of social life, such as addiction (2012). The progressive jail assemblage differs in that its reach is not intended to be hidden at all. On the contrary, sheriffs and their collaborators in this context use local and national media to publicize the ways they have extended their reach into the community. They make explicit appeals to community members for more support and participation. The concept of a progressive jail assemblage helps draw attention to the ways that incarceration in this context is co-produced by a range of actors, including the state, non-profit

organizations, universities, private companies, and individual volunteers with varying motives.

Lastly, the concept of the “prison industrial complex” while also relevant, falls short in explaining support for incarceration in this context (Critical Resistance, n.d.). Progressive jails, like any others, generate profits for private companies with commissary and phone contracts; sheriffs, corrections officers, and other jail staff and their unions support policies that keep them employed. However, such a focus on the ways that incarceration is driven by the overlapping interests of government and industry risks missing some of the other motivations that animate participants in the progressive jail assemblage. These include various forms of social justice activism, as well as religious evangelism, commitments to sobriety mentorship, and ideas of volunteering as civic duty. Profit is not enough to explain all the investments of time, money, and care that go towards sustaining incarceration in this context, especially for those community members who receive no economic return. Where the framework of a prison industrial complex, as used by scholars and activists, connotes a stable arrangement that works towards mutually reinforcing self-interests, the progressive jail assemblage I describe is a far less coherent, often conflicting convergence of actors, institutions, and policies that has nevertheless resulted in the sustained incarceration of thousands of men and women. These differences become more apparent when considering how figures within the assemblage are re-worked, taking on new shapes and meanings in response to changing logics of incarceration. The act of jailing someone is part of a social and legal process that designates specific individuals as criminals, and in doing so, defines what constitutes the figure of the criminal in that community. In this same process, the figure of the crime fighter is produced through jailing criminals. The progressive jail assemblage re-configures criminals and crime-fighters in ways that respond to social justice activism. If jails are seen as treatment centers, then criminals are those who need treatment, and sheriffs are those who provide it.

Carceral Care in Western Massachusetts

In this section I describe several examples of the progressive jail assemblage in action in Western Massachusetts. These initiatives exemplify the ways in which local jails orient towards care. I utilize the concept of carceral care, drawing on Sufrin’s (2017) engaged ethnography of medical “jailcare” for women in California, Hwang’s critical research (2019) on the California Department of Corrections policies geared towards incarcerating trans prisoners, which worked at odds with prisoners’ own forms of deviant care, and Martin’s (2021) analysis of halfway houses in Massachusetts as sites of ongoing, post-incarceration discipline and care. While this case study focuses on counties in Western Massachusetts, these kinds of interventions are typical within a growing trend among some law enforcement agencies to orient their

capacities toward social issues like addiction, homelessness and mental health. Pishko (2019) has described this movement, also highlighting the Hampden County Sheriff's Department's initiatives, as well as comparable efforts by the Albany County Sheriff's Office in New York state. Horowitz and Gowan (2023) have described how a Midwestern drug court intended to divert people from incarceration, imposes addiction treatment, while still maintaining gendered and racialized forms of discrimination. Additional examples of coercive care in progressive contexts include New York City's Mayor Eric Adams' instructions to police to enforce state laws that allow forced hospitalization for mental illness and California Governor Gavin Newsom's "CARE Courts" proposal to create court-ordered care plans targeted towards house-less Californians.

Care for the Individual

One of the primary ways that jails in Western Massachusetts have emphasized their progressive orientation is through programming focused on addiction treatment and recovery. The Franklin County Jail and House of Corrections, under the current Sheriff Christopher Donelan, became a national leader in employing a Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) model for treating prisoners with opioid use disorders. Within a MAT model, opioid users are prescribed medications intended to alleviate the symptoms of opioid withdrawal with the goal of helping them to gradually decrease their dependence and eventually desist from using opioids. On the Franklin County Sheriff's Office website, Sheriff Donelan describes how, as sheriff of Franklin County since 2010, he has shifted the jail "from a place where the mission was containment of offenders to what today resembles a locked treatment facility."¹ The website goes on to describe how:

Using evidence-based treatment, including mindfulness and DBT, to being one of the first Houses of Corrections in the country to offer Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT), Sheriff Donelan's leadership has made the Franklin County House of Corrections a national model for addiction and mental health treatment.

In interviews and press releases, Sheriff Donelan has been described as embracing a "trauma-informed" public health approach to jailing, with practices more like "European jails." The approaches to treatment that Sheriff Donelan describes are made possible by an array of jail staff, including social workers, educators, and re-entry coordinators. These paid staff are supplemented by volunteers from the surrounding community, some affiliated with local non-profit organizations. The jail has worked with a variety of local, university-based partners, to expand educational opportunities, but also to

¹ "Learn About the Sheriff" Franklin County Sheriff's Office. Accessed August 25, 2023: <https://www.fcso-ma.us/learn-about-the-sheriff>

conduct public health research and to publicize their addiction treatment programming (Donelan et al., 2021).

In Hampden County, I interviewed a social worker named Caleb who assists individuals leaving incarceration.² Caleb compared Western Massachusetts, where he works now, to other places in the United States where he had worked previously. The difference, as he put it, is:

Chronic drug addiction is being talked of here more. [Just] throwing people in jail is not helping them. They need help managing addiction, seeing a therapist. Why are people using drugs in the first place?

Caleb described how his work in Hampden County involves using psychological evaluation tools to assess formerly incarcerated people and assign them programming that they are required to complete, which can include attending faith-oriented support groups like Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous, as well as various modes of psychotherapy and individual and group counseling. The discursive re-configuring of the jail as a “locked treatment facility” by Sheriff Donelan, and the centering of drug addiction as an issue central to prisoner re-entry by social workers like Caleb, are expressions of a specific figuration of roles within the jail assemblage, through which jailers define their work as public health provision, and their prisoners as the recipients of care.

While this shift towards treatment is framed by those working in jail contexts as a positive shift, some incarcerated people have experienced this in negative ways. Izzy, a formerly incarcerated organizer I interviewed, described his frustration with treatment programming:

They just made me do drug programs, which didn't benefit me in any way because I wasn't an addict. I sold drugs. I wasn't an addict. I still had to do like all these other programs. That didn't make any sense. But, I guess to them, it made sense because they got their numbers, and they got what they needed out of it.

Even though Izzy openly identifies as someone who was incarcerated for selling drugs rather than using them, he was misrecognized within the jail's overarching treatment paradigm. Other incarcerated people expressed similar frustrations at being assumed to be drug addicts, simply by virtue of being incarcerated. As a result, they were forced to participate in addiction programming for which they felt they had no need, and which they felt took time away from positive actions they could be taking in other areas of their lives, including finding employment and participating in higher education programs. When Izzy and others attempted to refuse addiction treatment, they were seen by social workers and jail administrators as being in denial of their presumed diagnosis. In Izzy's analysis, compulsory treatment for all incarcerated people only makes sense as a strategy for the jail to be able to put

² All interview participants have been given pseudonyms.

more prisoners into drug programming – to “get their numbers.” In doing so, the sheriff’s department, as well as non-profit partners and public health collaborators, can demonstrate the need for drug programming in the jail and the lengths to which they are going to provide care in the form of addiction treatment. The harm of this mode of compulsory care, in addition to wasting time and resources and contributing to the frustration of incarcerated people, is a type of epistemic violence in which incarcerated people’s perspectives, their knowledge of themselves and others, is devalued.

Care for the Community

Jails in Western Massachusetts also engage in forms of care that extend beyond the population of people they incarcerate. These interventions included initiatives that opened jail spaces to new demographics of people (including non-criminals) and initiatives that brought the jail outward into surrounding communities. Treatment for addiction and mental and behavioral health in jails in Western Massachusetts has not been limited to convicted or suspected criminals. In Hampden County, Sheriff Nicholas Cocchi extended the jail’s role to include the incarceration of people based solely on addiction. This is possible in Massachusetts through the Section 35 legal process, in which a court can approve an order for someone to undergo “involuntary civil commitment” even if they have not been charged with a crime. A Section 35 can be imposed if a family member, doctor or police officer petitions a judge to have someone taken into custody because their use of alcohol or another substance “substantially injures the person's health or substantially interferes with the person's social or economic functioning” (Massachusetts General Law 123, par. 35).

In 2018, the Hampden County Sheriff’s Department opened the “Stonybrook Stabilization and Treatment Center,” utilizing some of the jail’s surplus capacity to house people incarcerated under Section 35. In so doing, Hampden County became the only jail in the United States to establish a program for involuntary commitments. While other states have similar policies, involuntary civil commitments are usually carried out in hospitals or mental health facilities. Since creating this unit, Sheriff Cocchi has received a high degree of support. In various press releases and interviews, former Section 35 detainees, as well as their families, have spoken in praise of the program. As one parent described on WBUR, a Boston affiliate of National Public Radio, “[My son] was telling me how good he felt about the care he was receiving... He said that it feels like one of the better treatment places he's been in. He's been to well over a dozen private and public rehabilitation centers” (Becker 2022). For families like this, the dire shortage of spaces in addiction recovery programs means that the jail might also be their only option for on-demand treatment. The Pioneer Valley Project, a multi-racial and multi-faith grassroots community organization that campaigns on progressive issues like ending gun

violence, supporting immigrant access to driver's licenses, and ending police brutality, has worked with the sheriff to expand Section 35 resources to house women as well men "to address this glaring inequity" in which women in Hampden County have not had "the same access to treatment as men do" (Pioneer Valley Project 2020).

Despite this support, there has been substantial criticism of the Section 35 policy, and specifically of the Hampden County Sheriff's Department's placement of people under involuntary civil commitment within a jail setting. In 2019, the advocacy organization Prisoners' Legal Services filed a lawsuit to end the practice of using correctional facilities for involuntary civil commitments. The lawsuit was filed on behalf of three men who alleged that they were treated as if they were criminals while being held under Section 35. In an article about the lawsuit, one civilly-committed man attested that:

There is no real difference between how I am treated now and what it was like when I was here as an inmate... although most officers are professional, some are on a power trip and talk to me like I'm worthless or as if I had done some terrible crime to get here.

He goes on to describe how people incarcerated in the civil commitment unit can be confined to their cells for up to 24 hours, as punishment for offenses like being argumentative or having a "bad attitude."

In 2019, the Massachusetts legislature established a statewide Section 35 commission with the task of evaluating the use of the involuntary civil commitment policy. The commission included 25 state legislators, judges, representatives from executive offices and legal scholars. With the exception of state representative Michael Finn, who represents the district that includes the Hampden County Jail, all of the members of the committee supported ending the practice of using jails for involuntary civil commitments, citing a lack of evidence for its efficacy when compared to voluntary treatment, as well as the heightened risk of overdose that people experience after being incarcerated, and the disruptive impacts that come with any form of incarceration through which people lose jobs, housing and family relationships. A majority of the committee voted in favor of recommending alternative public, community-based services for addiction treatment, rather than continuing to support the jail-based practice, but this committee was advisory in nature and could impose no changes based on their findings. In a separate study, University of Massachusetts-based public health researchers interviewed patients, family members and staff of the Hampden County Jail. Their report is similarly critical of jail-based Section 35 commitments, warning in even broader terms, that "involuntary civil commitment to treatment for opioid use disorder carries significant potential harms that, if unaddressed, may outweigh its benefits" (Evans et al., 2020, p. 733). Despite these concerns that involuntary civil commitment might be doing more harm than good, the Massachusetts legislature has continued to fund Section-35 commitments in Hampden County, and through the Massachusetts Department of Corrections.

The Berkshire County jail in Pittsfield, Massachusetts is the site of a different orientation to community care. Over the past three years, the jail has been helping to supply the surrounding community with sustainably grown food. In 2020, the Berkshire County Sheriff's Department added a \$500,000 aquaponics greenhouse, in which incarcerated people are trained to grow up to six varieties of lettuce, using water fertilized by hundreds of tilapia fish raised in tanks in the facility. The operation can grow up to 900 heads of lettuce a week. In the words of one correctional officer describing the program:

Forty-five days after they plant that seed, they hold two heads of lettuce and think, 'This one is going to feed myself and my brothers in the House of Correction, and this one is going to go to some homeless people who have it harder than me.' (Garver, 2020)

As the correctional officer describes, some of the lettuce is used by the jail and some is donated to community organizations, including South Congregational Church, the Berkshire Food Project, and the Berkshire United Way. These nonprofit partner organizations distribute the food to cash-poor, community members across the county. The Berkshires region is known for seasonal tourism and prestigious cultural institutions, but it also bears a legacy of industrial abandonment and contamination, rural poverty, and limited public services. Stuck with fewer jobs, and facing rising living costs, residents rely on the food distributed through these organizations, which includes food produced by the jail.

As final examples of how jails in Western Massachusetts have expanded their care to include non-criminals, during the Covid-19 pandemic Sheriff Cocchi gained recognition for the jail's use of manufacturing capacities and incarcerated labor to produce hand sanitizer and face masks, which were distributed for free to local municipalities. The sheriff even converted a section of the jail into free temporary housing for local first responders (police, doctors, nurses, EMTs and paramedics, and firefighters) who needed a place to stay that would not endanger their families, although their presence did increase the number of people with potential Covid-19 exposure moving in and out of the jail. Beyond the grounds of the jail, the sheriff's department even hosts basketball tournaments, youth summer camps, and back-to-school supply giveaways.

As a result of these interventions, the people who are incarcerated within the jail or who are targeted by jail programs are not solely convicted criminals, or even suspected criminals. The category of residents being cared for within the jail includes community members who are being incarcerated by the sheriff's department because of their addiction, and even those offered shelter because of public health needs during the Covid-19 pandemic. On the outside, individuals who received food from the aquaponic greenhouse or hand sanitizer and face masks from the jail are recipients of the progressive jail assemblage's care efforts, despite not being deemed criminals. Through these actions, the figurations of the jail and of jail staff are expanded to include

caregiving. The progressive jail is a place where people deemed to be social problems are taken, as well as a place from which resources for addressing social problems are distributed.

The Progressive Jail Assemblage in Context

In Massachusetts, an emphasis on rehabilitation through carceral care long predates the current moment of addiction treatment. It also precedes the shifts of neoliberal policy regimes that other scholars have cited in explaining the individualized disciplining of progressive punishment (Schept, 2015). The contemporary jail builds on a long legacy of interventions through which the state, with the assistance of voluntary associations, has endeavored to produce moral citizens through incarceration, treatment and surveillance. Social reform projects that have influenced jailing in Massachusetts include alcohol temperance movements, the use of “poor farms” as welfare for indigent community members, the creation and closure of state hospitals to treat neurodivergent and morally deviant individuals, eugenics movements targeting poor and indigenous families, and efforts to better assimilate racialized immigrants, Indigenous people and Black Americans (Panzarella, 2002; Mofford, 2011; Ben-Moshe, 2020). Claiming an orientation towards care is something that jails have been doing in Massachusetts since their inception, even while remaining places of heightened potential for abuse, social alienation, exploitation, and infantilization.

Much of the recent scholarship and activism around mass incarceration has focused on the sustained legacy of slavery and anti-Black racism within the history of prisons and jails in the United States (Alexander, 2010; Woodfox, 2019). And while the history of chattel slavery and convict leasing in the American South has had a major influence on criminal justice systems across the United States, prisons and jails in New England also have the distinct regional history described above. Like prisons and jails throughout the United States, jails in New England disproportionately incarcerate Black, Indigenous and Latinx community members. Although jails and houses of corrections in Western Massachusetts rely on work by prisoners to function they have not been primarily designed or operated for the purpose of extracting prison labor, unlike the slave plantations converted into prison farms that continue to exist in states like Louisiana and Mississippi. Only a small percentage of incarcerated people in Western Massachusetts work within “jail industries” producing goods or services for other public agencies, or for the “community service” crews that leave the premises of the jail to do manual labor within the county for payments of as little as one dollar a day. Exploitative as these work assignments are, they are often highly coveted positions. They are one of the few opportunities through which incarcerated people are allowed to leave the pods in which they are incarcerated, and one of few legal ways to make money before release.

Rather than extracting manual labor from prisoners, the progressive jail generates value – and purpose – through programming. Incarcerated people are enticed into engaging in classes and therapy with offers of greater freedom or “good time” that can count toward an earlier release, but they also they face coercion through the threat of further restriction within the jail. Jails and the partner organizations they collaborate with “get their numbers,” as Izzy argues, by using attendance to justify the budgets that pay for further programming, and by extension, for the ongoing employment of jail and program staff. Most of the captive population is not being put to work in factories or in fields; rather, it is being assessed and saturated with rehabilitative programming by caring social workers like Caleb. In this context, the “success stories” of rehabilitated individuals revolve around abstaining from drug use, securing formal employment and housing, and avoiding re-incarceration. Some formerly-incarcerated individuals return to the jail as peer mentors to share their successful experiences as motivation, and to coach others through the rehabilitative process. But the progressive jail also welcomes back those who fail and need further support in their rehabilitation. Re-entry workers like Caleb described feeling discouraged when the same people cycle through the jail, but remained hopeful that, eventually, their rehabilitative efforts would stick once people had the correct “mindset” to change their ways.

While an explicitly Christian orientation to penance and redemption guided early jail policies, a secular and science-based orientation has become more prominent, especially in evidence-based and trauma-informed approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of addiction and mental health disorders. The progressive jail’s Christian heritage remains visible, however, in chaplain-led bible study groups and faith-oriented addiction programming like Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous. But jails have also incorporated practices from westernized Buddhist traditions – such as bringing mindfulness meditations into required daily meetings and allowing outside facilitators to lead prisoners through yoga. Through these modalities, sheriffs and their collaborators offer the progressive jail assemblage as a publicly funded resource for fighting the disease of addiction and for providing resources for mental health, but the jail also remains a platform for religious evangelization as well as secular and spiritual modalities of self-improvement and self-realization.

Along with the ideological commitments of the people involved, jail programming is informed by the priorities of federal, state and local funding sources. Administrative staff and treatment professionals within the jails compete with other jails for grants to sustain and expand programming. Non-profit organizations run programs within sheriff’s departments through collaborative partnerships funded by government agencies, private foundations, and individual donations. Not only do jails generate economic value from this captive market, they also derive purpose. According to the sheriff’s departments, and even in testimonials from incarcerated people, these programs save lives. Similar to what Crewe and Ievins (2020) describe, some formerly incarcerated people and their family members see jails in Western

Massachusetts as sites of reinvention, where people shed addiction, gain tools for managing their struggles, and find resources to build new lives. These investments by the jails and their collaborators are appreciated by many in Western Massachusetts, where other resources for help with addiction or mental health struggles are extremely limited. Community organizations in Western Massachusetts have helped sheriffs secure funding to provide services like Medically Assisted Treatment in jail and even Involuntary Civil Commitments. The form that the jail has taken here is a product of social struggles demanding more care from the state. In addition, many of the features of the progressive jail assemblage are the outcomes of direct efforts by individual community members and grassroots organizations to do things like bring permaculture and organic food into jails, increase access to education and books, and even increase access to voting – initiatives that I and other abolitionists have initiated or supported.

As I discuss in the next section, the competing, converging, and conflicting social justice efforts that produce the progressive jail assemblage have done so by re-framing the figure of the criminal as a patient in need of treatment, and even as a victim of structural inequalities in need of support. This re-configuration of the criminal as patient, threat, and victim, occurs in parallel to the re-configuration of crime-fighting sheriffs and their collaborators as providers of care. These shifts have implications for the figure of the abolitionist, who, in opposing the existence of the jail, is put in a position of opposing the care and social justice work that the jail provides.

Figures of the Progressive Jail Assemblage

Within the progressive jail assemblage, the figure of the criminal is made into a figure needing care, a person who is not only a danger to others, but also to themselves. Schept (2015), describes how proponents of the construction of a progressive justice campus in Bloomington, Indiana, needed to define a “jail(able) population” that was “culturally and morally inferior,” but not so threatening to the surrounding community that they might oppose construction, a figure whose “behavior and ways of thinking rendered them in need of carceral treatment” (Schept, 2015, p. 95). A similar pattern is present in Western Massachusetts, where carceral care has become so focused on addiction treatment that a legal determination of criminality is not even required for someone to be incarcerated, and anyone incarcerated may be assumed to be an addict. The progressive jail is therefore not just a place for incarcerating criminals. It is for those in need of care. And the sheriffs who oversee jails in Western Massachusetts are not just figures of crime fighting, but also figures of care provision. The Hampden County Sheriff’s Department uses the concept of “enlightened corrections” to bridge these roles. The re-configuration of the Franklin County jail as “a locked treatment facility” mirrors the medicalizing language that scholars have found in other contexts

(Byrd, 2016). By emphasizing rehabilitation through a forceful kind of “pastoral care,” sheriffs in progressive political contexts re-configure the jail as an institution that is responsive to the rehabilitation needs of those it incarcerates, to the safety needs of the broader community, and to the pressures to reform coming from community-based activists (Garcia, 2015). Despite this investment in care by sheriffs, tensions remain among jail staff, highlighting the different roles expected of the figure of the corrections officer. While some employees of the progressive jail assemblage have joined specifically to improve the care offered to incarcerated people, other staff see incarcerated people as criminals who deserve punishment but are instead being coddled by progressives. I experienced this contrast in the ways that different corrections officers would respond when I helped to facilitate educational programming in two separate jails. Some officers expressed encouragement and support for jail-based education, and others arbitrarily delayed class start times or refused to allow standard teaching materials that had already been approved. This co-existence of ideologies within the jail assemblage does not negate the discursive dominance of care, but rather helps us to see the processual and tentative nature of the jail, as an assemblage of multiple and even competing logics.

This complexity has a bearing on how we, as social justice activists, position ourselves in relationship to the jail. In the spring of 2020, incarcerated organizers and their allies mobilized to respond to the crisis of Covid-19, raising awareness of higher rates of infection and death within prisons and jails, and advocating for the immediate release of incarcerated people (UCLA Law, 2021). During this time, I joined with other abolitionists to form a coalition to support prisoners, which we called Decarcerate Western Mass. We drew explicitly on a framework of mutual aid, a form of self-organized, non-hierarchical support, which many people were becoming familiar with through community-based responses to Covid-19 (Spade, 2020). We began writing letters with incarcerated people, sending in money for food and medical supplies, raising money to bail people out, and raising public awareness about dangerous conditions inside the county’s jails. In Hampden County, prisoners circulated and signed a petition that demanded access to medical care, personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, adequate food, and phone calls with family members. On the outside, Decarcerate Western Mass, working with the partner of the incarcerated organizer who began the petition, planned a “car rally” to bring attention to their demands and to show support to prisoners in the jail. We organized around 50 cars to drive slowly by the jail as a protest, honking our car horns and hanging signs out the car windows that called for abolition. We were loud enough that people incarcerated were able to hear us and know that they had our support. And, unexpectedly, we were also successful in pressuring the sheriff to meet with us and with activists from other organizations over Zoom. In an excerpt from my field notes I describe our interaction:

June 18, 2020, Thursday 4pm, Zoom Call

Before anyone else on the call can say anything, the sheriff begins speaking, saying that he wants to turn the conversation over to us, but first he “wants to commend us on the drive by,” which he felt was “done with class, and done in an appropriate fashion.” I feel annoyed. I try to make eye contact with other activists, but I remember we’re on zoom and no one can tell who I’m looking at, so I text the group that it sounds like maybe we need to be more disruptive next time. The sheriff talks a while longer, saying how glad he is for our input. He finally gives up the floor that he’s taken within the meeting, saying “I’m all yours.” We relate the demands that are listed on the petition written by people incarcerated in his jail. The sheriff objects to the word “demands.” He says that he’ll consider them suggestions, since the word “demand” is so “aggressive,” - and he really wants to work *with* us. He responds to each of the issues, saying that he’ll investigate our concerns with medical attention, that his department has been doing thousands of free video calls (more than any other jail he adds), and that the variety of meals had only been limited during a two-week lockdown in response to Covid-19 infections, but since then they were back to normal.

The partner of an incarcerated organizer responds, emphasizing that these demands are not being met, and that they are based on what people inside are experiencing. She says that she, as the loved one of someone inside, feels especially responsible for supporting people inside. She states that her bigger goal is to have more resources for people coming out of incarceration. The sheriff responds with praise for her passion. He asks her and anyone else in the group if they’d be interested in touring the jails to see what conditions are really like. He then suggests that we could start a program within his department’s After Incarceration Support System (AISS) to help people leaving incarceration. The partner says she’ll consider it. The meeting ends with an invitation from the sheriff to stay in communication. On our side, we reiterate the need for the sheriff to meet the demands of the protesters and to welcome external independent oversight to ensure that demands have been met. We are met with a smile as he signs off.

As this excerpt from my field notes demonstrates, even after we coordinated a rally to protest the jail, one in which we called explicitly for the abolition of prisons and jails, our group was invited to host our own program within the jail assemblage. The sheriff expressed minimal interest in what the content of this hypothetical program would be, and it is unclear how much support a program that we started would have, but nevertheless, he responded to our critique by inviting our collaboration. The sheriff fought back against our attempts to distance ourselves from him and enumerated the ways his jail was providing more care than other jails. He re-framed our demands as suggestions, and positioned himself as equally committed to providing care for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people. He imposed a dilemma on us, of whether to join with him in improving support for incarcerated people, or work against him.

Within this kind of dilemma, a rejection of the sheriff’s invitation to collaborate could reinforce an image of the abolitionist as an intransigent, militant figure, committed more to an abstract political idea than to real,

incarcerated people and their immediate needs. And yet, many abolitionists in Western Massachusetts, me included, have found ways to use these kinds of invitations to support the demands of incarcerated people and their loved ones – as they have articulated them – while still articulating a critique of sheriffs as figures of care. From activism to get sheriffs and the state legislature to improve conditions in jails and prisons, to working with bail clerks to make the process of bailing people out easier, to volunteering to provide educational and voting opportunities within jails, we have tried to find a balance of working within the opportunities created by the progressive jail assemblage, while working to get as many people out as possible.

The scholar-activist group Critical Resistance (2021) has published guides to address the dilemma that abolitionists face. They distinguish between “abolitionist steps” and “reformist reforms.” Abolitionist steps reduce the number of people incarcerated, reduce the reach of the criminal legal system, reduce the funding and resources that go towards incarceration, and increase support for alternative practices for addressing harm outside of carceral institutions. Reformist reforms attempt to make positive changes to carceral institutions without reducing their capacity or building up alternatives, and in doing so risk further expanding and entrenching incarceration. Some of the activist campaigns that abolitionists in Western Massachusetts engaged in met the criteria of abolitionist steps, while other projects have arguably helped to legitimize or even subsidize the progressive jail assemblage through progressive reforms and volunteer labor. In both cases, for many of us, what has guided our decision-making on whether to compromise has been a commitment to supporting the self-determination of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people. We have sought to support self-determination by building up the leadership of people directly impacted by incarceration, and by centering their analyses in deciding what needs to change. In doing so, we are attempting to fight against figurations of incarcerated people as dangerous criminals and as helpless patients, and instead to insist on considering them as experts in their own experience. As Turner et al. (2023) argue, citing Du Bois, “the ultimate success of abolition depends upon its ability to upend epistemes of domination.” Abolitionists do so when we listen to people as they articulate their own needs and priorities, and work to support those rather than imposing the care we think they need.

Conclusion: Social Justice and the Progressive Jail Assemblage

This article uses the concept of a progressive jail assemblage to describe the diverse range of actors and logics that sustain incarceration in Western Massachusetts. Research on jailing in this context can add to the existing literature on incarceration, which has come to focus largely on neoliberalism as an overarching, explanatory framework for current carceral practices, or has emphasized the historical continuity between plantation slavery and prisons in

the South of the United States, often ignoring more specific regional histories and political economies. This case study can help scholars and activists to better understand the persistence of carceral responses to harm in politically progressive contexts, in ways that include but also deviate from the dynamics captured by terminology like the “prison industrial complex” (Critical Resistance, n.d.) or “shadow carceral state” (Beckett & Murakawa, 2012). Here, carceral care is demanded by some as a public good, and celebrated, as a community investment. The progressive jail emerges as an outcome of successful, social justice activism.

In Western Massachusetts, reformers from within and outside the jail assemblage have sought with some success to transform jails into locked treatment facilities. As a result, abolitionists who are opposed to the very existence of the jail must contend with the broad popularity of sheriffs and of the care that they claim to provide. This popularity persists, even as jails remain sites of heightened risk of abuse, neglect, and discrimination. It persists, even as public health researchers, state legislators, and incarcerated people insist that carceral care is causing more harm than good. And it does so largely by inviting critics into cooperation. The progressive jail assemblage persists through collaboration and entanglement, where even those who are opposed to its existence are invited in as partners.

Finally, by focusing attention on the figures of the caring sheriff and of the prisoner-as-patient, this article demonstrates the ways in which social justice activists in New England continue to enter and build on long legacy of jail reform. In this sense, the progressive jail assemblage is not new at all, but rather continues a long tradition of paternalistic care, drawing on earlier figures of carceral repression and rehabilitation. Attention to the figuration of crime in context can help us to see the ways in which progressive jailing puts abolitionists into an uneasy position, of either becoming a collaborator within the jail assemblage, or of risking being seen as someone who is against care. While this article has sought to offer a case study approach, focusing on incarceration in a politically progressive context, the dynamics I explore have resonance anywhere in which prisons or jails are adapting to growing social justice activism (Levenson et al, 2023). As more jails in more places draw on ideas of care to justify their existence, more abolitionists will need to figure out how they will respond.

Acknowledgments

This analysis is my own, but the research is indebted to Cassandra Bensahih, Derrick Washington, Tamik Kirkland, The Elm Street Think Tank, Great Falls Books Through Bars, Decarcerate Western Mass, UMass Alliance for Community Transformation, and especially to Jackie Velez, Katie Talbot, Don Perry, Khalil Rodriguez, Izzy Rivera, and Messiah Allah. Funding for this research came from the Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship and the

Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Dissertation Research Grant.

References

- Alexander, M. (2010). *The New Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. The New Press.
- Arutunyan, I. (2017). *The progressive jail: An exploration of carceral living conditions and employment/educational life plans* [Unpublished masters thesis]. San Jose State University.
- Becker, D. (2022, May 31). *Mass. is poised to spend millions on forced addiction treatment, reigniting debate over system*. WBUR News.
<https://www.wbur.org/news/2022/05/24/massachusetts-section-35-drug-jail-money-debate>
- Beckett, K., & Murakawa, N. (2012). Mapping the shadow carceral state: Toward an institutionally capacious approach to punishment. *Theoretical Criminology*, 16(2), 221-244. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480612442113>
- Ben-Moshe, L. (2020). *Decarcerating disability: Deinstitutionalization and prison abolition*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Black Visions Collective. (2020). *Minneapolis without policing*.
<https://dataspace.princeton.edu/handle/88435/dsp0147429d357>
- Byrd, R. M. (2016). "Punishment's twin": Theorizing prisoner reentry for a politics of abolition. *Social Justice*, 43(1), 1-22.
- Crewe, B., & Ievins, A. (2020). The prison as a reinventive institution. *Theoretical Criminology*, 24(4), 568-589.
- Critical Resistance. (2021). *Reformist reforms vs. Abolitionist steps to end imprisonment*.
https://criticalresistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CR_abolitioniststeps_antiexpansion_2021_eng.pdf
- Critical Resistance. (n.d.). *What is the PIC? What is abolition?*
<https://criticalresistance.org/mission-vision/not-so-common-language/>
- Davis, A. Y. (2003). *Are prisons obsolete?* Seven Stories Press.
- Donelan, C. J., Hayes, E., Potee, R. A., Schwartz, L., & Evans, E. A. (2021). COVID-19 and treating incarcerated populations for opioid use disorder. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 124, 108216. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2020.108216>
- Evans, E. A., Harrington, C., Roose, R., Lemere, S., & Buchanan, D. (2020). Perceived benefits and harms of involuntary civil commitment for opioid use disorder. *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, 48(4), 718-734.
- Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Vintage Books.
- Garcia, A. (2015). Serenity: Violence, inequality, and recovery on the edge of Mexico City. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 29(4), 455-472.
- Garver, B. (2020, October 19). Different crop of inmates: At Berkshire jail, aquaponics program offers food for thought. *The Berkshire Eagle*.
https://www.berkshireeagle.com/news/local/different-crop-of-inmates-at-berkshire-jail-aquaponics-program-offers-food-for-thought/article_b72af8da-0fbc-11eb-aa18-1f038736eb6b.html
- Gilmore, R. W. (2007). *Golden gulag: Prisons, surplus, crisis, and opposition in globalizing California*. University of California Press.
- Gilmore, R. W. (2022). *Abolition geography: Essays towards liberation*. Verso Books.
- Hackett, C. (2013). Transformative visions: Governing through alternative practices and therapeutic interventions at a women's reentry center. *Feminist Criminology*, 8(3), 221-242.
- Horowitz, V., & Gowan, T. (2023). Feminized need and racialized danger: Punitive therapeutics and historical addict tropes in a Midwestern drug court. *Theoretical Criminology*, 27(1), 23-47.
- Hwang, R. (2019). Deviant care for deviant futures: QTBIPOC radical relationalism as mutual aid against carceral care. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 6(4), 559-578.

- Irwin, J. (1985). *The jail: Managing the underclass in American society*. University of California Press.
- Kaba, M., & Ritchie, A. J. (2022). *No more police: A case for abolition*. The New Press.
- Kushner, R. (2019, April 17). Is prison necessary? Ruth Wilson Gilmore might change your mind. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/17/magazine/prison-abolition-ruth-wilson-gilmore.html>
- Lancione, M. (2014). Assemblages of care and the analysis of public policies on homelessness in Turin, Italy. *City*, 18(1), 25-40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2014.868163>
- Law, V. (2021, February 9). Victoria law's 'prisons make us safer' looks at resistance behind bars. *Teen Vogue*. <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/prisons-make-us-safer-victoria-law-women#:~:text=Politics,Victoria%20Law's%20Prisons%20Make%20Us%20Safer%20Looks%20At%20Resistance%20Behind,dismantles%20myths%20about%20mass%20incarceration.&text=The%20United%20States%20incarcerates%20more,of%20the%20world's%20prison%20population>
- Levenson, J., Textor, L., Bluthenthal, R., Darby, A., Wahbi, R., & Clayton-Johnson, M. A. (2023). Abolition and harm reduction in the struggle for "Care, Not Cages". *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 121, 104163.
- Li, T. M. (2007). Practices of assemblage and community forest management. *Economy and Society*, 36(2), 263–293.
- Lopez, A. M. (2020). Necropolitics in the "compassionate" city: care/brutality in San Francisco. *Medical Anthropology*, 39(8), 751-764.
- Maher, G. (2021). *A world without police: How strong communities make cops obsolete*. Verso Books.
- Manion, J. (2015). *Liberty's prisoners: Carceral culture in early America*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Martin, L. (2021). *Halfway house: Prisoner reentry and the shadow of carceral care*. New York University Press.
- Massachusetts General Law - Part I, Title XVII, Chapter 123, § 35. (1986). <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXVII/Chapter123/Section35>
- Mofford, J. H. (2011). *The devil made me do it!: Crime and punishment in early New England*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Murakawa, N. (2014). *The first civil right: How liberals built prison America*. Oxford University Press.
- Panzarella, R. (2002). Theory and practice of probation on bail in the report of John Augustus. *Federal Probation*, 66(3), 38-42.
- Pioneer Valley Project. (2020). *Our successes*. <https://www.pioneervalleyproject.org/our-impact>
- Pishko, J. (2019, November 19). The re-purposing of the American jail. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/11/going-jail-substance-abuse-treatment/602206/>
- Purnell, D. (2021). *Becoming abolitionists: Police, protests, and the pursuit of freedom*. Astra Publishing House.
- Rothman, D. J. (1980). For the good of all: The progressive tradition in prison reform. In *Workshop Papers: Historical approaches to Studying Crime* (pp. 271-284). National Institute of Justice. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/good-all-progressive-tradition-prison-reform-historical-approaches>
- Routon, E. (2021). Legal care and friction in family detention. *Cultural Anthropology*, 36(2), 312-339.
- Schept, J. (2013). 'A lockdown facility... with the feel of a small, private college': Liberal politics, jail expansion, and the carceral habitus. *Theoretical Criminology*, 17(1), 71-88.
- Schept, J. (2015). *Progressive punishment: Job Loss, jail growth, and the neoliberal logic of carceral expansion*. NYU Press.
- Shange, S. (2019). *Progressive dystopia: Abolition, antiblackness, and schooling in San Francisco*. Duke University Press.
- Spade, D. (2020). *Mutual aid: Building solidarity during this crisis (and the next)*. Verso Books.
- Sufrin, C. (2017). *Jailcare: Finding the safety net for women behind bars*. University of California Press.

- Thuma, E. L. (2019). *All our trials: Prisons, policing, and the feminist fight to end violence*. University of Illinois Press.
- Turner, K., Wallace, D., Miles-Langaigne, D., & Deras, E. (2023). Toward Black abolition theory within radical abolition studies: Upending practices, structures, and epistemes of domination. *Journal for Multicultural Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-01-2023-0002>
- Tsing, A. L. (2015). *The mushroom at the end of the world: On the possibility of life in capitalist ruins*. Princeton University Press.
- UCLA Law. 2021. *Covid behind bars data project*. <https://uclacovidbehindbars.org/>
- Wacquant, L. (2009). *Punishing the poor: The neoliberal government of social insecurity*. Duke University Press.
- Woodfox, A. (2019). *Solitary: Unbroken by four decades in solitary confinement. My story of transformation and hope*. Grove Press.