

JEW'S BEHIND BARS AND THE INFLUENCE OF JEWISH COMMUNAL
SUPPORT ON REENTRY, REINTEGRATION, AND DESISTANCE

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ABSTRACT

Recently, there has been a resurgence of interest in communal social support and prison chaplaincy. Numerous studies evaluate the growing role of religion and spirituality in various preventive and rehabilitative initiatives (Giordano, Longmore, Schroeder, & Seffrin, 2008; O'Connor, Duncan, & Quillard, 2006) and a large proportion of prison chaplaincy studies are centered on the Christian community (Baier & Wright, 2001). Few, if any, studies explore how Jewish prison chaplaincy and Jewish communal support affect reentry and reintegration.

In this study, 24 individuals (n=24) participated in qualitative interviews between July, 2018, and January, 2019. The population sample includes 6 Chabad Lubavitch chaplains from across the United States, 1 chaplain's assistant from Israel, and 17 felony-convicted individuals who were recipients of Jewish chaplaincy. Of the felony-convicted individuals, 13 are Jewish men, two are non-Jewish men, and two are Jewish women. I analyzed data using inductive and deductive coding strategies. Five major challenges faced by Jewish offenders during the incarceration-to-reentry process were identified; (1) employment, (2) mental health, (3) housing, (4) legal aid, and (5) anti-Semitism. Findings demonstrate that social support offered via the Jewish community and Jewish chaplaincy positively affected post-incarceration employment and mental health outcomes and provided

more access to housing and legal aid. Anti-Semitic behaviors and policies affecting prisoners were moderated and, at times, corrected by Jewish chaplains.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of College of Arts and Sciences, have examined a thesis titled “Jews Behind Bars and the Influence of Jewish Communal Support on Reentry, Reintegration, and Desistance,” presented by Esther Hannah Scheibler, a candidate for the Master of Science degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Jews, who embody a distinct faith and ethnicity (Amir, 1971; Kivisto & Nefzger, 1993), are not the most popular subjects amongst criminological research. To date, very little research has been conducted on Jewish criminal offending patterns or offending rates. Likewise, Jewish prison chaplaincy, Jewish reentry programs, and Jewish communal support for prisoners has been, for the most part, overlooked in criminological literatures. In an effort to offer insights into the Jews' role in the criminal justice system, my current research aims to improve our understanding of how Jewish communal support affects reentry, while demonstrating how religiosity moderates this relationship. The Jewish community, in this context, is defined as a collaborative group of Jewish individuals or families who engage in Jewish life together. For a full list of operationalized terms, see Appendix D.

Efforts made to improve reentry by Jewish chaplains and the Jewish community are grounded in Judaism's ideology for rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders. The Jewish community's rehabilitation of offenders is part of the larger idea of repentance called "*teshuvah*" that constitutes a basic principle in Judaism. The goal of corrections, based on Jewish ideology, lies in the sinners' repentance, rather than in harming the sinners or banning them from society (Ronel & Ben Yair, 2018). Jewish prison chaplains work to facilitate reentry directly with prisoners and with those whom have been released. Based on my current findings, the Jewish community finances a large portion of Jewish chaplaincy work, and provides monetary, legal, housing, employment, and mental health support to those who are reentering.

To answer my research question, “What impact does communal social support have on incarcerated Jews and on their prospects for reentry?”, I conducted qualitative interviews with a total of 24 individuals (n=24). The sample included: 17 individuals over the age of 18 who have at least one prior felony conviction and received Jewish prison chaplaincy services in the state of Illinois, six current or former prison chaplains who are affiliated with Chabad Lubavitch (the “ultra-Orthodox” sector of Judaism), and one chaplain’s assistant who worked for Maayan B’Negev, a nonprofit prisoner support program in Israel.

My findings collectively demonstrate how the Jewish community and Jewish chaplains address five critical challenges Jewish chaplaincy clients face upon reentry: housing, employment, mental health, legal aid, and anti-Semitism. Some of methods that the Jewish community and Jewish chaplains use to facilitate reentry are standard techniques, while some methods for facilitating reentry are unique to Judaism and the Jewish community. Policy implications based on my research are offered in the closing discussion, as are suggestions for future research on Jewish communities, Jewish offenders, and Jewish reentry initiatives.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

While recent studies on modern Jewish-American crime rates and offending patterns are virtually non-existent, the conclusion of most classical studies on Jewish offenders indicate that Jews have historically enjoyed a low crime rate. When compared to non-Jews as a whole, or to members of other religious groups, the Jewish offending rate has been historically low (Amir, 1971; Ellis, 1985). A low crime rate among Jews has been attributed to their closely-knit communities, cohesive family life, high educational standards, moderation in the consumption of alcohol, their solidarity, consciousness of mutual responsibility, and readiness for mutual help (Jewish Virtual Library, 2019).

The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics routinely reports on several characteristics of the U.S. prison population, such as age, gender and race, but it does not report on the religious affiliation of inmates (Pew Research, 2012). Therefore, Jewish offenders are not officially counted in the United States. However, our northern neighbor, Canada, does systematically count Jewish offenders. Correctional Service Canada (CSC) said that as of March 31, 2014, there were 177 offenders who identified themselves as being Jewish, representing 0.8 per cent of the total prison population (Canadian Jewish News, 2105). As Canadian Jews represented 1.2% of Canada's 32.9 million population in 2011 (Shahar, 2015), the offending rate of the Jewish population is smaller than the Jewish proportion of the population.

My study was premised on three foundational criminological theories, each of which offers valuable perspectives to consider when building the methodological framework for this study. The three theories are: social attachment theory (Sampson & Laub, 1993), social

capital theory (Bourdieu, 1979), and social support theory (Cullen, 1994). While previous research suggests that social support, social attachment, and social capital are instrumental for reducing criminal behavior (Cullen, 1994; Cullen & Wright, 1999; Sampson & Laub, 1993) and improving the reentry process (Austin & Irwin, 1994; Naser & La Vigne, 2006; Rose & Clear, 2001), these theories have not previously been applied to evaluating Jewish communal systems of reentry.

Social attachment theory suggests that rehabilitation comes about through an informal process of relating to social institutions such as family, education, employment, politics, and religion. The theory asserts that the more attached a person is to these social institutions, the less likely that individual is to engage in criminal behavior (Sampson & Laub, 1993). In my study, I will evaluate each individual's attachment to religious institutions in light of their transition from prison to the community. Likewise, I will also explore the role of attachment to Judaism to determine how this attachment made an impact on their reentry process.

Social capital theory asserts that a person's position or membership within a particular group affords them advantageous benefits. Social capital is often described as the social networks that people can draw upon to solve common personal, communal, and relationship problems (Lin, Cook, & Burt, 2001). Social capital can be instrumental when transitioning from prison to society, as it affords individuals an advantage when seeking to meet their reentry needs. Often, people obtain resources (such as better jobs, admittance to schools, and childcare) through connections they have with one another (Reblin & Uchino, 2008). Thus, reentering individuals can expect to obtain what they need through the people they know by leveraging their social capital.

The theory of social support, the overarching theoretical framework for this research, is centered on the proposition that high social support reduces the likelihood of crime. This theory articulates that supportive relationships and crime rates are inversely related (Cullen, 1994; Cullen & Wright, 1999). In addition to social support reducing the likelihood of crime, inmates themselves have demonstrated a strong need for social support. Studies have consistently shown that the grievance cited most frequently by inmates is a lack of family and friends' support during incarceration (Flanagan, 1980; Richards, 1978; Zamble & Porporino, 1988).

Upon reentry, high levels of social support also play a critical role in the transition from incarceration to the community (Austin & Irwin, 1994; Naser & La Vigne, 2006). Social support can be evidenced by emotional, financial, and practical support. An aspect of the reentry process that has been understudied is how social support offered by chaplains affects the transition back into the community. Chaplains, in addition to meeting inmates' religious, institutional, and post-release needs (Sundt & Cullen, 1998), are often positioned to offer mentoring, which constructs a favorable post-release environment (Koschmann & Peterson, 2013). Additionally, chaplains not only provide advice, mentoring, and modeling of prosocial values, but they also serve as a conduit for resources that a client will need from the community after their release. Jewish chaplains provide legal aid, housing, employment, meals, bus fare, spiritual guidance, and even romantic match-making for their clients post-release.

Daniel Glaser (1964) affirms the chaplain's role as an agent of reformation in his foundational study, *The Effectiveness of a Prison and Probation System*. He found that, of inmates who attributed post-release success to prison staff, prison chaplains were the second

most frequently credited staff members who encouraged prisoner rehabilitation. One-sixth cited prison chaplains as catalysts to their successful reentry, a significant proportion considering that chaplains typically make up fewer than 1% of the prison staff (Glaser, 1964).

It is important to note, however, that social support is not the only factor that leads to desistance. A study by Breese, Ra'el, & Grant (2000) suggests that the presence of a social support system has no significant bearing on recidivism unless it is coupled with life skills. They found that the acquisition of life skills (e.g., job-readiness, community service, and life-coping skills) were the most helpful attributes for transitioning to the community, and social support simply served to delay illegal behavior (Breese et al., 2000). That finding should not mitigate the importance of social support. Social support can be a conduit for the acquisition of life skills. Necessary life skills, such as would be necessary for job-readiness, are often learned from others within an individual's support network (Reblin & Uchino, 2008).

The Role of Religious Chaplaincy

The strengths of religious chaplaincy within the Christian community include reduced recidivism (Clear et al., 1992; Johnson, Larson, & Pitts, 1997; Kerley et al., 2009; O'Connor, Parikh, & Ryan, 1997), as well as increased engagement with prosocial attitudes and activities, more positive reintegration for ex-offenders, increased financial and emotional support, and desistance (Bartkowski & Regis 2003; Clear et al., 1987; Ellison, 1992; Johnson et al., 1997; Kerley et al., 2005; Koschmann & Peterson, 2013; O'Connor et al., 1997; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). Johnson et al. (2000, 2001) contend that strong social networks and emotional support are created by religious involvement, and those networks of

support may serve to constrain criminal behavior. Studies also suggest that religion may reduce antisocial behavior and may promote prosocial attitudes and behaviors (Kerley et al., 2005) by providing a moral framework and an accountability structure (Bartkowski & Regis, 2003; Ellison, 1992; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). In a meta-analysis of 60 previous studies on the effects of religiosity on crime, Baier and Wright (2001) concluded that religious beliefs and behaviors exert a moderate deterrent effect on individuals' criminal behavior. Prison-based chaplains are charged with facilitating inmates' religious beliefs and behaviors in prison and, in the case of Jewish chaplains, they continue to encourage religious observance upon reentry (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018; M. Vogel, personal communication, January 1, 2019).

A recent study demonstrated that American Jews do not have equal access to prison-based religious chaplaincy. For instance, prison staff and administrators are often familiar with Christian religions, and Christian religious services are offered in most correctional facilities. Meanwhile, minority religious services are rare, if not altogether lacking. Jewish rabbis are often harassed by prison authorities and their access to inmates is limited (Breese et al., 2000). Likewise, due to fear of anti-Semitic retaliation, approximately one-third of Jewish inmates do not identify as Jews in prison, whereby limiting their access to prison-based religious chaplaincy (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018).

Jewish chaplains, like Christian chaplains, are positioned to offer increased engagement with prosocial activities through prison-based activities such as group prayer, Torah learning, and holiday observance. Likewise, continued engagement in religious activities after prison may positively impact the reentry process. While Jewish chaplains argue that engagement in Jewish chaplaincy improves prisoner adjustment and the reentry

process (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018; M. Vogel, personal communication, January 1, 2019), there is a need for further empirical research to determine the impact Jewish prison chaplaincy has on reentry, reintegration, and desistance.

Jewish Communal Support

The Jewish community offers Jewish prisoners a strong social support network, which is consistent with an ancient Jewish ethic, “Helping the imprisoned is the loftiest of all charitable acts, superseding all other forms” (Jewish Prisoner Services International, 1999). The more religious adherents of the Jewish community can be the most forgiving and supportive peers to those with previous felony convictions. When asked about forgiveness and reentry in Jewish communities, Mordechai Tzivin—an expert on the extradition of incarcerated Jews—said in an interview, “The [ultra-orthodox Jewish] society, by nature, is forgiving, and the mutual responsibility reaches levels not seen anywhere else in the world” (Gil, 2018). In Israel, ultra-orthodox programs offer religious rehabilitation programs for suitable ex-offenders, and the Israel Prison Service and the Prisoner Rehabilitation Authority in Israel have a significant Torah rehabilitation division. Additionally, anyone who leaves a prison in Israel can be supported by the Torah Department of the Prisoner Rehabilitation Authority to continue their Jewish study, practice, and rehabilitation (Ronel & Ben Yair, 2018).

The tendency for Jewish communities to be forgiving and supportive of prisoners may be due to the fact that the Jewish community has historically opposed the practice of incarceration. The Torah, the foundational religious text for Judaism, teaches that a person should be placed under temporary custody until his sentence can be decided, but long-term incarceration is not a penalty deemed appropriate by the Torah (Schneerson, 1985). The

perspective that the Jewish community has regarding incarceration may have an impact on the way they choose to support criminal offenders and those who have been released from prison.

Jewish chaplains utilize multiple techniques to facilitate a supportive relationship with Jewish inmates. Jewish chaplains organize Hebrew language learning groups in prisons, facilitate Jewish prayer groups, create Jewish artifact loan programs, lobby on behalf of Jewish prisoners, and offer family-style meals to Jewish-affiliated inmates on the Sabbath and on holidays (Aleph Institute, 2018; Hinda Institute, 2018). Particularly interesting is the fact that chaplaincy support continues after an individual has successfully reentered and, in some cases, these supportive relationships last a lifetime (Aleph Institute, 2019; Hinda Institute, 2019).

Despite the best efforts of the religious community, several challenges associated with reentry remain. Jewish chaplains, and the Jewish community as a whole, work hard at providing assistance to those who reenter. Three major challenges for those who are reentering include employment, mental health, and housing.

Employment Challenges

A lack of employment during the reentry phase can be particularly stressful (Waller, 1974). The educational level, work experience, and skills of prisoners are known to be well below national averages (Uggen et al., 2005; Western, 2007), making them unqualified and unable to attain many jobs. Likewise, the stigma incurred by reentering individuals makes it difficult for them to secure jobs (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2006).

Another significant challenge is finding a job that provides meaningful employment at a decent wage. Many experts believe that such experiences are the key to successful

reintegration (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Good & Sherrid, 2005; Rossman & Roman, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 1993). Obtaining employment, whether it is meaningful or not, may also lead to desistance. The work environment, and connections to others at work, serve as a means of informal social control, which prevents criminal behavior. Moreover, according to prisoners themselves, finding and maintaining stable employment is a primary catalyst for a well-adjustment during reintegration and a positive change in identity during the reentry phase (Maruna, 2001; Uggen, Wakefield, & Western, 2005).

Jewish chaplains help their clients overcome employment challenges. Chaplains are able to use their broad social networks to find employers for their clients, both within and outside of the Jewish community. Likewise, Jewish chaplains help their clients acquire life skills and job training by assisting them with vocational training placement (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018; M. Vogel, personal communication, January 1, 2019).

Mental Health Challenges

Maintaining optimal mental health for reentering individuals is major challenge, and many do not cope well with the pains of reentry. Residual maladaptive responses to imprisonment include emotional disorders, self-mutilation, and suicide attempts. Inmate suicides and self-injuries continue to present a major problem in correctional institutions. Likewise, the monotonous prison lifestyle deprives inmates of activities that can distract them from negative emotions and creates mental anguish for inmates and reinforces negative feelings such as emptiness, despondency, and despair (Adams, 1992). Many psychiatrists have emphasized the pathogenic qualities of prisons. They argue that institutional

conditions, which deprive people of their freedom and their self-worth, have dehumanizing effects that can foster mental and emotional disorders (Halleck, 1967).

Studies have demonstrated the positive effects of social support on mental health. Social support fosters a sense of purpose in life by attaching symbolic meaning to responsibility and promoting a sense of personal control (Thoits, 1995; Umberson & Montez, 2010). Strong social ties have been found to protect individuals from a myriad of mental health problems ranging from mild depression to suicide (Thoits, 1995). In addition, social support has been found not only to increase the rates of recovery from mental illness but also decrease the likelihood of onset as well (Uchino et al., 1996). Social support is instrumental for aiding those suffering from mental illness and mental anguish incurred from the incarceration and reentry process.

One of the greatest challenges that Jewish chaplains currently face is restoring humanity within individuals and instilling feelings of hopefulness and purpose upon reentry (M. Vogel, personal communication, January 1, 2019). Chaplains, as a formal system of social support, have the potential to make positive effects on their clients' mental health. For those with diagnosed mental health issues, Jewish chaplains can provide access to mental health therapists and mental health services upon reentry without any financial obligation from the client (Aleph Institute, 2019; Hinda Institute, 2019). Likewise, those who suffer from situational depression and mental anguish due to the oppressive nature in prison stand to benefit from the social support, mentorship, and counseling offered by Jewish chaplaincy.

Housing Challenges

A strong argument could be made that housing is the most important asset necessary for successful reentry, as securing employment and maintaining optimal mental health are

extremely difficult without stable housing. While housing for formerly incarcerated persons is a source of necessary shelter and residential stability, it can also serve as the literal and figurative foundation for successful reentry and reintegration for released adults (Fontain & Biess, 2012). It is common for ex-prisoners to be homeless or marginally housed (Dumont et al., 2012; Fleisher & Decker, 2001), but a strong social network can help overcome the housing challenge. A majority of prisoners report that their housing arrangements post-incarceration were arranged by family or friends (Visher, 2010; Visher & Travis, 2011). Housing support decreases the chances of homelessness and potential recidivism (Fleisher & Decker, 2001).

Jewish chaplains find suitable housing for their clients through their connections to Jewish philanthropists and charitable organizations within the Jewish community. Many reentering clients find housing through a Jewish charity, a Jewish shelter, a real estate agent who is in partnership with the Jewish chaplain, or an individual within the chaplains' personal support network (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018).

The Jewish community and Jewish chaplains work diligently to meet the needs of inmates engaged with Jewish chaplaincy. Even with the social support offered by the Jewish community and Jewish chaplains, employment, mental health, and housing remain a challenge for many reentering individuals. However, the partnerships between Jewish chaplains and Jewish communities ensures the most positive reentry process possible for reentering individuals, even under the most extreme and trying circumstances associated with incarceration and reentry.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Previous research suggests that social support, social attachment and social attachments are instrumental to promoting desistance. These theories, however, have yet to be applied to evaluating Jewish communal systems of reentry. My research will examine how aspects of these theories manifest within support systems designed by the Jewish community, and executed by Jewish chaplains, for incarcerated and recently released Jews.

My proposed study aims to answer the research question: “What impact does communal social support have on incarcerated Jews and on their prospects for reentry?” The data collected from this study will help inform the way we currently think about the influence of communal support on reentry, reintegration, and desistance. This study, though focused on a specific sub-population, could yield profound opportunities for future study in communal support, prisoner reentry systems, and prison reform.

For my cross-sectional research, I utilized open-ended, semi-structured interviews to elicit qualitative data regarding prisoner support programs and reentry services offered by the Jewish community. My research population included a total of 24 people (n=24): 17 individuals over the age of 18 who have at least one prior felony conviction and received Jewish prison chaplaincy services in the state of Illinois, six current or former Jewish prison chaplains, and one chaplain’s assistant who worked for Maayan B’Negev, a nonprofit prisoner support program in Israel. Interviews were conducted from December 2018 until January 2019. Each interview was 45-60 minutes in length. The data I collected elicited detailed information about social support, social capital, and social attachment processes, as well as new themes and concepts as they arose.

My first research population, individuals who received Jewish prison chaplaincy services in the state of Illinois, included 13 Jewish men, two non-Jewish men, and two Jewish women. Each have been convicted of one or more felonies and has served time in an Illinois correctional facility. They were contacted by personal solicitation through Rabbi Binyomin Scheiman, their personal prison chaplain, who has served as a chaplain for over a thousand Jewish and non-Jewish people (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018). Rabbi Scheiman contacted his chaplaincy clients using both email and in-person communication in order to request their participation in an interview with me. Of the 25 clients who were contacted and asked to participate in an interview with me, 17 participants responded to the solicitation and participated in an interview.

Before I engaged with any potential participants, I ensured that they provided informed consent, were over the age of 18, and fit the requirements of the Institutional Review Board. Qualifying questions were asked of each potential interviewee to ensure their eligibility for the study. To see the qualifying questions and additional interview questions, see Appendix A for the full interview guide.

In my interviews, I asked that all interviewees withhold identifying information such as their name, city of residence, and the names of family and friends. All research participants were assigned a pseudonym for personal privacy protection and organizational purposes. All phone calls were recorded through an app, TapeACall Pro. After each interview was recorded it was transcribed and stored on a password-secure laptop. A table containing demographics for all 17 individuals I interviewed who received support from a Jewish prison chaplain is below:

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Respondent	Jewish (J) /Non-Jewish (NJ)	Male (M)/ Female (F)	Age Range 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's, 60's, etc.	Criminal Offense	# Years since release from prison
Adam	J	M	30's	Fraud Conspiracy	5 years
Albert	J	M	-	-	-
Bear	J	M	30's	Drug possession	6 years
Berel	J	M	50's	Declined to answer	11 years
Brian	J	M	30's	Drug manufacturing and sales	6 years
Chaim	J	M	40's	Murder	9.5 years
David	J	M	30's	Possession of Burglary Tools; Careism	-
G	NJ	M	50's	Burglary	3.5 years
Gracie Silver	J	F	50s-60s	Mail fraud & identity theft	-
Greg	J	M	40's	Drug Charges	8 years
Jeff	J	M	30's	-	6 years
Jerry	J	M	50's	Burglary	6 years
Joseph	NJ	M	50's	Declined to answer	21 years
Liora	J	F	50s-60s	Financial Enterprising	2 years
Paul	J	M	40's	Property crime	5 years
Saul	J	M	60's	Armed robbery; sexual assault	3 years
Teddy	J	M	40's	Accessory to murder	3 years
Total	J=15 NJ=2	M=15 F=2	Range= 30's to 60's	Property crime=10 Violent crime=3	AVG=6.78 years

My second research population, prison chaplains, included adult men and women who are or have been active in providing Jewish chaplaincy services. In this research, chaplains are operationalized as those who operate on self-funded or community-sponsored missions and who seek Jewish inmates or Jewish ex-offenders in order to offer them support.

I interviewed six prison chaplains from across the United States in order to gain knowledge of Jewish prison chaplaincy in multiple geographic locations. Each geographic region (Northeast, Midwest, West Coast, and Southeast) is represented in my population sample. All of the chaplains I interviewed work under the auspices of Chabad Lubavitch, the “ultra-orthodox” branch of Judaism. The names of the chaplains I interviewed are listed below.

1. Rabbi Binyomin Scheiman, Director & founder of the Hinda Institute
2. Rabbi Moishe Mayir Vogel, Executive Director of Aleph Institute- Northeast
3. Mrs. Leah Perl, consultant to the Aleph Institute
4. Rabbi Ben Zion Friedman, prison chaplain
5. Rabbi Moshe Fuss, prison chaplain
6. Rabbi Mendel Segal, former prison chaplain

The Aleph Institute is a non-profit organization that provides support to every known Jew who is held in an American jail or prison. Aleph sends rabbis, or rabbis-in-training, to visit incarcerated Jews in an attempt to fulfill their personal and spiritual needs. Inmates receive reading materials, newsletters, care packages, and religious items periodically by mail from the Aleph Institute. In addition, Aleph offers housing, employment, meals, transportation assistance, and family counseling services to released Jews (Aleph Institute, 2019). Likewise, the Hinda Institute aims to provide for the personal and spiritual needs through visitation of every incarcerated Jew in the state of Illinois on a monthly basis (Hinda

Institute, 2019). The Hinda Institute is a partner of the Aleph Institute. Both operate primarily on donations from the Jewish community and they maintain separate fundraising campaigns (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018). My interviews with the chaplains elicited information regarding their professional goals, methods for supporting inmates, reentry programming, and personal measures of success as chaplains. To see the full interview guide for chaplains, see Appendix B.

My final interviewee is a former employee of Maayan B'Negev, a program that provides Jewish prisoners with faith-based programming and facilitates prisoner reentry in Israel. This interview improved my understanding of Jewish chaplaincy and reentry services from an Israeli perspective. By broadening the scope of my research to include a Jewish chaplaincy program in Israel, I can then theorize the different ways that reentry is impacted by Jewish chaplaincy internationally. For the Israeli chaplain's assistant interview guide, see Appendix C.

Analysis

Each interview I performed was transcribed by myself or by a professional transcriptionist. I employed inductive and deductive using Atlas.ti software. Deductive coding focused on themes of social support and reentry outcomes while inductive coding allowed themes to organically emerge from the data. I utilized 53 different codes including: goals of Jewish prison chaplaincy, religious expression, Jewish inmates supporting one another, and ex-offender's feelings of inclusion or isolation in the Jewish community. I analyzed my codes by searching for themes and patterns which would then inform my explanations for trends in the data.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The data I collected demonstrates that the Jewish community is well-prepared to help incarcerated and reentering Jews overcome a plethora of challenges. The Jewish community uses traditional methods - such as counseling and visitation – to offer support to prisoners and to those who are reentering. Additionally, there are four methods of support that make the support offered by the Jewish community unique from the support offered by other communities which are: kosher food donations to prisoners, gender-matched chaplaincy support, lifetime reentry support, and promoting desistance through adherence to Torah laws.

Kosher food donations for prisoners are unique to the Jewish community since a kosher diet is unique to Judaism. Every Jew I interviewed was the recipient of a kosher food donation at some point. What I found unique about the kosher food donations is the sense of interdependence created between the consumer (the inmate) and the provider (the Jewish community). For many of my interviewees, the kosher food support offered by the Jewish community meant the difference between having suitable food to eat or not. My findings suggest that bonding and attachment between inmates and the Jewish community is enhanced through donations of kosher food. Additionally, benefitting from kosher food may be an exercise of social capital, since only those engaged with Jewish chaplaincy have access to these donations.

Gender-matched chaplaincy support also makes Jewish chaplaincy unique, and potentially more effective. At the Hinda Institute and the Aleph Institute, female chaplains pair with female clients and male chaplains pair with male clients upon reentry (B.

Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018; M. Vogel, personal communication, January 1, 2019). As studies have shown, when females are in a classroom with only females, their educational attainment is higher. Likewise, males learn most effectively with and from other males (Caplice, 2004; Heise, 2004; Herr & Arms, 2004; Gillibrand, Robinson, Brawn, & Osborn, 1999; Vail, 2002). Thus, gender-matched mentorship provides an optimal learning environment for clients.

Aleph, a national Jewish prison chaplaincy agency, regularly provides professional services to nearly 4,000 men and women in federal and state prisons across the country and their approximately 25,000 spouses, children and parents left behind. The Aleph Institute follows clients from prison to the end of life (Aleph Institute, 2019). The Hinda Institute, a smaller chaplaincy agency based in Chicago, Illinois, has helped approximately one thousand individuals navigate incarceration and reentry since their founding in 1980 (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018; M. Vogel, personal communication, January 1, 2019). While other prison-based chaplaincy agencies assist their clients within the prison, or shortly after their reentry process begins, the Aleph Institute is unique from other reentry programs in that they provide services in prison as well as lifelong reentry services. The Hinda Institute, which is a partnered organization of the Aleph Institute, also provides prison-based chaplaincy and lifelong reentry services (Hinda Institute, 2019).

Jewish chaplains are unique in their explicit goals for chaplaincy. In my interview with Rabbi Ben Zion Friedman, he explained that Jewish chaplains actively encourage Jewish inmates to increase their adherence to Jewish law. This, he believes, is instrumental for promoting future desistance.

One hundred percent, [Jewish chaplaincy] can help people from returning to prison. Chaplaincy gives them purpose in life, it teaches them right and wrong. People can

repent; it's possible. There's light at the end of the tunnel. [By teaching people to become] more involved in the Jewish community, being Godly, doing more mitzvos [tenants of Jewish law], all of those things hopefully keep them out of prison.

Likewise, Jeff, a client of the Hinda Institute, noted that one of Rabbi Scheiman's goals was to use religion as a method to promote more positive reintegration and to keep people on the right track.

I saw him, you know, use religion as a vehicle, use kind words as a vehicle, inspiring philosophies...anything that he could do to lift people's spirit and to keep them on the right path toward reintegration and success.

So, how does getting people more involved in the Jewish community and encouraging adherence to Jewish religious laws translate into keeping people out of prison and promoting reintegration? The answer is two-fold. First, Judaism, like most other religions, encourages positive attributes such as mercy, humility, and compassion, while promoting normative behaviors (Ronel & Ben Yair, 2018). Second, Jewish law encourages Jews to support Jewish business-owners, which is beneficial to Jewish entrepreneurs who are reentering.

Unlike other religions, Jews have a religious obligation to help another Jew in business. According to Judaism, a person should strive to give preference to doing business with another Jew, in order to help them in a constructive and non-humiliating fashion (Meir, 2019). The religious obligation to "buy Jewish" has helped sustain the Jewish community throughout periods of persecution. Now, even in times without the eminent threat of persecution, my interview data demonstrates that numerous Jews are supporting Jewish business-owners. Of the Jews who left prison and started their own business, several interviewees indicated that a high percentage of their clients or consumer base are also Jewish. While this information was not initially part of my interview guide, this concept to

cohesive Jewish commercialism strongly emerged from the data. The process of Jewish support for Jewish businesses could be developed more by further research.

The Torah law that encourages “buying Jewish” could be potentially beneficial for another important reason. Several Jews I interviewed indicated a preference for doing business within the Jewish community. The reentering Jewish individual’s own tendency to “buy Jewish” may cause an ex-offender to bond more closely with other Jews through commerce. This commercially-driven socialization with others in the Jewish community has the potential to include more religious individuals into their support system and potentially create more opportunities for growth in social capital.

Jewish chaplains aim to keep Jews committed to a Torah-based lifestyle, engaged in the Jewish community, and, ideally, keep their clients from re-engaging in crime. A few clients- G and Teddy- have indicated that Jewish chaplaincy services have aided in their desistance from crime. G, a Jewish male in his 50’s who was convicted of serial bank robbery, described how his relationship with Rabbi Scheiman curbs his temptation to engage in crime.

Trust me, sweetie, I’ve had thoughts about, you know, grabbing a few thousand quick dollars; I always think of Rabbi Scheiman. And before I think of Rabbi Scheiman I think of my girl who is with me right now. And she keeps me from thinking those thoughts. And then it’s Rabbi Scheiman right behind for the reinforcement.

G, who has a self-described “brotherly bond” with Rabbi Scheiman, suggests he would not commit a crime out of respect for their relationship. This exemplifies how the revelation of social attachment theory, which argues that social attachments to friends and significant others, can deter criminal behavior.

Teddy, who reentered society 3 years ago after serving a 21-year and four-month prison sentence, feels that his desistance is a direct result of his relationship with Rabbi Scheiman. In particular, he feels that the Rabbi's goal of increasing Teddy's adherence to Jewish law aids in keeping him away from crime.

And even on the outside [of prison], he constantly, the rabbi [Benyamin Scheiman] always send me Torah versus, always send me Shabbat things to do, always tell me what to do around Passover. He constantly stay on me and he keeps me focused. I've been out since January the 20th of 2016. No crime, not even thinking about crime. Constantly doing the right thing. Because of the rabbi. Because he's such a great leader.

Rabbi Scheiman stays in close contact with Teddy and informs him how to keep Torah law in regard to what he should be doing on the Sabbath and on holidays such as Passover. What Teddy is suggesting is that the closer he adheres to Torah law, the further his mind is from committing crime. Teddy is suggesting that his attachment to the social institution of religion causes him to abstain from criminal behavior.

In Israel, the Mayaan BeNegev program claims to curb recidivism rates by holding inmates to a strict religious curriculum. Mrs. Rachel Prero, a chaplain's assistant from Mayaan BeNegev, said she saw first-hand how the strictness of the religious program related to recidivism and reentry.

I know they have to be at services three times a day. And, they have to be at certain classes. Also, the prison offers classes and stuff like that, but I don't know if that's part of this program. But, um, for example, like, they can get a job making tzit tzit [religious clothing items]. And I don't know the percentage, but [the Director of Mayaan BeNegev] did say that the recidivism of ...the former prisoners within this program is significantly less.

These examples of individuals who reentry and stay away from crime give a clear indication that an individual's attachment to religion may inhibit criminal behavior.

It is important to consider how religious chaplaincy affects reentry and be able to conceptualize those findings fit within an international framework. More studies would need to be conducted to determine what differences, if any, exist between Jewish chaplaincy programs in the United States and in other Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Likewise, more research would be needed to determine if Jewish chaplaincy is correlated with desistance.

Based on my findings, I identified five critical ways Jewish chaplaincy and the Jewish community profoundly affect reentry outcomes in a positive way. The five critical elements are: stable employment, optimal mental health, housing assistance, increasing access to legal aide, and offering protection against anti-Semitism. These five elements were the most impactful on those whom I interviewed, and they soundly echo extant research which state that strong mental health, employment, and housing are critical for successful reentry (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Good & Sherrid, 2005; Fontain & Biess, 2012; Rossman & Roman, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 1993).

The two areas where clients mentioned they received the most support from the Jewish community and their Jewish chaplain were mental health (35%) and employment (35%). While 35% of clients reported receiving support in these two areas, it is important to note that I never asked clients directly which areas they were supported in. Each client was welcomed to suggest ways in which the Jewish community and their chaplain supported them, but each client was not directly asked about each of the five areas of support. Had each client been asked about each category directly, the response rate would have likely been much higher.

Employment

As studies have demonstrated, employment is difficult to obtain and maintain after being incarcerated and yet, employment is a critical element for reentry (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Good & Sherrid, 2005; Rossman & Roman, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 1993). The Jewish community and Jewish chaplains address the need for employment post-incarceration by helping their clients acquire vocational skills and obtain employment upon reentry. Chaplains capitalize on their broad social networks, acquired through years of service within their communities, to secure employment for their clients. Those who engage with Jewish chaplaincy within prison are at an advantage when seeking employment, due in part to their chaplain's vast personal social networks that can span cities, states, and even countries.

While chaplains can utilize their expansive networks, the local Jewish community can be just as instrumental for securing employment. Paul, a man in his 40s who spent three years in prison for property crimes, is seeking new employment. He currently sells public service announcements in the radio industry. But as public radio-listening declines, so do his sales. Paul plans to utilize his access to Jewish agencies and Jewish individuals who are dedicated specifically to finding jobs for Jews.

There's Illinois Job Link and a few others [Jewish services] where you can go, and they can assist you with certain things I'm sure. I know that there is a program, I haven't actually met the woman before, I've never gotten a job through her, but like I said it's called Illinois Job Link. It's in the Albany, not Albany Park, but Peterson Park area where there's a lot of *Shuls* and one of the Orthodox rabbis, his, Dr. what's his name... I can't even remember their last name, but Yocheved is his wife and she runs that. And that's specifically for Jewish people. It helps them get jobs. So, I should again fill out my, send her a copy of my resume. Maybe she can help me.

It's important to Paul, and most people who are reentering, to find stable, long-term work. Paul, like many others, is looking not only for employment, but also for long-term job stability and the potential for career growth. The social support offered by Yocheved, and numerous other agencies dedicated to finding employment for members of the Jewish community, gives Paul an opportunity to achieve his goal of long-term employment stability and satisfaction.

Stable employment is often the goal for many inmates who consider what life will be like on the outside. Many will choose to enroll themselves in vocational training to achieve stable employment. That was certainly one of the goals Joseph had in mind when he applied to electrical school a year after his release from prison. He believed life would be much more promising if he could become a certified electrician. However, he faced a major unforeseen setback when he was victimized in a stabbing. His injuries from the crime left him physically unable to finish electrical school and he was dismissed. The dismissal was devastating for Joseph- his dreams of becoming an electrician were aborted.

Joseph is a Noahide, which means he is not Jewish, but he is affiliated with Judaism by practicing certain aspects of the Torah. When Rabbi Scheiman and the Jewish community heard about Joseph's unfortunate predicament, they stepped in and offered to pay for Joseph to start his training all over again. So, Joseph reenrolled in the program after he healed from his wounds. Without the support of his prison chaplain, Rabbi Scheiman, and Ezra (i.e., the Jewish organization who paid the fees), it would have been extremely difficult to reenroll in school and become the journeyman electrician he is today. It is notable that neither Ezra nor Rabbi Scheiman were hesitant to assist Joseph in light of his non-Jewish

status; on the contrary, they fully supported him just as they would any other full member of the Jewish community.

I didn't have a way to really pay for schooling. And I mean, they don't charge you for the schooling, but you have to find a way to have a place to live and transportation while you're going to school for the first nine weeks. So, Rabbi Scheiman introduced me to an organization called Ezra.

And Ezra is a [Jewish] organization that does community outreach for the Jewish community and non-Jewish community. And what they did was they literally paid my rent, furnished my apartment and gave me transportation money to go to school and even though it's a long travel, and to have food to eat. And Rabbi Scheiman was the one that introduced me to Ezra. Now half, well almost I think it was in my seventh week of school and that's when the crime happened to me. I was stabbed multiple times by a gentleman. And that meant that I could not go to school anymore so I was in the hospital for a week maybe and then, you know, I couldn't do the laborious work that was required by the school. So, I was dismissed from school, which meant that I would have to start all over again. And Ezra offered to pay it again after Rabbi Scheiman spoke to them about the matter.

So, the following January of that year is 1999, they repaid the plan and I went to school and completed it...And so I finished the school, graduated, wound up becoming an electrician in Chicago.

Joseph is one example of how social support from the Jewish community can manifest into life-long vocational skills for someone with a criminal record. Vocational training for those who have endured incarceration is so vital because it produces one of the most coveted attributes for those who are reentering: self-reliance. Many individuals I interviewed expressed feelings of gratitude for the assistance offered by Jewish chaplaincy, but those who were self-reliant expressed more feelings of happiness, pride in their accomplishments, and overall satisfaction with life.

Self-reliance, a direct result of employment, sits at the pinnacle of success for many who reenter. Rabbi Vogel, director of the Aleph chapter in Pittsburg, says his expansive network of employers offers job opportunities to clients upon reentry with the hope of bestowing self-reliance. He says that the most promising jobs are those which offer on-site

training or trade experience. Job skills attained through learning a trade can make life much more promising and can foster independence and self-reliance in an individual.

We've got, just, many employers within the community, the Jewish community, and we beg them, and they give them [reentering Jews] jobs. All kinds of employment whether it's warehouse jobs- it depends on what talents an individual has. If it's a younger kid, then we can get them into schools. And it depends what age group, what they like doing. We just placed a few months ago someone in a welding school. We got a scholarship from the welding school. We knew the right people and they started welding. And once a person goes for three months of welding school, they can earn quite a decent living. But it has to be the right person for that. Then we've got, there's a school here that does bricklaying that helps. I mean, there's many, there are many opportunities. We're connected over what we do over here but what we do it we help get them to get a trade. And once they have some form of trade, life becomes so much more promising.

Rabbi Scheiman, like Rabbi Vogel, believes that long-term, stable employment is a critical element necessary for reentry. He has many contacts within the Jewish community, which he capitalizes on to find employment opportunities for his clients. One of his most valued connections is his network of former clients. Many of his former clients have reached their pinnacle of success by creating their own businesses. As Rabbi Scheiman says, "you know, it's so hard for some of them to find a job that they have to hire themselves." These former inmates-turned-business owners are sometimes the most receptive people when it comes to hiring individuals with felony convictions.

In fact, certain of our clients have successfully began their own businesses and they are willing to help some of the felons when they come out. So, we have a group of employers, not a large group, but maybe four or five different employers, and a lot of them are entry-level, but we have employers including clients of ours that are now business owners that hire offenders.

Albert, a former inmate and client of Rabbi Scheiman, is one of those people who has helped reentering Hinda Institute clients. He started his own handyman business in Chicago after he was released from prison several years ago. His business is growing and, now, he has several people working under him. He says he employed four individuals who have been

released from prison, per recommendation from Rabbi Scheiman. Numerous others have done the same; Rabbi Scheiman estimates that four or five of his previous clients have opened their own businesses and are now hiring others directly from prison under the auspices of the Hinda Institute. The number of available jobs for individuals with a previous felony grows with the establishment of new businesses. Business owners who have been supported by Jewish chaplaincy “pay employment forward” by hiring individuals who also are engaged with Jewish chaplaincy, ensuring a continuation of social support.

In the event that a client of the Hinda Institute receives proper training and an opportunity to start a business, many of them seize the opportunity. Those who indicated they were self-employed at the time of their interview were involved in several industries including finance, property management, industrial consulting, and childcare. This may be a result of the more general reentering population’s need for employment but lack of employment opportunities (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2006; Uggen et al., 2005; Western, 2007). In the absence of suitable employment for ex-offenders, they may be more inclined to create their own employment opportunities.

The commonality of self-employment among my study participants, however, may also be reflective of the Jewish community’s tendency toward entrepreneurship (Zhou, 2006). It is also notable that of the 17 Hinda Institute clients I interviewed, eight (47%) are self-employed. This is much higher than the national average rate of self-employment. In 2015, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that 10.1 percent of total U.S. employment was attributed to self-employment (Hipple & Hammond, 2016). The Hinda clients I interviewed, therefore, are more than 4 times more likely to be self-employed than the average American.

Three interviewees mentioned that the Jewish community or their Jewish chaplain placed them into a job upon reentry. Additionally, three interviewees indicated that either the Jewish community or their Jewish chaplain helped them to build their own business upon reentry. In total, six clients (35%) said they were either employed by or their business was supported by the Jewish community or their Jewish chaplain upon reentry. Two of my interviewees consciously employ and support former Hinda institute clients. When former clients make the conscious decision to pay employment and social support forward, they expand the Jewish social support network for those who are reentering. In sum, not only do individuals with criminal convictions currently rely on Jewish chaplains and the Jewish community to help them find them find employment, they are actually relying on support from one another, as well.

Mental Health

Incapacitated individuals are highly susceptible to suffering from situational depression due to the oppressive nature of prison (Adams 1992; Halleck, 1967). Arguably, mental health is the most critical element any inmate needs to endure the hardships of prison and successfully transition to society after prison. Teddy, who served 21 years and four months inside of a correctional facility, says mental health is the most crucial element for anyone who strives to make it inside of a prison.

And the main thing, from my experience, and I know plenty of men that's in prison, the most crucial thing about dealing with any ex-con, inmate, whatever, is it's a mental game. It's really- the only physical stuff that really happens sometimes is when you fighting, you know, guys jump you or whatever. But the entire time you there is all mental. It destroys your mental. If you can't hold that together, you're done.

Four interviewees, Bear, Adam, Jerry, and G, all experienced significant bouts of depression during their incarceration. While Bear indicated that he received previous medical intervention to treat his depression as a teenager, the others did not indicate a pre-incarceration onset of their depression. They collectively described feelings of severe depression, thoughts of ending their lives, and not knowing how they could carry on. All four of them reported that they were able to overcome their depression by engaging in counseling and mental health support with Rabbi Scheiman. Aleph's director in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Rabbi Vogel, knows first-hand how the mental hardships of incarceration negatively impacts mental health.

One of the types of prisons that we work with is the county jail. And when a person is arrested, a person starts a sentence, the rates of suicide are phenomenally high, and clearly because of a lack of hope. These individuals need a lot of strength to go to the next day.

The Aleph Institute works hard to ensure that those who are mentally ill or drug-addicted, but who are not a danger to society, do not remain behind bars. The Aleph Institute creates a lasting impact on struggling Jews by getting them placed into treatment facilities instead of languishing in prison. Mrs. Leah Perl, a consultant for the Aleph Institute, advocates in the courtroom on behalf of her clients, convicted Jews, who need mental healthcare or addiction rehabilitation. She told me a story about Laurie Ritz, a Jewish man who was diagnosed with depression and bi-polar disorder who cycled between homelessness and incarceration for many years. Laurie Ritz, one of the more famous recipients of Aleph's prison-to-treatment initiatives, was convicted and sentenced to prison but was pulled out of prison due to Aleph's advocacy in court. Mrs. Perl said that The Aleph Institute helped him get the treatment he desperately needed, which resulted in drastic improvements in his life, as well as reunification with his family and community.

So today, fast forward- he graduated college, he's a paralegal, he has a job and he's completely normal. You look at him and you'd never know this man was so disheveled. He looked like a homeless guy with flies buzzing around him. If it wasn't for the work of the Aleph Institute, this man would still be in prison. I mean, you can't imagine- this literally saved his life. He is absolutely a poster-child success story of the work of the Aleph Institute's Project Tikvah.

Mrs. Perl said that countless people, like Laurie, have been successfully treated for mental illness because of the advocacy of the Aleph Institute and Project Tikvah. Resolving mental illness in a treatment facility, as opposed to leaving mentally ill people in prison, is restoring health, safety, and livelihood to many people today.

Interview participants who received mental health support in prison indicated that this counseling enabled them to endure the mental hardships of prison. One recipient of such services, G, said he did not have the mental fortitude to survive his prison experience alone; depression constantly overcame him. With the support of Rabbi Scheiman, he was able to overcome his mental anguish and the temptation to commit suicide.

Yeah, no, Rabbi Scheiman was most instrumental in my mental health. He sustained me. He taught me things that I hadn't thought about, he gave me, how do I say it, he gave me perspectives that I never saw before. Okay? So, he was very instrumental in not just my day-to-day living, but my mental health...He was something I could depend upon. He was someone I could depend upon because I knew he was going to be there. And he was [in prison] on every [monthly scheduled] date. He was, he was most instrumental. He was; he saved me, okay? He was rock-solid. Trust me, Esther, he saved my life. He kept me alive, okay?

Like G, many of Rabbi Vogel's clients face temptation to commit suicide. He relayed a story about one of Aleph's clients to give an example of Aleph's chaplaincy saved the life of an inmate with compromised mental health.

An inmate comes, an ex-inmate, and he says that...in the beginning of his sentence it was bleak and wanted, he was prepared to commit suicide. He had everything in place. And the rabbi said something that changed his life and he decided no, he can't do that... Each visit is a success. This work is so holy- saving lives.

In certain cases, Jews in prison work together to stave off depression and feelings of despair. As Adam stated, he oftentimes confided in and sought encouragement from another Jewish inmate, a former bank robber whom he calls a 'very close friend.' Adam was fortunate to have a supportive relationship with someone else from the Jewish community on a daily basis. This social support helped him to move on with his life in prison, despite his situational depression. Adam spoke of the impact that this friend had on his mental health:

As a matter of fact, there's one [Jewish] guy that I'm still in touch with. He's an older guy. I'd say he's probably in his fifties, I don't know exactly how old he is, and I would say that he was probably more important to me than anybody in my life for the years that I was in prison, even more so than my mother or you know, the girl that I was dating when I went to prison because he was someone that I talked to every day. And when I was going through, you know, difficult times and I was, you know, very depressed and you know, didn't want to, just didn't know how to go on and what I was going to do with my life and you know, whatever I was going through, he was always there to talk to me, and you know, sort of psychoanalyzing. And he helped me a great deal.

While friendships between Jews can provide social support on an individual basis, Jewish prison chaplaincy offers formalized and routine social support. The Hinda Institute continuously provides mental health services to inmates through visitation and mentorship in prisons.

Upon reentry, chaplains are instrumental in aiding their clients' mental health. Jerry says that Rabbi Scheiman keeps his feelings of depression at bay, even several years after his release. He speaks to Rabbi Scheiman over the phone or in-person whenever he is feeling depressed. Rabbi Scheiman pulls him out of his depression and sets him back on the right track.

There was a time that I was feeling down, and I was starting to have some depression issues; starting to, you know, like, G-d is this really worth it? You know what I mean? Is this, you know, like what the heck? And as soon as I did, my first call was to [Rabbi

Scheiman]. And I went immediately there to see him and sat down with him for an hour and talked. And he will open his schedule as quickly and as much as possible to help somebody who is trying to be, who is trying to stay straight and stay on the right path and everything...when I get into that kind of a mood where I feel like I'm starting to get down on myself, depressed or I'm starting to have thoughts of that I'm not getting anywhere, I'm stuck, I'm in a rut or I'm, you know, it's just not worth it, my therapy is to talk... You know, it doesn't happen a real super lot, but every once in a while, I just believe that every once in a while, I just need a little kick in the behind, you know. And that's what Rabbi [Scheiman] gives me. He gives me a little kick in the behind.

Rabbi Vogel arranges weekly group-therapy sessions and individual mentorship sessions post-incarceration for his clients. He offers therapy groups for individuals battling addictions and for those who need the extra emotional and mental support. His therapy groups help hundreds of people each week to them overcome their depression, suicidal ideations, and addictions.

We've got 350 people a week coming in for programs and services. Today is January 1st, and we had 30 people at our program this morning. We open up every morning at 7am. There's a first group meeting support, there's a 12-step program and we have therapists who come in, trained therapists who provide support groups. So, on a typical week we have 350 people a week coming in just to receive the strength. A lot of them are, have addictions to whatever it is. And holiday time, especially, when families get together, and there is an increased drinking or whatever it is that goes on, added stress in the family life, people need help... [our] goal is to be there for them as they go through the stresses of life. There (are) times when we don't hear from these individuals for years. They're doing well and all of a sudden, we get a call. They're having a rough patch. We can be there for them.

Chaplains motivate their clients to take advantage of these reentry services well before they're released from prison. The encouragement the chaplain gives to their clients to continue with services, coupled by the accessibility to those services, makes it an easier transition for the hundreds of people reentering and engaging in mental health treatment each week. Rabbi Scheiman says he always makes it a point to tell his clients that chaplaincy doesn't end when the prison sentence is over. He tells his clients that they must continue to get the mental health support of the Hinda Institute even after they get out.

I tell my clients while they're in prison that they need to come and see me when they get out. It's not fair that I come all these times and they don't pay me back a visit and come to see me. I say, "for every time that I came to pay you a visit, you need to come and pay me a visit [after you're released]."

This fluid, continuous support between prison and the outside keeps people engaging in mental health services long after their sentence is over. As Rabbi Vogel mentioned in his interview, hundreds of people seek mental health services through his chapter of the Aleph Institute each week.

The importance of continued mental health support offered via Jewish chaplains post-release is apparent. Six out of 17 interviewees (35%) indicated that their Jewish chaplain was instrumental for pulling them out depression. As in the case of G, Jerry, and Lurie Ritz, we witness first-hand how the efforts of Jewish chaplains to improve the mental health of their clients can literally save lives.

Housing

Housing remains a tremendous challenge for individuals with a previous felony conviction and yet, it is a necessary component for successful reentry (Fontain & Biess, 2012). As someone who reentered society 38 months ago after a 36-year prison sentence, Saul is someone who knows first-hand about the challenges of reentry. You can hear how his words echo research that asserts housing is the most critical element for transition back to society:

I think the most important thing for a person getting out of prison is to have housing because you need a place to live. You can't just live in an alleyway or in an abandoned car and expect to go to work all the time. Of course, second, of course, would be employment because to pay for that housing you have to have money, you have to have a job. But yeah, I think housing is the most important thing that a person needs when they first get out. Some place to live.

Saul does have some place to live and he considers himself fortunate to live in government-subsidized section 8 housing. Saul, who was convicted of several charges of armed robbery and sexual assault, completed 23 years of college-level criminal justice and business coursework in prison, but believes it is better for him to be on government assistance than to be employed.

I collect SSI and food stamps and section 8 housing. So, it's not like I make a lot but like with SSI, it's like \$800 a month and food stamps is another \$50 a month. But I get a discount on section 8 housing which is 6-and-a-quarter, with utilities it's cheap and I'm, like, semi-downtown and I only pay \$200 a month. So, I get all kinds of other discounts. Since I'm on SSI I get Medicaid and since I'm over 65 I get Medicare. And so, it's pretty well being on the welfare thing. I just, uh, I have to watch the budget but, you know, I'm good...

I've been going now to college for 23 years, but I still haven't graduated [laughs]. That's because college is free in prison except under Illinois law when we get out if you graduate, when you get out, you're going to have to pay for it. I majored mostly in business when I was in prison because I figured, ok, I'll get out, I don't want a job working on the assembly line. I want to be the guy that walks behind them with my hands in my pocket telling other people what to do. Well, fortunately I didn't have to go that. Plan B came out just right with the welfare benefits. I majored mostly in business when I was in prison because I figured, ok, I'll get out, I don't want a job working on the assembly line. I want to be the guy that walks behind them with my hands in my pocket telling other people what to do. Well, fortunately I didn't have to do that. Plan B came out just right with the welfare benefits.

Not all returning prisoners are eligible for Saul's benefits, and not all who are eligible actually apply. There are many, like Saul, who find themselves cobbling together a livelihood from multiple sources such as welfare or charitable organizations. One such source for charity is the Jewish community. The Chesed Fund is an organization that gives people in crisis, including those exiting prisons, a chance to get back on their feet by giving them stipends and housing. Paul is someone who utilized the Chesed Fund's charitable funding to secure housing for himself after his release from prison.

The Chesed Fund helped me out with housing...You've never heard of the Chesed Fund? Well, the Hebrew word for Chesed I think it actually translates to 'mercy' in

English. But there's a fund in Chicago and there's a rabbi, his name is Rabbi Furst, he's in charge of the Chesed Fund. And what it does, it's a fund that's designed to help Jewish families get through times of crisis...they've got a lot of connections to help you get an apartment and jobs and so forth. And you know, they do a lot of good for the community and it's funded mostly through Jewish business owners who contribute to it, similar to the JUF [Jewish United Fund]. I mean I'm sure you know that that charity is an essential; it's a big part of Judaism.

The Jewish community and chaplains draw financial support from Jews who adhere to the tradition of charitable giving. What Paul was referencing when he said that charity is a big part of Judaism is the fact that traditional Jews are religiously required to give at least 10 percent of their income to charity. Jewish non-profit foundations, like the Chesed Fund, persevere on charitable donations from Jewish community members.

While many organizations provide assistance to those with convictions, not everyone will be eligible to receive such support. G, for example, who was charged with a class-two burglary and spent 30 years in prison, has not benefitted from any housing assistance. He struggles to maintain his housing payments, which he shares with his girlfriend, and says he feels frustrated by the lack of assistance he received from the government upon reentry.

[The State of Illinois] want(s) me to gross less than fifteen hundred dollars a month, pay for an apartment and all my bills, and then I qualify [for assistance]. The moment I hit a little bit more than that they are like, "Nope, nope, nope, nope, you're done." They took me off it. So, you told me you wanted to talk about services? There are no services for convicted felons. We are on our own.

G says he asked Rabbi Scheiman for help with housing but to no avail. The Hinda Institute and organizations within the Jewish community were not instrumental in finding G housing, or any social service for that matter. While he has a job and a home, he wishes he were eligible for more assistance.

I'm a sous chef. I make about ten dollars an hour, which is worthless work. You can't find immediate work [after prison]; you can't find immediate work in our situation for anything more or less than ten, nine, ten, eleven dollars an hour. It's very difficult to pay rent, car payment, insurance, etcetera, etcetera, on eleven dollars an hour.

Now you may have different stories where inmates have been released and have gotten all the benefits in the world they can receive, and I'm very happy for them, but I guarantee you this ain't my situation- that ain't it. It's 'fend for yourself, screw you, you got nothing coming' because I don't fit in either category. I'm not poor enough to get the benefits, but I'm not making enough to get the other benefits.

G is frustrated by the fact that he lives on the edge; he earns just enough to disqualify for government assistance and yet, he doesn't earn enough to buy the things he wants and doesn't make enough to save money. His frustrations echo the frustrations of many others who also find it difficult to find well-paying work after incarceration (Bushway & Reuter, 2002; Good & Sherrid, 2005; Rossman & Roman, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 1993).

If finding suitable housing is difficult for someone like G who is exiting prison with a felony conviction, it is especially difficult for someone to find housing if they have been charged as a sex offender. The Hinda Institute's most recent initiative involves collaboration with New Day Apartments in Chicago to offer housing for reentering clients, particularly sex offenders, who are not able to find housing elsewhere. Rabbi Scheiman indicates that housing is one of the biggest challenges for his reentering clients.

[Housing] is something that we need to improve on. I don't know the exact solution, maybe we have to get our own housing area and, I don't know. It's something that we're lacking in, so we do the best we could do it's just that sometimes we fall short. It's not, uh, especially sex offenders; it's very hard to find them a place to [rent]. We're looking to twin, maybe, with some organizations that are actually looking to buy housing places and then rent out to offenders that are coming out so we may have something like that in the future. But it wouldn't be us, it would be another, actually, a non-Jewish organization that's working to, you know- everybody has the same problem no matter what religion. So, we have this organization we're speaking to acquire housing that they would own and then they could use it to help felons and sex offenders coming out with housing. It's a problem and it remains a problem, but we're doing what we can do but it's just a very big problem.

Sex offenders have a difficult time finding housing due to the many restrictions they face. For example, they are not allowed to live near within 1,000 feet of a family attraction,

school, bus stop, daycare, or park, which greatly limits housing options (Zandbergen & Hart, 2006). Rabbi Vogel, director of the Aleph Institute in Pittsburg, is well-versed in the struggles associated with finding housing for his clients. He understands the immediacy of the need, and he does everything within reason to find adequate housing for his clients. Recently, he was able to get an apartment for a man who was standing at a Greyhound Bus station in Pittsburg and needed to have access to a house within hours.

For example, two weeks ago a young man, an older man, gets out of prison. He had maxed out, meaning that he had spent all the time, which means he's not getting any government help when he got out. He's not going through a half-way house. So, in that case, he called me from the bus station, from the Greyhound station downtown. And we were able to provide him, get him an apartment. We had no advance warning, so it was a little challenging. We had hours to do it, in this case, because of other restrictions. We had to have a house for him within hours. So, we were able to provide him a house [within hours].

By addressing housing challenges like these, chaplains keep people from violating their parole, being revoked, or facing homelessness.

When feasible, the Jewish community provides individuals with free housing. Joseph, a Noahide client of the Hinda Institute, said in his interview that he was given free living quarters by members of the Orthodox Jewish community. He manages properties for these individuals on the south side of Chicago in exchange for free housing, while also receiving a salary for his work. This gift of free housing has served to enhance his social ties to the Jewish community. He feels very involved in the Jewish community; so much so that he says that the Scheiman family "feels like family." Joseph also utilized services from The Ark in Chicago to help him furnish the apartment he was given. The Ark allowed him to get items that he needed for his new apartment, which included bedding, curtains, and dishes, among other things. Joseph's apartment and most of his furnishing were entirely funded by the Jewish community.

Not everyone is so fortunate upon their release from prison. Like G, Gracie Silver was denied assistance. She most notably was turned away from occupying a bed at a local Jewish shelter when they discovered her criminal background. Her background check showed that she had been charged with two Federal crimes – mail fraud and identity theft. These charges led to her being denied food and temporary housing at a Jewish shelter. Despite the rejection, she continued to seek support. She now lives in a single-room occupancy provided to her through a local Jewish organization, Mount Sinai Hospital. She lives in a 10 by 15-foot room with a little kitchen area and a private bathroom. She feels very upset with her refusal for housing by the first Jewish organization she contacted, but she is very happy with the housing unit she currently occupies.

When chaplains find housing for their clients by utilizing partnerships with other Jewish organizations, everyone is satisfied with the outcome. However, in those cases when a Jew is turned away from accessing housing services within the Jewish community due to their criminal record, feelings of resentment and anger may arise. It is important for local organizations to reconsider their policies when it comes to assisting those who are transitioning back into the community from prison, especially when it comes to non-violent offenders like Gracie Silver. Liora, who served four and a half years for financial enterprising, laments the housing crisis she faced after she left prison. As a woman of Jewish faith, she felt abandoned by Jewish housing agencies. Perhaps it's best to conclude with her words of promise to everyone who has been or will be in her current housing crisis. "If I ever win the lottery, I'm opening a Jewish women's sober living house. I promise you."

Legal Aid

Individuals entangled in the criminal justice system face three major challenges relating to their court processing. First, their accessibility to legal representation may be limited. Second, they may be unable to post bail or bond. And third, criminally-charged individuals suffer from lengthy and disproportionate sentences when their legal representative does not effectively advocate for alternative sentencing such as probation, community service, mental health or drug treatment, or monetary restorative justice.

For many clients of the Hinda Institute and the Aleph Institute, it is difficult to post bail or bond without the support of their family, friends, or community. By not posting bail or bond, it negatively impacts the pre-trial experience (detainment versus living at home), as well as increasing the likelihood of a guilty plea and conviction. Studies show that pretrial detention is associated with greater risks for incarceration and greater lengths of incarceration (Olsen, Lowenkamp, Cadigan, VanNostrand, & Wooldredge, 2014; Sacks & Ackerman, 2012; Stevenson, 2018).

I found that the Jewish community provides critical support for those who need assistance with posting bail or bond. Rabbi Scheiman, director of the Hinda Institute, indicated that he has freed numerous clients from jail by personally posting bail or bond on their behalf.

I just gave somebody a loan to bail himself out, 300 dollars. He says he's going to pay me back- he will, or he won't. I have a man who I put up 7,000 dollars bond for- he jumped the country, he left, so the whole \$7,000 was lost. He was gone for 2 or 3 years but from another country he just wired in 7,000 dollars back to me. It just took a long time. We do help out with people with bonding at times. I had somebody in the community, I lent a woman \$10,000. She got back, she got the money back, but this way her husband was able to stay home, and he didn't have to spend nights and nights and nights and weeks in jail. So [the money I give to my clients is] mostly for bonding issues.

By posting someone's bail or bond, Rabbi Scheiman is doing more than freeing his clients from pretrial detainment. He is publicly declaring that he believes they are not a risk to the community while awaiting trial. When a chaplain posts bail or bond for someone, it restores their non-threatening image to the judge who oversees their case, which is important for their sentencing outcome.

The Hinda Institute has formed a cooperative relationship with the Decalogue Society, a group of Jewish lawyers in Chicago, who are dedicated to helping the Hinda Institute's clients overcome the challenge of financial insecurity.

Legal services, we have, it's not as robust as we'd like it to be. But we do have a number of criminal defense lawyers which will, you know, when people go to jail, they can call them. He [the Jewish lawyer] will tell them, "you know, you really don't have to hire me," or "your case, a public defender could do," or they may take on the case at a lower rate.

This network of Jewish lawyers who work on behalf of Jewish defendants at a lower rate is a resource many clients of the Aleph and Hinda Institutes utilize. While many ethnicities and have their own legal societies organized through the American Bar Association, not all of them do. Individuals who utilize their services at a reduced rate have a unique advantage compared to those who are unable to afford reputable legal representation.

In addition to sharing their network of lawyers, Jewish chaplains provide legal aid to their clients by testifying in court as a character witness. One example of this is when Joseph, a Noahide client of the Hinda Institute, went to court as a victim of an attempted murder. Noahides, like Joseph, are individuals who affiliate with Judaism via their adherence to the Noahide Laws, a distinct set of laws put forth for non-Jews as mandated by the Torah. The defense lawyer attempted character assassination to turn the tables and get Joseph to appear as less than a victim. Rabbi Scheiman went to court and testified on behalf

of his character in order to keep Joseph's reputation intact before the judge. Joseph explained:

I was stabbed multiple times by a gentleman. And when I went to trial for the criminal thing that happened, they literally put me on trial as if I were the person who committed the crime, even though I was the victim. And the Rabbi [Binyomin Scheiman] literally testified on my behalf [of my character]. Yes, and they found the guy not guilty of attempted murder...but the Rabbi was there for emotional support and that was important to me. He testified for about an hour.

This supportive relationship between Joseph and Rabbi Scheiman has spanned more than two decades. Joseph was so impacted by the work of the Hinda Institute and the legal assistance Rabbi Scheiman offered in the courtroom that Joseph has now dedicated himself to continuing the work of the Hinda Institute. His goal is to expand the Hinda Institute's clientele and infrastructure to provide reentry services to more inner-city, non-Jewish residents in Chicago.

I'm working with [the Hinda Institute] right now to start a community center for Noahides in Chicago. I would probably just be managing things. Maybe do a little directing, a little community involvement myself, as well...[my goal is] to work with people out of prison who are just being released who need housing, education, healthcare...get people to complete their GEDs [for] those people who have professional jobs who still don't have high school diplomas. You know we would try to make sure that they could get that and get the training, high school diplomas, without, you know, interrupting their work as they have it at this present time. The Noahide Center will be under the purview of the Hinda Institute.

Joseph devotes much of his time to building up the Noahide Center of Chicago. The compelling vision Joseph has for providing reentry assistance to more Chicago residents through the Center will ensure that the legal testimony Rabbi Scheiman gave on his behalf will be paid forward as he continues to serve others in his community.

Once somebody has been sentenced for a crime, individuals may ask Jewish chaplains or members of the Jewish community to intercede on their behalf. Mrs. Leah Perl, consultant for the Aleph Institute, is one who advocates specifically for mentally infirm and drug-

addicted Jews. Her job, along with eight other staff members who manage Project Tikvah, is to advocate for alternative sentencing, addiction rehabilitation, and mental health treatment. When she is successful in her work, she is pulling non-threatening people out of prison or jail in order to get them checked into a drug treatment or mental treatment program. It's a win for the client and it's a win for the justice system when an individual is treated in a medical facility rather than sitting untreated in jail or prison.

We basically go to court and we ask the judge if we can pull out a young individual who fell into drugs or wound up in jail due to mental illness... So, they're not professional criminals but it was the illness that brought them there, or their addiction. And we would plead with the judge to put them into a rehabilitation program instead of sitting in jail doing nothing. And the court would follow, you know, it would be a court-mandated alternative sentence. But the court is able to follow the progress of the individual and they get reports to see how the individual is doing.

Another way that Jewish agencies intervene on behalf of Jews is by assisting them with legal documents. The Aleph Institute gives critical guidance for those in need of legal control over a loved one who has mental illness. LPS Conservatorship provides legal medical and residential guardianship for individuals over the age of 18. LPS Conservatorship gives a caregiver the authority to place a mentally ill dependent into treatment and enforce medication compliance until he or she is stable enough to live independently. The utilization of Aleph's services and LPS Conservatorship has ensured the treatment of numerous mentally ill and addicted clients. Further, Aleph has kept numerous mentally ill and drug-addicted Jews out of the criminal justice system. As a consultant for the Aleph Institute, Mrs. Leah Perl knows first-hand that the legal aid offered by the Aleph Institute is instrumental for providing convicted Jews access to the medication they need to stabilize their mental illness.

Just Sunday, I was speaking with a young man; not so young, he is 44. His brother called me, and he said, "I'm going out of my mind. My brother is, just, he's

schizophrenic, bipolar, and he keeps getting arrested, going to jail. And then he gets sent home, recycled. Why? Because he's not taking medication. I can't, I can't get him to take medication." And so, Project Tikvah stepped in and we helped him learn about something called LPS Conservatorship which is, it's a legal binding which gives an adult permission to make decisions on behalf of this individual. And it takes away the right of this individual to make any medical or residential decisions. So, it gives the caregiver the opportunity to say, "this individual needs to go into a psyche ward, you know, long-term to stabilize them, to get them on medication, and to show him that you can educate him about his illness." The psyche wards cannot keep an individual for more than 3 days...maybe 2 weeks... that is not long enough to help an individual get stable. He, or she, needs a long-term, 6-month to a one-year program. But they need to have a legal LPS Conservatorship for a family member to [go that route].

The Aleph Institute's alternative sentencing division is dedicated to lobbying for alternative sentencing, in appropriate cases, for charged Jewish defendants in conjunction with the defense council. They do not advocate for every Jewish person, but only for those individuals who have demonstrated certain mitigating circumstances. Alternative sentences are deemed appropriate for those with abnormal behavioral traits, medical conditions, and family responsibilities. Many federal and state courts have accepted Aleph's alternative sentencing plan and have released inmates back to their families or into treatment programs. In the words of Rabbi Vogel, "We can help them with alternative sentencing where they've done wrong and they can be punished in a more humane way than putting them in prison. We'll do that. We'll do whatever we can to help them."

Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism within correctional facilities is a major challenge for incarcerated and reentering Jews. Anti-Semitism makes a negative impact on incarcerated individuals' access to Jewish chaplaincy and on their expressions of Jewish faith. Anti-Semitism and the fear of retaliation forces many Jews to hide their religious and ethnic identities in prison. This is

problematic for two reasons. First, it leaves many unidentified Jews without access to Jewish chaplaincy and Jewish reentry services. Second, the unwillingness of many Jewish inmates to identify themselves causes the prison system to inaccurately report the annual total of Jewish inmates. This error then reduces the legitimate claim that Jewish chaplaincy services need to be protected and even expanded to cater to more clients.

My findings demonstrated that anti-Semitism is experienced in prisons during most routine activities such as eating, passing through security, praying, and during recreation time. The most frequently-cited need for support in prison was the inmates' need for protection against anti-Semitism (59%). I did not ask interviewees to speak directly about each category of support (mental health, legal aid, employment, housing, and protection from anti-Semitism), so a response rate for each category would likely be much higher. However, the fact that 59% of respondents cited a need for protection against anti-Semitism demonstrates that anti-Semitism is a serious and pressing issue for inmates and for those reentering.

Most of my interviewees struggled to a keep kosher diet due to an inconsistent supply of kosher food. Adhering to a kosher diet is an inherent part of being involved in Jewish faith; it isn't superfluous. Anti-Semitism permeated mealtimes for the majority of my interviewees. Several Aleph Institute and Hinda Institute clients, like Berel, experienced anti-Semitic sentiments from fellow inmates while eating kosher meals in the prison cafeteria:

You're going to get the haters no matter what. If they know that you're Jewish and, you know, obviously when we were eating and they saw that we were eating kosher meals, you know, they might say things or do things, you know, try and do things or whatever to show their hate or anger or whatever.

Hate and anger sometimes manifested into other inmates spitting into their food. Gracie Silver experienced mealtime anti-Semitism and often worried about others spitting on her food.

For example, on Passover we were allowed to come down, like come down, make meals, you know, make the meals. And, we were allowed to go to the office salad bar, make a salad, you know, make it really nice for holiday. And they used to have to have someone guarding our food because people would threaten to spit in them. There were TV dinners and people just resented the fact that we were able to do that.

The feelings of resentment other inmates directed at Gracie Silver reinforced her claim that in prison, anti-Semitism is “huge, huge, huge.” In addition to anti-Semitism from other inmates, Jerry faced his share of challenges from prison administrators when he tried to adhere to kosher dietary laws in prison. The prison administration charged Jerry \$200 for the kosher meals he ate while he was incarcerated. The meals he was charged for weren’t even paid for by the prison; they were donations brought in by the Jewish community. The Jewish community often donates food- matzah, fish, meat, dessert- to inmates when access to kosher food is severely limited or non-existent. Even though the food itself was donated, Jerry was held responsible for the costs associated with delivering that food.

I was actually charged \$200 because of my kosher meals. It wound up costing me \$200 because they had to send an officer to another penitentiary [to pick up the Kosher meals] so I had to pay for the travel time for the gas, time and a half, overtime, for him to go and pick up more meals so that they had enough meals for everybody. These meals came from the Jewish community. The penitentiary did not pay for these meals. Those were donated by the Jewish community and brought to the penitentiary by Rabbi Scheiman, okay? But I had to pay for all that.

He says it is uncommon for a prison to charge an inmate for the food they already ate, especially when that food has been brought in from an outside agency. Jerry felt that anti-Semitism was the cause of the administration’s actions. Likewise, when Jerry would get his kosher meals, the prison administration often harassed him and made it impossible to eat his

kosher meals. They would purposely add non-kosher food to his food in order to make his food no longer acceptable. Jerry describes how the prison administration harassed him for adhering to the Jewish faith and how they actively discouraged him from maintaining his religious dietary standards:

And the supervisor who I got into it with, he was so very against kosher meals and everything else. And he, even if you had a kosher meal, he would be a jerk and he would throw something on there purposely that was not kosher. He would, you know, grab like a scoop off the line and throw it in the bowl and hand it to you like, "Here." Like that's your kosher meal, get the hell outta here.

This is problematic for numerous reasons. First, it infringes on the federal rights of traditional Jews to adhere to religious dietary standards. Second, when a prison guard puts non-kosher food on top of kosher food, that food is no longer kosher. This means that the Jewish individual is no longer able to eat that food. By tampering with kosher food, prison guards are essentially starving the Jewish inmates in their prison. This is gross misconduct according to federal law.

Another major problem that anti-Semitism poses to Jewish inmates is the prison system's neglectful and abusive facilitation of Jewish chaplaincy. From the guards to the prison administration itself, the Jews I interviewed have been frequently harassed and banned by the guards from participating in certain aspects of Jewish life. Although against federal law, the guards often defy protocol in favor of anti-Semitic behavior. Jerry, for example, did not get released from his cell for participation in Jewish holiday services.

During Passover, during Hanukkah, anything, anything special that we got, "Oh, you freaking guys think you're special," and all this and that. And you have to I mean literally, sometimes they wouldn't even take us out of our cells or let us go to go and celebrate the holidays and stuff.

Jerry's voice becomes painfully emotional as he recalls being held in his prison cell and restricted from participating in religious services. He is clearly upset and angry as he

tells of a certain day when the prison guard prevented him from participating in the Jewish Passover Seder being led in the prison by Rabbi Scheiman.

You know, he tried to make sure that I didn't get anything and everything. You know, there was one evening that this officer was working at my building and even though I had a pass and everything else to go to Passover, he refused to let me go. And he just [said], "It's cancelled; it's cancelled." That's all he would keep saying. He wouldn't say anything. But it was not cancelled. They called, they even called to the building looking for me, the other COs called looking for me and [he] told them I didn't want to go. I found all this out the next day that this CO told them, "Oh, he doesn't want to go tonight." You know, it was a big issue and the next day he was no longer working in my building because of the major. The major got him out of the building because of that, because he cheated me out of Passover.

But I know like the night that he wouldn't let me go to Passover I was, oh my God, I was steaming. I was so mad. I was. I was so ticked off; I was so mad. I wound up, I went to my cell container and I actually cried that night because I had missed Passover that night.

Passover, the very first time I ever went to Passover my sister Linda had converted some years ago. I don't remember when, but some years ago she had converted and had married a Jewish man. And his parents were Jewish, and they had Passover at their house, and I went for it. And I loved it. I loved the story; I loved everything about it, had some really, really had, you know, a lot of meaning and everything else and stuff to me. So that night when I was denied to go, it really hurt me a lot.

In similar fashion to the treatment they receive from the prison guards, Jews often felt disparaged by religious Christian chaplains. Many study participants believed Christian chaplains were displaying anti-Semitic behaviors by suggesting that Jews should leave their faith, their traditions, and their lifestyle behind in favor of the "higher calling" of Christianity. Liora felt particularly berated by a particular Christian chaplain for being Jewish and not converting to the Christian faith.

The guards, sometimes they wouldn't let you out in time to get there [Jewish services], or you'd be harassed, you know, going and coming... Our chaplain, she was very pro-Christian, and she wanted everybody to convert. And she would make comments that she hoped one day we would find Jesus. And she even made a comment about that [about Rabbi Scheiman]. She goes, "I do pray for your rabbi, and I do hope that someday he finds Jesus too." And I thought, "That is a crazy statement."

Jewish chaplains do everything in their power to combat the problems associated with anti-Semitism in prison. The chaplains at the Hinda Institute and the & Aleph Institute work to bring awareness to the needs of Jewish inmates to the Jewish community and to the prison administration. Chaplains put pressure on prison administrators to ensure compliance to federal and when necessary, chaplains involve Jewish state senators who will pressure prison wardens into compliance.

One good thing does come out of anti-Semitic discrimination Jews receive in prison. Collective experiences of anti-Semitism cause inmates to increase their social support for one another. As Chaim states,

When I wasn't the only Jew [in my prison], all our interactions [between Jewish inmates] were pleasant because, you know, you're the minority. And so, you tend to bond more and, you know, clique together."

Jerry also said that the anti-Semitism he faced made him feel even more connected to his Jewish heritage and to other Jews. He says that Jewish inmates tried to support each other and ease their suffering by connecting their suffering to the suffering of their Hebrew ancestors. They would tell themselves and each other:

It's like okay, look, you know, I mean yes, okay, we put ourselves here, but you got to think about it that our ancestors went through the same exact thing, fighting and struggling to maintain and keep their faith and to practice their faith even though they were always put down and everything else. We tried to put something with it to make it feel more of a connection with our past and try not to be so negative.

When the inmates' social support is increased, access to social capital is also increased, lending more support and more advocacy for other incarcerated Jews. The transfer of social capital is apparent when Jewish inmates provide each other with tangible assistance within the prison. David, for example, said he would send hygiene products to

fellow incarcerated Jews in his prison who were without hygiene. Even if he had never met them, he would still support them by virtue of their Jewish identification.

While inmates can help with obtaining everyday needs such as hygiene, chaplains assist inmates with obtaining religious articles in prison such as *tefillin* (prayer phylacteries), *tsistsis* (white, fringed undershirts worn by Jewish men), *kippot* (head coverings) and *siddurim* (Jewish prayer books), while also offering protection against religious oppression in prison. Aleph Institute, for instance, helps Jews who are harassed for their religious observance by helping them transfer to a more accommodating correctional facility. David is one of those people who was granted a transfer to another facility due to Aleph's relentless advocacy, where he was given the freedom to wear a kippah and even share a cell with another observant Jew.

And even on one occasion, I was in, when I was in the federal system, I was in a US marshals holding facility, which was really abysmal as far as, you know, again, any, they wouldn't even let you have a *Yarmulke* to put on. And so, I guess Aleph had tried talking to them [about not allowing kippot], but finally just got me moved to the other federal facility where the chaplain was a rabbi and it was a much better environment there...But once I was moved to the federal system I, there were, you know, many more Jews and I managed to get a room; my cellmate was an older Jewish man... We would do Friday nights [Jewish holidays] together and it was nice.

Anti-Semitism is presumably keeping Jews from seeking Jewish chaplaincy, as many chaplains have indicated. For those who are hesitant to identify themselves as Jewish, chaplains, at times, must assure inmates that they won't be "found out" in exchange for meeting with a chaplain. Rabbi Friedman stated that one inmate wouldn't come to him, presumably due to anti-Semitic ramifications:

One inmate said he didn't want to see me. He just wanted to stay quiet and to himself. He didn't want to "stir up things", or, you know, to make a scene. So, I would go to him to see him privately, individually.

Rabbi Scheiman, director of the Hinda Institute, seconds the notion that many Jews are not identifying themselves in prison due to fear of retaliation. He believes that this fear is causing one-third of all Jewish prisoners to hide their identities in prison. The chaplains I interviewed indicated that encouragement from a fellow Jewish inmate may cause “hidden” Jews to come forward and reveal their identities. Other times, Jews remain hidden, uncounted, and unsupported due to fear of anti-Semitic retaliation.

There are people, again, this is just an estimate because really, I would have no way to know. I would say that for every 2 Jews that I know that are in prison, there might be another one that’s not coming forward. In other words, it’s very possible and the reason we know it is because from time to time these people surface. People are scared, they don’t want to say that they’re Jewish. They’re petrified of what’s going to happen. So, they go in and they don’t even list, they just say, “no religion”, or “other”. They don’t want to say, or they even put another religion because they’re just scared to say. And if we by chance, like, we have our clients that we are seeing say, “oh, there’s another guy back that we know on the unit that’s Jewish”, you know, so we do everything that we can do. We try to encourage them to come forward and, you know, they’ll find out that they’re not going to get hurt, they’re not going to get harmed.

While an immediate remedy to anti-Semitism in prisons eludes us, it could be beneficial to inmates and to the prison administration to more actively discourage retaliation against Jewish inmates in order to fully account for and further engage Jews in prison chaplaincy. Chaplains work diligently to abate anti-Semitism but in order to combat discrimination more effectively, it must come from the very top ranks of the prison administration. It should also be understood that anti-Semitism in prisons and during reentry is negatively affecting Jewish and non-Jewish inmates alike.

While my original research question asks, “What impact does communal social support have on incarcerated Jews and on their prospects for reentry?”, my interviews also gathered data on non-Jewish individuals who utilized Jewish chaplaincy agencies. These individuals all benefitted from their connection to the Jewish community within all five

areas; employment, mental health, housing, legal aid, and protection from anti-Semitism. Protection against anti-Semitism would be seemingly irrelevant for non-Jewish clients. However, it should be noted that non-Jewish individuals faced backlash, particularly from the Christian community, by *associating* with Judaism. Joseph describes the struggles he experienced due to his association with the Jewish religion upon release:

I got married and most of the people that I was involved with in friendships and stuff, like, they weren't Jewish. But they, you know, never questioned my involvement with the Jewish community when I was involved because I still did some High [Jewish] Holidays and things like that. And they were a little bit confused by my faith because most African Americans are not Jewish; they're Christian. So, everybody I knew was Christian. And after a while- I don't attend Christian churches- it made it difficult because [of] my belief system and their belief system.

While Joseph felt there was difficulty negotiating friendships and differences between the Christian faith and the Jewish faith, he leaned heavily upon his friendship with Rabbi Scheiman to assuage those difficulties.

Teddy said he felt disparaged when he overheard anti-Semitic rhetoric in prison because although he wasn't born Jewish, he still practices Judaism. The direct anti-Semitism he faced was as impactful to him as it would be to any incarcerated Jew.

These people used to sit right in front of me and say weird things [about Jews] not knowing that I practiced Judaism. It was amazing to me, because you hear about it and you're like "Wow!" Alright, I'm going to give you an example. There was this sergeant. Me and Ed was doing Chanukah. And you know, when they shake us down, they put on these rubber gloves. So, he came to shake us down and he had one of the rubber gloves on his head acting like it was a yarmulke. And you're like, "why you doing that, man?" And he's like, "Well, you know, you guys get to participate in Chanukah, why I can't participate in Chanukah?" They constantly, they constantly made jokes about when you get the trays. They had this bread on there and he's like, "there go your Jesus bread, man." "Dude, that ain't Jesus bread, man. What's wrong with you, man?" I always just took it as unflattering jokes.

These narratives, presented by Joseph and Teddy, illustrate how discrimination against non-Jewish clients engaged in Jewish chaplaincy can be extremely harsh. In all of

the interviews with Jewish and non-Jewish clients, 23 separate instances of prison-based anti-Semitism were cited. Ten out of 17 interviewees (59%) witnessed or experienced anti-Semitism in prison. This is reflective the prevalence of anti-Semitism on a broader scale. In a 2014 study, 54% of self-identified Jewish students at 55 university and four-year college campuses reported having been subject to or witnessing anti-Semitism on their campus (Kosmin & Keysar, 2014).

My findings suggest that anti-Semitism is very prevalent in prison, and detrimental to reentry. An estimated one-third of Jews are not identifying themselves as Jews in prison because they are afraid of retaliation and discrimination (B. Scheiman, personal communication, July 23, 2018). Those who do not identify themselves as Jewish are not benefitting from Jewish reentry services. Anti-Semitism causes many unidentified Jews to forfeit prison-based reentry resources such as employment services, educational opportunities, family counseling, housing assistance, legal assistance, mental health services, and meal support.

I am inclined to believe that fear of retaliation is much more prevalent among adherents to the Jewish faith than any other faith. Jews are sensitive to the fact that they are victimized by religious hate crime much more often than any other religious denomination. UCR data demonstrates that of all religiously-motivated hate crimes that took place in the United States in 2017, Jews represented 58.1% of the victims, Muslims represented 18.6% of the victims, Catholics represented 4.3% of the victims, Sikhs represented 1.5 percent of the victims (FBI, 2017). I believe that the high rate of Jewish victimization creates abundant fearfulness of anti-Semitism for prison inmates and based on my findings, that fear is well-justified.

Jews will continue to be underserved in prison and during reentry as long as anti-Semitism, and the fear of anti-Semitism, keeps them from revealing their identities and accessing services. The reentry process is uniquely challenging for Jews who feel heavily persecuted for their faith and ethnic origins.

Unsupported Clients

Six individuals stated during their interviews that they didn't receive any reentry services from their Jewish chaplain. Of those six, three stated that they are self-sufficient and they didn't ask for, or need, any reentry support. As Chaim stated,

I'm self-sufficient so I haven't really needed any assistance, but [the Hinda Institute] made it abundantly clear that if need be it's there.

Like Chaim, Brain suggested he didn't need any reentry support. His reason is that his family, and most notably his father is very involved in making his reentry process positive. Teddy, the third person who chose not to engage in Jewish reentry services, is well-supported by family members. He indicated that his family helps him meet all of his reentry needs and he is also happy knowing that the Hinda Institute is there if he ever needs something and his family isn't able to help.

Well, this is how I look at that. I guarantee you if I would have asked for those things [reentry support], it would have happened. But my situation was...I came home to family. My family supported me for all 21 years that I was there. So, some of the things that other released inmates have to seek out and search for I really didn't have to.

Two individuals stated that they lived outside of Illinois, where the Hinda Institute is located. Therefore, receiving reentry support via the Hinda Institute was not feasible. Also, there is no Jewish community in the city, or surrounding cities, where they currently reside, so they are unable to access any Jewish resources. Jeff, the sixth person who did not receive

reentry services, did not indicate during his interview his reason for why he didn't engage in Jewish reentry services.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In an attempt to answer my research question, “What impact does communal social support have on incarcerated Jews and on their prospects for reentry?”, I have gained new perspective on Jewish involvement in chaplaincy, prisoner support, and reentry. My findings demonstrate that chaplains offer formalized and systematic social support to inmates during incarceration and during their reentry phase with full participation and financial support from the Jewish community.

My data also demonstrated that chaplains are able to help their clients overcome five major reentry challenges: employment, mental health, housing, legal aid, and protection against anti-Semitism. Chaplains actively secure suitable housing and stable employment for their clients. They provide advocacy for alternative sentencing in the courtroom when appropriate and facilitate access to reputable legal aid for their clients. Likewise, the data shows that Jewish chaplains protect their clients from anti-Semitism and positively affect the mental health of their clients. In some cases, chaplains have improved their clients’ mental health to the point of saving individuals from severe depression and thoughts of suicide. Jewish chaplains offer social support to incarcerated individuals and their families by offering financial loans and stipends, spiritual guidance, drug and alcohol addiction counseling, and educational opportunities.

Rabbi Vogel of the Aleph Institute, as well as Rabbi Scheiman of the Hinda Institute, have made it very clear to their clients that they will never be denied any support- regardless of their behavior, their level of engagement or commitment, or their ability to contribute financially to the chaplaincy group. Every service offered by Jewish chaplains in prisons and

during reentry is free of charge. These services are primarily funded by donations from the Jewish community and a large portion of the Institute directors' time is dedicated to fundraising.

My study lends support to three major criminological and sociological theories: social attachment theory (Sampson & Laub, 1993), social support theory (Cullen, 1994), and social capital theory (Bourdieu, 1979). Several examples were given throughout the interviews of how these three theories manifest themselves within the context of Jewish-American reentry processes.

There were several individuals who did not engage in Jewish reentry services, either because they lived outside of the Jewish community or they did not feel a need to utilize reentry services. Generally speaking, the effects of social support from chaplaincy and the Jewish community indicate very positive results, especially in terms of housing, employment, legal aid, mental health, and protection against anti-Semitism. Seventeen clients (100%) were socially supported by Rabbi Scheiman in prison. Jewish reentry services were utilized by 11 out of 17 (64%) Hinda Institute clients.

It is important to devote extensive research in the future to understanding how support from the Jewish community effects other areas of reentry such as recidivism, desistance, financial security, entrepreneurialship, family cohesion, and reintegration long-term. In similar fashion, follow-up research should address anti-Semitism in prison and more policies aimed at protecting inmates from discrimination should ensue.

Strengths and Limitations

The intent of my research is to offer a real-life portrait of the community reentry process for individual ex-felons. This research cannot assume to represent the feelings or

experiences of all ex-offenders, nor even of all Jewish ex-offenders. I cannot capture data from those whom have recidivated and returned to prison. Therefore, this data is skewed toward representing successes upon reentry. Thus, the narration of personal experiences from my interviews will not describe Jewish reentry in totality, but it can direct us toward a more meaningful investigation of the Jewish community's reentry programs.

Due to a lack of variable manipulation or experimentation, this cross-sectional investigation is unable to prove causality. This research seeks a deeper understanding of systems that influence Jewish desistance and evaluates results based on correlation as opposed to causation. A longitudinal study, which captures a larger sample size, would make an excellent follow-up and would provide more generalizable findings. The strength of my small sample size is that it allows ample time during each interview for participants to express their opinions, questions, feelings, thoughts, and experiences.

Data collected from the seven prison chaplains whom I interviewed is not generalizable to all prison chaplains. The amount of social support each chaplain offers is dependent on several factors including his or her financial resources and the proximity of the chaplain to Jews who request services. The chaplains' religious affiliation with the Chabad Lubavitch branch of Judaism limits the generalizability of this study and a more generalizable study would incorporate chaplains from other branches of Judaism, including Reform, Conservative, Modern Orthodox, and Non-denominational. However, my interviews will provide introductory insights into Jewish prison chaplaincy and Jewish communal support for ex-offenders which, as of yet, has remained largely unexplored.

Likewise, my sample of individuals who engaged with Jewish chaplaincy was entirely drawn from referrals from Rabbi Binyomin Scheiman. He stated that he drew from a

variety of his clients in order to give me a full-spectrum view of his clientele. I am aware that drawing samples from only the Hinda Institute, and not the Aleph Institute may give a limited representation of clients who have engaged with Jewish chaplaincy. Further, phone interviews were conducted, which does not allow those without access to a phone to participate in an interview.

My interview guides are intended to illustrate the personal lives of Jews who have felony convictions, as well as to offer insights into the Jewish community's role in chaplaincy and reentry. As scholars and lay-readers, we will be afforded an opportunity to theorize to what extent social support from the Jewish community promotes desistance, how the positive aspects could be better-supported, and how to extrapolate the successful aspects of Jewish communal support and Jewish chaplains and replicate them in other ethnic and religious communities. By offering more communal and religious support to those reentering, we may be able to assist a number of those with felony convictions become well-adjusted, non-criminal, contributing members of our society.

Future Research

By choosing to delve more deeply into the role of Jews in the justice system, I am attempting to fill a void in extant literatures. Future research should aim to further elucidate anti-Semitic behaviors and practices within correctional facilities. My findings demonstrate that anti-Semitism negatively affects the incarceration experience and may negatively impact accessibility to Jewish, prison-based reentry services.

Ultra-orthodox Jews in Israel offer a religious rehabilitation programs for ex-offenders, similar to the programs offered by the Hinda Institute and the Aleph Institute. In any prison in Israel, prisoners can apply to join a religious rehabilitation program to study

and practice Judaism. When released, they can be supported by the Torah Department of the Prisoner Rehabilitation Authority, to continue their Jewish study, practice, and rehabilitation. (Ronel & Ben Yair, 2018). Perhaps, future research could include a cross-cultural comparison between Jewish chaplaincy programs in the United States the Israeli Torah rehabilitation program.

A formal evaluation on the effectiveness of American Jewish prison chaplaincy would make a strong follow-up to my study. While the positive benefits of chaplaincy were obvious in my interviews, a longitudinal study would be necessary to measure the long-term effects of Jewish chaplaincy. The measurable outcomes I would suggest measuring for those engaged in Jewish chaplaincy are recidivism, desistance, mental health trajectory, employment, and length of engagement in reentry support.

More attention should be given to Jews and their unique role in the criminal justice system. Jews are often characterized as belonging to the white race, although many do not see themselves that way. More research should be aimed at disentangling Jewish Americans from the broad, all-encompassing racial category of ‘white’ and directly studying their religion, ethnicity, and culture in light of the criminal justice system.

There are still so many questions without answers. Within the American Jewish community, what is the criminal offending rate? Which Jews in the community are most at-risk for becoming involved in crime? Do Jews primarily victimize Jews or others outside of the Jewish community? How receptive is the Jewish community to those who are reentering, compared to other ethnic and religious communities? The answers to these questions could give us an objective portrait of Jewish criminal patterns and Jewish reintegration in

America. These questions beg for answers given the lack of information on Jewish criminality currently available.

Jewish Americans, a cohesive, identifiable, religious and ethnic minority, have been poorly represented in criminal justice and criminology literature. In order to rectify the lack of knowledge concerning this community, it is important to bring this group to the forefront of criminal justice and criminology literatures and bring them up to equilibrium in terms of research. Women occupy their a distinct subfield of criminology, as is evident in Feminist Criminology. Many criminologists are that Black Criminology and Black Feminist Criminology also merit their own distinct subfield (Potter, 20016; Unnever, Gabbidion, & Chouhy, 2019). I see no reason why Jewish Criminology should not merit the same academic efforts.

It is important to delineate between ethnic and religious groups when studying the reentry process, as experiences vary widely between gender, race, ethnic background, and religion. My research presents us with a brief insight into the lives of Jews with criminal convictions and their reentry process. It is my sincere hope that this study will encourage other researchers to continue to engage in an ever-evolving, panoramic discourse on Jewish Criminology.

APPENDIX A

Former Jewish Inmate Interview

Qualifying Questions

1. Have you given consent for this interview to be recorded?
2. Are you over the age of 18?
3. Are you Jewish according to traditional Judaism (either born from a Jewish mother or having undergone an orthodox conversion)?
4. Do you speak English proficiently?
5. Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

Questions Regarding Jewish Community Membership

1. Do you hold any responsibilities within the Jewish community? For example, are you employed by a Jewish company or organization, work on the synagogue board, work with chevra kiddisha (Jewish burial) society, make a minyan, volunteer on a regular basis
2. How do you currently identify religiously? [i.e. agnostic, atheist, spiritual but non-religious, Reconstructionist, reform, conservative, orthodox, no affiliation, other]
3. Do you have any close friends who are Jewish? If so, what kinds of activities do you enjoy together?

Questions Regarding their Support System

1. When you were in prison, did anyone Jewish visit you? If yes, how many people? How often did they visit?
2. Did you know of any other Jewish inmate while you were incarcerated? If no, skip to question #4. If yes, was there a supportive relationship between you and this other person? What did that support look like?
3. What type of relationship or interactions did you have with Jewish inmates?
4. Were you offered to meet with a Jewish chaplain in prison? If no, skip to question #6.
5. Think about the first time you were offered a visit from a Jewish chaplain in prison. How long had you already been in prison? Were you contacted by a Jewish chaplain within a week, a month, 3 months, 6 months, one year, more than one year?
6. How did it make you feel when a representative from the Jewish community came to visit you?
7. Did you receive any other type of support from the Jewish community (aside from your family or chaplain) while you were in prison?
8. Do you currently attend a synagogue? If yes, continue to the next question. If no, skip to question #11

9. How long have you been attending a synagogue?
10. How did you learn about that synagogue?
11. Why did you decide to start attending synagogue?
12. Do you feel like you're included in the Jewish community or do you feel isolated from the Jewish community? Please explain.
13. Other than immediate family members, who in the Jewish community knows about your felony conviction?
14. Were you adopted as a minor? If yes, do you know whether or not your birth parents are Jewish?
15. What types of assistance have you been offered by people in the Jewish community who know about your felony conviction? [i.e. shidduch (romantic match-making), work placement, monetary gifts, monetary loans, meal assistance, housing, spiritual support, family counseling, social events (including meals, parties, lifecycle events, etc.), drug and alcohol therapy (if it's relevant to this person), mental health counseling (if it's relevant), free or discounted professional legal counseling, other]
16. Do you know of any support groups that are especially for Jews with felony convictions? If so, how did you learn about them? Do you attend these support groups? [Probe: why or why not?]

Background Questions

1. What was the date of your last felony conviction?
2. Concerning the last felony that you were arrested for, what crime (or crimes) were you officially convicted of?
3. How long were you incarcerated?
4. How many felony arrests have you endured in your adult lifetime (over age 18)?
5. Do you have any physical or mental conditions (such as autism, depression, bi-polar, anxiety, etc.) that make socializing more difficult? If so, how has this influenced your relationships with other people? Has this made socializing difficult for you?
6. Have you ever been exempted from participating in any aspects of Jewish life because of your felony conviction? If yes, could you please tell me about this? How did this exemption make you feel?
7. Have you ever had experiences with drug or alcohol use?
 - a. Are you currently addicted to drugs or alcohol? Can you tell me what or who has been the most helpful to you in overcoming it?
8. How many felonies have you been charged with as an adult?
9. How many years has it been since you were released from your (only/most recent) felony conviction?
10. Can you tell me what circumstances brought you to become involved with the crime you committed?

Social Support Network

1. Do you feel that support from the Jewish community can help you stay away from crime? If yes, go to #12. If no, skip to #14.
2. How has the Jewish community been a source of social support for you? If yes, continue. If no, skip to #15.
3. In what ways has the community been supportive?
4. How can the Jewish community better support you, and other Jews, after incarceration?
5. This is the end of our interview. Is there anything else you wish to discuss?

APPENDIX B

Prison Chaplain Interview

1. As a chaplain, do you/did you work independently or as part of an organization?
2. What prompted you to want to become involved in prison chaplaincy?
3. Can you walk me through what a first encounter with a Jewish inmate might look like?
4. Can you walk me through what a follow-up after a Jewish prisoner's release from prison looks like? Do you contact them, or do they contact you?
5. Where do you spend most of your time connecting with inmates? Is it in a visiting room, their cell, or elsewhere?
6. What standards do you have in place for determining whether an inmate is Jewish, and if they qualify to benefit from your services?
7. Are there ever any barriers aside from the prison itself when you're trying to connect with Jewish inmates?
8. That you are aware of, has a Jewish inmate refused to connect with you? If so, what reason was given for them not wanting to connect with you?
9. So that I better understand your job, what is the goal of your position as chaplain?
10. How do you measure your clients' successes?
11. Which of the following categories of assistance do you (or did you, if you're no longer a chaplain) offer to ex-felons? [i.e. shidduch, work placement, monetary gifts, monetary loans, meal assistance, housing, spiritual support, family counseling, social events (including meals, parties, lifecycle events, etc.), drug and alcohol therapy, mental health counseling, legal counseling] NO
12. Have you ever felt unsafe inside of a prison?
13. To aide in someone's reentry, have you ever recommended to a Jewish client that they connect with someone else in the Jewish community? If yes, what kind of assistance did you recommend? [i.e. shidduch, work placement, monetary gifts, monetary loans, meal assistance, housing, spiritual support, family counseling, social events (including meals, parties, lifecycle events, etc.), drug and alcohol therapy, mental health counseling, legal counseling]
14. What are the goals of your chaplaincy/correctional program?
15. Does your program aim to keep Jews from returning to prison? If no, skip to #16. If yes, do you consider the program to be successful?
16. Which aspects of your program do you think reduces recidivation?
17. Is there anything you think I should know that might help me understand your work?
18. In your own words, what is most important for a Jewish inmate to have in order to reenter successfully?
19. This is the end of our interview. Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

APPENDIX C

Israeli Chaplain's Assistant Interview

1. What does Maayan B'Negev mean in English?
2. Can you describe what the mission of Maayan B'Negev is?
3. Do they serve only Jewish inmates, or do they also offer services to those who are religiously-affiliated outside of Judaism?
4. What was your job title at Maayan B'Negev?
5. Were you a volunteer or were you paid?
6. How long did you work there?
7. What types of programs does Maayan B'Negev offer to prisoners?
8. How can someone in prison receive benefits from this organization?
9. Are all prisoners welcome to join the organization? If not, which policies keeps certain inmates from joining?
10. Does Maayan B'Negev offer any reentry assistance such as employment assistance, or housing assistance, after release? If so, tell me about it.
11. What success stories do you recall from the program?

APPENDIX D

Operationalized Key Concepts

- Social support- the emotional, spiritual, and/or financial support a previously-convicted individual receives from members of the Jewish community.
- Individual released after a felony conviction- any person who has served a full or partial prison sentence for a felony conviction. My study excludes those who are currently on probation or parole.
- Jew- a person who self-identifies as Jewish or who is Jewish according to Orthodox Jewish law [i.e. has a Jewish mother or grandmother and who would be recognized as a Jew by the state of Israel]. My study includes those who have undergone a conversion to Judaism.
- Jewish community- a collaborative group of Jewish individuals or families who engage in Jewish life together and who also share a communal Rabbi.
- Prison chaplain- a non-familial, professional Rabbi or spiritual leader who visits an incarcerated person in order to provide that inmate with resources, education, and support.
- Recidivism- a return to crime as evidenced by an arrest, conviction, or return to prison within seven years of their most recent release date, as defined by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Reentry- the process of liberation and the establishment of livelihood after incarceration.

Reentry program- a program that transfers interpersonal support (i.e. life skills, education, friendship, religious guidance) to previously-convicted individuals. This program links in-site prison support to a community on the outside in order to provide continuity of care.
- Desistance- the absence of re-arrest, reconviction, or incarceration.

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VITA

Mrs. Esther Scheibler was born in Fallbrook, California, to her parents Bobbie Irvin Jr. and Maureen Seals. She graduated high school in 2006 from Lincoln College Preparatory Academy in Kansas City, Missouri, and from the University of Arkansas with a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice in 2009 at age 20. She spent many years volunteering, working, and travelling in places like New Mexico, Oregon, and Ethiopia, before she married in 2012. As a master's degree student, Esther has been awarded with funding by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Muscogee Creek Nation. She served as President Elect for the Association for Women of Color at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (2018-2019).

Esther is planning to continue her education in criminal justice as a doctoral student at the University of Cincinnati this coming fall. She is very passionate about researching issues relating to crime and the Jewish community. She currently lives in Overland Park, Kansas, with her husband and their four children.