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Change is gonna come: a mixed
methods examination of people's
attitudes toward prisoners after
experiences with a prison choir

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Dissertation

**CHANGE IS GONNA COME:
A MIXED METHODS EXAMINATION OF PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES
TOWARD PRISONERS AFTER EXPERIENCES WITH A PRISON CHOIR**

by

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DEDICATION

To all those who experience injustice.

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EDWARD D. MESSERSCHMIDT**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of (a) singing with incarcerated choir members and (b) listening to a live prison choir performance, on non-incarcerated people, focusing particularly on the effects of such experiences on participants’ attitudes toward prisoners. Participants included: 1) non-incarcerated volunteer singers from four Midwestern prison choirs ($n = 41$); 2) a control group of Midwestern community choir members who, at the time of data collection, had had no experiences in a prison context or with a prison choir ($n = 19$); and 3) non-incarcerated, adult audience members at a Midwestern prison choir concert ($n = 78$). In part 1 of the study, the volunteer singers and control group completed the Attitude toward Prisoners scale (ATPS; Melvin et al., 1985) and responded to two open-ended items following the completion of their respective spring concerts. In part 2 of the study, adult audience members completed the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) before and after attending a Midwestern prison choir concert. After the concert, the audience members also responded in writing to an open-ended item regarding their experience at the performance.

Research questions included:

1. How do the ATPS scores of the volunteer prison choir singers compare to the ATPS scores of the control group? What is the relationship between participation in a prison choir and ATPS scores?
2. What relationship, if any, is there between the number of concerts the volunteer singers have sung with a prison choir and their ATPS scores?
3. What changes, if any, are there between audience members' pre-test and post-test responses to the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985)?
4. What effects, if any, do volunteer singers and audience members report regarding their experiences with a prison choir?

Using mixed methods in a concurrent triangulation design (Harwell, 2011), the researcher found that it is possible for non-incarcerated people to change their attitudes toward prisoners through experiences with a prison choir. Although there was not a significant difference between the ATPS scores of non-incarcerated volunteer prison choir singers and those of the non-prison-based community choristers, 69.2% of the volunteer prison choir singers reported that their attitudes toward prisoners had grown more positive since joining a prison choir. Alternatively, in part 2 of the study, audience members' ATPS scores were significantly more positive after attending the prison choir concert. Using an open, axial, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006) to analyze open-ended responses in both parts of the study, the researcher developed an informed grounded theory (Thornberg, 2012) that musical activities with a prison choir (including both singing and listening) afford people the opportunity to explore their sense of ideal relationships; through that exploration, their sense of ideal relationships can either be

affirmed or challenged (Small, 1998), which, in the latter case, can potentially lead to a change in their attitudes toward prisoners.

The results of this study could be particularly important to music educators seeking to meet the NAFME (2017) goal of “music for all,” as well as to researchers interested in criminal justice reform. After all, negative attitudes toward prisoners influence criminal justice policy (Melvin et al., 1985) and are also an impediment to tertiary desistance (Nugent & McNeill, 2017) and newly released prisoners’ successful reintegration into society (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Park, 2009).

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I: INTRODUCTION: CAN MUSICAL EXPERIENCES CHANGE ATTITUDES TOWARD PRISONERS?

Prologue: Personal Reflections

I have a vague recollection of being a child, maybe twelve years old, and watching a news report detailing the allegedly inappropriate perks we offer prisoners in the United States. In particular, I remember the report's narrator complaining that tax revenue is wasted on education programs, gyms, libraries, and televisions for inmates.

If my recollection is accurate, the year was 1994, the same year that President Bill Clinton signed the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act. The act was notorious for its stringent new regulations. Among other things, it expanded the number of offenses punishable by the death penalty (United States Department of Justice, 2013), and it eliminated Pell Grant funding for inmates (Karpowitz & Kenner, 2003). By doing away with Pell Grants for prisoners, the act all but ensured that inmates in many states would not be able to participate in higher education programs. Following the passage of the law, many states like New York experienced a “near total collapse” in post-secondary prison education programs (Karpowitz & Kenner, 2003, p. 7). For example, the 1994 crime bill compelled one of my current employers, Marist College, to terminate its education program at Green Haven Prison in Dutchess County, NY (Davis, 2003, p. 58).

The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act continued a trend of "tough-on-crime" legislation, which had begun in the 1970s (Greene, 2002, p. 3). Proponents of the trend cited Martinson's (1974) influential essay on the failure of rehabilitation programs, repeating the catch phrase that “nothing works” when it comes to

altering criminal behavior (Greene, 2002, p. 4). Various policies that followed, particularly those associated with the “War on Drugs,” led to a 510% increase in the prison population between 1983 and 1993 (Greene, 2002, p. 20). In addition, many states began prosecuting large numbers of juveniles as adults during this time. According to Amnesty International (1998), about 200,000 juveniles per year were prosecuted in general criminal court between 1978 and 1998. Yet despite the passage of “tough-on-crime” legislation and massive increases in incarceration rates, authors like Robert James Bidinotto (1996) continued to complain about our country's “Excuse-Making Industry” (pp. 9–10) and the “outrageous leniency” of the American criminal justice system (p. 82).

Just a year after the passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, congressman Dick Zimmer introduced the federal No-Frills Prison Act (H.R. 663, 1995), another piece of tough-on-crime legislation, which would have placed austere limitations on inmate privileges. Ultimately, the bill was referred to committee. Soon thereafter, however, many states followed the model of the proposed federal No-Frills Prison Act and eliminated or dramatically reduced the number of inmate programs, privileges, and services in their own correctional facilities (Hensley, Koscheski, & Tewksbury, 2007).

Mass incarceration and the poor treatment of inmates remain significant issues in the United States. Despite former Attorney General Eric Holder’s push for more alternatives to incarceration (Clifford, 2014), the United States continues to have the largest penal population in the world (Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 2017). In addition, just when it seemed that a bipartisan push for criminal justice reform might lead

to real change, President Donald Trump altered the Republican landscape during his election campaign. NY Times congressional correspondent Carl Hulse (2016) argued that Trump's call for more "law and order" contributed to the failure of a major criminal justice overhaul bill that had previously seemed destined to be a "bipartisan success story."

Furthermore, negative attitudes toward inmates persist. Roma (as cited in D. Lee, 2014) reported that some correctional officers refer to prisoners—including members of her prison choir—as, "the scum of the earth" (Creating the Blueprint, para. 1). Evidence for the existence of negative attitudes toward prisoners is not merely anecdotal; research studies discussed in chapter 2 (Mandracchia et al., 2013; Melvin et al., 1985; National Opinion Research Center, 2013; Shields & de Moya, 1997) contain further evidence. Negative attitudes toward prisoners are especially troubling given the fact that prison wardens often consider public opinion when drafting policies for their institutions (Johnson, Bennett, & Flanagan, 1997). Also, Hirschfield and Piquero (2010) and Park (2009) argued that the public's negative attitude toward prisoners is one of the major barriers to their successful reintegration into society (Park, 2009, p. iv).

Regarding my own attitude, I once wholeheartedly agreed with the "tough on crime" stance frequently expressed in media reports and congressional legislation during my early adolescence. The thought of offering hardened criminals the opportunity even to watch television made me shiver with revulsion. They committed a crime, and now they should suffer, I thought.

As I have grown older, however, my attitude has changed drastically. An

influential factor in the changing of my attitude toward incarcerated people was my exposure to video footage of the Sing Sing Prison Salsa Band from 1986 (Laboy, 2006). Angel LaBoy, the man who posted the video online, had been employed as the music teacher at Sing Sing Prison in Ossining, New York from 1983 to 1988. I was inspired by his video; it was a powerful experience to listen to incarcerated people making such beautiful music. I came to see prisoners as more human, more real than I had before. I no longer felt disdain and disgust for incarcerated people, and I began to favor less punitive correctional practices.

The experience of hearing a recording of prison musicians also helped solidify my interest in music education in prison contexts, and it encouraged me to pursue opportunities to volunteer in prisons. For example, I recently spoke about music and performance anxiety to a Toastmasters class at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan. Because of these experiences, I no longer think that it accomplishes anything worthwhile to deprive people of the opportunity to participate in meaningful activities such as music making. I agree with the liberal credo shared by Judith Shklar and Richard Rorty (1989) that “cruelty is the worst thing we do” (Shklar, 1984, p. 44), and I think that to deprive people of the opportunity to make music is cruel. Researchers have highlighted the “[nearly] universal importance of musical communication” arguing, “it influences how we see ourselves and how we relate to the world around us” (MacDonald, Hargreaves, & Miell, 2002, p. 462). Likewise, Christopher Small (1998) posited that people taking part in a musical event are, at least on some level, affirming their identity as part of a community, saying: “*This is who we are*” (p. 43).

To deprive incarcerated people of the opportunity to participate in musical activities, then, is to deprive them of a means to identify themselves both as individuals and as part of a community. I argue that this deprivation is what Grimsrud and Zehr (2002) call a “person-destroying” experience of prison. Such experiences only further serve to alienate a group of people who often felt alienated from society [perhaps due to factors such as poverty, broken family relationships, abusive behaviors, and/or systemic racism] even before their incarceration (Grimsrud & Zehr, 2002). In short, I share Lee’s (2010) view that, “For music educators, there should be no need to doubt the significance of music in people’s lives. What is needed is for researchers to embrace the value of music in helping people reclaim their humanity” (p. 15).

Because music played an important role in the positive alteration of my attitude toward prisoners—and in chapter 2 I provide research-based evidence that others have had similar experiences—I am interested in exploring the effects of involvement with and/or exposure to prison music programs on non-incarcerated people’s attitudes toward prisoners. Will such experiences lead to a change in their attitudes? Because prison administrators consider public opinion when creating policies for their facilities (Johnson, Bennett, & Flanagan, 1997), finding ways to help people develop positive attitudes toward prisoners is an important goal for those who support reforming the American criminal justice system.

In the following sections, I provide an overview of music in prisons along with a summary of research on music education in prisons, and I argue that studies involving non-incarcerated participants are rare. I then offer an extended argument on why it is

important to examine non-incarcerated people's attitudes toward prisoners. Next, I use Christopher Small's (1998) concept of musicking along with Cohen's (2007a) theory of interactional choral pedagogy as a framework to suggest that, under certain circumstances, experiences with prison choirs could potentially lead to transformations in people's behavior and attitudes toward others, including volunteers' attitudes toward inmate-choristers (Cohen, 2007a). Finally, I provide the purpose statement and research questions of my study along with the delimitations of the study and important definitions.

Overview of Music in Prison Contexts

Although music education has “largely failed to reach the large [U.S. prison] population,” (de Quadros, 2015), there is still a rich variety of formal and informal musical activities happening in American prison contexts. Ben Harbert (2013) filmed music making in Louisiana prisons, demonstrating that incarcerated people make music both recreationally and as part of organized programs. Focusing on organized programs for incarcerated people, Cohen (in press) provided an overview of currently active performing arts groups in American jails, juvenile detention centers, and adult prisons, including: theater programs; dance programs; instrumental programs; prison choirs; composition and songwriting programs; and multi-arts programs. Although instrumental programs remain rare, Cohen (in press) pointed out that the overall number of prison performing arts programs is increasing, indicating “a renewed interest in rehabilitation and a need for positive changes in the U.S. criminal justice system” (para. 2).

My overview of music programs active in American adult and juvenile prisons expands on Cohen's (in press) work, but it is not a comprehensive listing of all the music

groups in U.S. prison contexts. The overview serves to illustrate the variety of currently active prison music programs without extending beyond the scope of my study.

Instrumental programs. Cohen (in press) pointed out that instrumental programs in U.S. prisons are rare due to security protocols. However, there are still a number of active instrumental programs such as the string orchestra coordinated by Arts on the Edge (2013) at the Hiland Mountain Correctional Center in Eagle River, Alaska, which holds concerts attended by outside community members (Warfield, 2010). Similarly, Musicambia (2016), a New York-based program inspired by El Sistema in Venezuela, gives inmates at Sing Sing Correctional Facility and Rikers Island a chance to learn to play string instruments, brass, piano, or voice along with ear training and music theory instruction. Musicambia also has partnerships with prisons in South Carolina, Indiana, Scotland, and Venezuela. The Carnegie Hall Corporation's (2017) Musical Connections organization also leads musical activities in Sing Sing Correctional Facility; a series of instrumental and composition-based workshops give incarcerated men a chance to make music alongside professional musicians.

There are also a number of guitar programs in U.S. prisons. For example, "Jail Guitar Doors" holds guitar workshops in over 60 prisons, jails, and youth centers. In addition, there is a piano program active at the Goodman Correctional Institution in South Carolina, which was founded by Dr. Anna Hamilton, an adjunct faculty member at The University of South Carolina.

Multi-arts programs. Multi-arts programs for incarcerated adults sometimes include musical components. For instance, Cohen (in press) detailed the activities of

Music for Transformation, a program under the non-profit DeCoda Music, which runs songwriting workshops in Lee Correctional Facility, South Carolina and in Sing Sing Correctional Facility, New York. Some of the participants at Lee Correctional Facility also started a string quartet and a brass quartet. Like Music for Transformation, Rehabilitation through the Arts (2017) also runs arts programs at Sing Sing Prison in Ossining, NY. Rehabilitation through the Arts (RtA; 2017) is now active in three New York State counties and seeks to “use the transformative power of the arts to develop social and cognitive skills that prisoners need for successful reintegration into the community” (para. 1). RtA gives incarcerated people the chance to perform in musicals, play guitar and keyboards, and write songs. Prison Performing Arts (PPA) is another multi-arts program with a musical component. Founded by Agnes Wilcox and based in St. Louis, Missouri, PPA (2017) has seven programs in prisons for youth, adult males, and adult females. Some of the PPA programs focus on hip-hop and spoken word poetry (Cohen, in press).

Choirs. In 2003, most choirs active in American prisons were either religious-based worship groups or inmate-conducted vocal ensembles (Cohen & Silverman, 2013); however, the number of adult prison choirs facilitated by outside volunteers has recently grown (Cohen, in press). Two choirs led by outside volunteers active since the 1990s include a male choir called the East Hill Singers at Lansing Correctional Facility in Kansas (Cohen, 2010b) and a male choir called Umoja at the Lebanon Correctional Facility in Ohio (Roma, 2010). Founded by Elvera Voth (Cohen, 2010b), the East Hill Singers perform together with non-incarcerated volunteers outside the prison twice a

year, and their concerts are open to the public (Arts in Prison, 2017). Led by Cathy Roma, Umoja has released CDs and even competed in the World Choir Games (Peace Resource Center of Wilmington College, 2012). Roma also leads two other prison choirs in Ohio: Ubuntu and Hope through Harmony.

In 2009, Mary Cohen founded the Oakdale Singers at the Oakdale Prison (officially the Iowa Medical and Classification Center). The choir consists of around 30 incarcerated men and 20 to 30 people from the outside community who sing together. The choir also has reflective writing and songwriting components, and it performs for outside community members who come to the prison for performances (Cohen, 2012b).

In 2012, several professors of Boston University's Metropolitan College Prison Education Program initiated choral programs in two Massachusetts prisons: the Massachusetts Correctional Institution—Framingham, a prison for women, and the Massachusetts Correctional Institution—Norfolk, a men's prison (de Quadros, 2015). In their work with these two choirs, professors André de Quadros, Jamie Hillman, and Emily Howe developed a distinct interdisciplinary arts approach called "Empowering Song," which is "rooted in improvised song, poetry, bodywork, movement and imagery for personal and communal transformation" (de Quadros, 2015, p. 504). The approach is democratic and inclusive, giving incarcerated singers the chance to guide sessions with their own ideas and responses (de Quadros, 2015, p. 505). The Empowering Song programs in Norfolk and Framingham, Massachusetts are also noteworthy, because they allow incarcerated people the chance to earn college credit (Boston University, 2014). In addition to the choral work they have done, Professors de Quadros, Hillman, and Howe

have also taught music appreciation courses at the Norfolk and Framingham prisons. Other American prison choirs include Jody Kerchner's Oberlin Music at Grafton Correctional Institution Men's Choir (OMAG) in Ohio and Voices of Hope at Shakopee Woman's Facility in Minnesota founded by Amanda Weber (Cohen, in press, *Prison Choirs in Adult Facilities*, para. 2). In addition, Sue Coffee directed Unbound Voices in recent years at the Denver Women's Correctional Facility, but the choir is no longer active (Sound Circle, 2017).

Programs for juveniles. Programs for juveniles include multi-arts programs such as The Champaign County Juvenile Detention Arts Project in Illinois and Project Youth ArtReach in Maryland (Cohen, in press). Maud Hickey's AMPED program (The Arts and Music Programs for Education in Detention Centers) gives Northwestern University students the chance to teach composition to justice-involved youth at the Cook County Juvenile Center (Northwestern University, 2014). AMPED students use synthesizers and programs like Garageband to create music in their preferred styles. Founded by Bea Hasselmann, the Soul of Red Wing is a prison choir for boys detained at the Red Wing Correctional Facility in Minnesota (Cohen, 2012b). Another program for young people, Storycatchers Theater (2017) is facilitated by teachers trained in trauma-informed approaches and gives youth the chance to write and perform original musical plays based on their own experiences. Palidofsky (2010) described the work of the Storycatchers Theater in detail. Additionally, Marcum (2014) described a classical guitar program at the Gardner Betts Juvenile Justice Facility in central Texas, and Cohen (in press) discussed a program for children of incarcerated adults called SWAN (Scaling Walls a Note at a

Time).

Project reports about additional American programs. The authors of project reports and other articles have described additional music programs in American prison contexts, focusing particularly on the role these programs play in the lives of incarcerated people. For example, Abrahams, Rowland, and Kohler (2012) and Harvey (2010) discussed prison choirs in New Jersey and Connecticut respectively. Elsilá (1998) described a songwriting program in Michigan, and Fierro (2010) detailed the activities of his music class at the Santa Ana Jail in California. Finally, Geidel (2005) discussed a hip-hop-based program in Kentucky. I am not certain if these programs are still active.

Programs outside the U.S. Prison music programs are not limited to American facilities. Aside from his work with the prison choirs in Massachusetts, de Quadros has also worked with prison choirs outside the U.S., from Thailand to the Palestinian territories (Seligson, 2012). Menning (2010) reported on a choral program in New Zealand; Pardue (2004) described Brazilian hip-hop as an educational project; Rodrigues et al. (2010) reported on the “BebeBaba” project in Portugal; researchers have described various programs in the UK, including prison-based gamelan ensembles (Henley, 2012; Savage & Challis, 2002; Wilson, Caulfield, & Atherton, 2009) and also pop/rock-based programs (Anderson & Overy, 2012); Tiernan (2010) related experiences with a community music program in an Irish probation center; and Woodward, Sloth-Nielsen, and Mathiti (2008) described the Diversion in Music Education (DIME) program for adjudicated youth in South Africa.

An Overview of Research on Music Education in Prison Contexts: 1992 – 2017

In this section, I summarize the body of research on music education in prison contexts written during the last 25 years. I describe studies involving human subjects, along with historical and philosophical studies, in an effort to show that there is an important gap in the literature. Although a few of the studies listed below involve recreational music programs, I include them in this section because musical learning takes place in them, even if they do not describe themselves as music education programs. In addition, I use the term “prison contexts” because it is a broader term than “prisons”; some of the studies below involve music not just in prisons, but also in other facilities such as jails and probation centers.

Within the last few decades, growing numbers of music education researchers have begun to explore the roles that music education can play in the lives of incarcerated people (Lee, 2010). The proliferation of research on music education in prison contexts has coincided with a growing interest in the role that music education can play in the promotion of social justice (e.g., Allsup, 2010; Benedict et al., 2015; CRÈME, 2014).

Research on music programs. Researchers have described the following outcomes for incarcerated people through participation in music programs in prison contexts: some have reported reduced recidivism among past participants of prison music programs (Brewster, 1983; Richmiller, 1992). Several researchers have reported improved self-esteem/self-worth among prison-choristers (Cohen, 2007c; Cohen, 2008a; Silber, 2005). Other authors have reported that participants in prison music programs have improved their relationships both with peers (Cohen, 2007c; Silber, 2005; Wilson,

Caulfield, & Atherton, 2009) and with authority figures (Cohen, 2007c; Silber, 2005; Wilson et al., 2009). Broadened perspectives and increased tolerance of other races and cultures have also been recurring themes in the literature on music education in prisons (Brewster, 2010; Cohen, 2007c; Cohen, 2008a; Richmiller, 1992). Researchers working in the United Kingdom have reported the increased likelihood to pursue other educational opportunities (e.g., literature and mathematics courses) among participants in prison music programs (Anderson & Overy, 2010; Wilson et al., 2009). American researchers have reported that many inmate-musicians have expressed the desire to continue participating in musical activities after release (Brewster, 2010; Cohen, 2007c). Furthermore, several prison choir researchers have reported the development of goal-oriented behavior among inmate-choristers (Cohen, 2008a; Richmiller, 1992). Additional reported outcomes include: empowerment (Silber, 2005; Wilson et al., 2009); peak experience leading to temporary disappearance of stress (Cohen, 2007c); improved attention span (Cohen, 2008a); emotional release through songwriting (Cohen & Wilson, 2017; Wilson, 2013); participants' frustration with the behavior of others or the limitations of their own musical abilities (Cohen, 2007a); development of new physical skills (Cohen, 2008a); and the desire to "give back" to the community through service (Brewster, 2010). Although some authors have mentioned the involvement of non-incarcerated people in prison music programs (Cohen 2007b; 2012c; Cohen & Silverman, 2013; and Wilson, Caulfield, & Atherton, 2009), research focusing on these groups (e.g., volunteers or prison staff) is rare. Furthermore, research on the attitudes toward prisoners of non-incarcerated people involved with prison music programs is also rare.

Historical researchers, however, have occasionally alluded to the way that different attitudes toward criminal justice have influenced prison music programs over time. For example, the authors of status reports on music education in prison contexts have provided general overviews of the nature and scope of the field at certain points in time, sometimes discussing the impact of various criminal justice policies (Cohen, in press; Cohen, Duncan, & Anderson, 2012; Littell, 1961; Sporny, 1940; Walker, 1980). In addition, Hirsch's (2012) work on music in the criminal justice system included a discussion of the public backlash against the VH1 program *Music behind Bars*, and Messerschmidt's (2015) history of wind music at Sing Sing Prison detailed the way different wardens' views of criminal justice helped shape the purposes and activities of the bands active at Sing Sing during the past century. Other studies on the history of music education in prison contexts include Cohen's (2008b) work on the Bethel College Benefit Sing-Along for Arts in Prison, Inc.; Cohen's (2012b) description of the formation of four U.S. prison choirs; and Hash's (2007) history of the Chicago Reform School Band, which was founded in the 1860s.

Although the research described above is important in the effort to improve the field of music education in prison contexts, the authors of philosophical studies have begun to recognize the necessity of answering more fundamental questions about the purpose and practices of such programs. Shieh (2010), for example, argued that "Foucault's [1975] assertion of a rehabilitative impossibility [in prisons] is premature: he fails to consider the possibility of educational approaches that resist constituting the students as objects to be transformed...Nor does Foucault consider prisons that resist

isolation and authoritarianism” (p. 22). According to Shieh, Freire’s (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* offered a redefinition of education, extendable to music programs, which could resist isolation and authoritarianism in prison contexts. Along similar lines, de Quadros (2015) described the “Empowering Song” approach as used in two Massachusetts prison choirs as an alternative to elitist and exclusionary practices found in many choral contexts. The practices of the Massachusetts prison choirs are grounded in inclusion, communal participation, bonding, and resistance in an effort to counteract the restrictive authoritarianism choir members encounter during their incarceration (de Quadros, 2015). In another philosophical work, Cohen (2007a) used Christopher Small’s (1998) concept of musicking as a framework for developing a theory of choral singing pedagogy in prison contexts. Later in this chapter, I discuss the work of Cohen (2007a) and Small (1998) in greater detail, as both contribute significantly to the conceptual framework of this study.

A gap in the literature. Although the majority of studies about music education in prison contexts pertain to the effects of participation in such programs on incarcerated people, Cohen (2007a) also encouraged researchers to explore the effects of experiences with a prison choir on non-incarcerated people such as correctional officers, inmate choristers’ family members, and audience members. Despite this need, few research studies on music education in prison contexts include non-incarcerated participants. In one study, however, Cohen (2012a) examined non-incarcerated, volunteer choristers’ attitudes toward prisoners before and after participation in a prison choir. The volunteer choristers’ attitudes toward prisoners became more positive through the experiences of

singing in a prison choir for three months. In the following sections, I explain why I think it is important to examine attitudes toward prisoners and to explore potential means for improving them. I begin at the broadest level of my argument with Rorty's (1982; 1989) pragmatic views on the importance of solidarity with "others."

Richard Rorty and the Importance of Solidarity

According to Richard Rorty (1982), a primary goal of social science research is to widen our sense of community so that it includes all people. With that goal in mind, it is the task of social scientists to "act as interpreters for those with whom we are not sure how to talk" (p. 202). Intellectuals should provide redescriptions of "others" so that we come to see each of "them" as "one of us" (Rorty, 1989, p. xvi).

In *The Consequences of Pragmatism*, Rorty (1982) provided a hypothetical example of a psychopath addressing the court before his sentencing. Rorty argued that even this extreme example of an adjudicated individual is "one of us," a fellow human who deserves to be treated with civility (p. 202). However, Rorty's position on the importance of human solidarity was not an endorsement of the view that every human—including this hypothetical psychopathic individual—has some essential trait that all other humans share. Instead, he argued that differences between race, tribe, religion, customs, and the like are "unimportant when compared with similarities with respect to pain and humiliation" (Rorty, 1989, p. 192).

Although it is important to defend the goal of widening our sense of community to be inclusive of all social groups, Rorty (1989) admitted that there is no objective, non-circular way to do so. Arguments related to how we should treat others are invariably

based on philosophical premises or religious beliefs, which not everyone shares.

According to Rorty (1982), one cannot offer an “objective” argument in support of the view that outgroup members should be treated with civility, because:

[Our] awareness that we are part of a moral community...is simply taking a certain point of view on our fellow-humans. The question of whether it is an ‘objective’ point of view is not to any point. (p. 202)

The latter question is irrelevant because no vocabulary exists that is useful in all contexts. For example, there are useful vocabularies in which the human/non-human distinction matters and, likewise, useful vocabularies in which that distinction does not matter (Rorty, 1982, p. 203). Things are not more objectively described in some vocabularies than others. “Vocabularies are useful or useless, good or bad, helpful or misleading, sensitive or coarse, and so on; but they are not ‘more objective’ or ‘less objective’” (Rorty, 1982, p. 203). For example, natural scientists can answer certain questions successfully without consideration of the human/non-human distinction, but when it comes to the moral vocabulary, Rorty held that the distinction between humans and non-humans is basic (p. 203). Using his moral vocabulary, Rorty (1982) argued that someone convicted of a crime and awaiting sentencing is “one of us” (p. 202).

Incarcerated Americans: A Marginalized Population

It was perceptive of Rorty to use the example of an adjudicated individual, because incarcerated people have become an enormous, marginalized population in the United States. In fact, the United States incarcerates more people per capita than any other nation (International Centre for Prison Studies, 2012). As of 2015 there were over

1.5 million adults in federal or state prisons in the United States (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016). In addition, America has more prisons than any other country (Lennard, 2012).

These numbers alone should be cause for concern, but even more troubling is the handling of people who are convicted of felonies in the American legal system. Before, during, and after their incarceration, these individuals—predominantly minorities—are subjected to the same forms of discrimination that African Americans experienced during the Jim Crow era (Alexander, 2012, p. 14). “Once you’re labeled a felon, the old forms of discrimination—employment discrimination, housing discrimination, denial of the right to vote, *denial of educational opportunity* [emphasis added], denial of food stamps and other public benefits, and exclusion from jury service—are suddenly legal” (Alexander, 2012, p. 2).

It is important to remember that some people who wind up in prison and face the kinds of discrimination described above are innocent. Although only 1.6% of people on death row between 1973 and 2004 were exonerated, Gross et al. (2014) used available exoneration statistics in a survival analysis model to estimate that at least 4.1% of those sentenced to death are innocent. Furthermore, The Innocence Project (2017) maintains records of hundreds of Americans who have been exonerated through DNA evidence over the last 25 years.

The pressure of plea-bargaining offers some insight into why so many innocent people wind up in prison. Innocent defendants sometimes accept reduced sentences through plea-bargaining in order to avoid the risk of more severe penalties. In fact, of the

federal cases that do not wind up being dismissed, 97% are resolved through plea-bargaining (Rakoff, 2014). In other words, most people incarcerated in federal prisons have never even been to trial, and the numbers are similar in state legal systems (Rakoff, 2014). Many of these inmates are poor people with minimal resources who feel pressured to take “deals” offered by prosecutors. As Rakoff (2014) pointed out, “mandatory [minimum sentences] provide prosecutors with weapons to bludgeon defendants into effectively coerced plea bargains” (para. 15).

Another troubling fact is that people of color constitute the overwhelming majority of the U.S. prison population (Alexander, 2012). By the early 1990s, 29% of Black men could expect to spend some time in a state or federal prison (Currie, 1998, p. 3). In fact, the U.S. incarcerates a larger percentage of its Black population than South Africa did at the height of Apartheid (Alexander, 2012, p. 6). In 2000, the highest rate of White male incarceration (1,151 men per 100,000) was lower than the lowest rate of Black male incarceration (1,195 men per 100,000) on a state-by-state basis (Human Rights Watch, 2000). Furthermore, these racial disparities do not seem to be improving. Neal and Rick (2013) pointed to trends in incarceration rates and non-employment rates and stated, “less-skilled Black men are now...worse off than they were in 1970” (p. 42). In fact, the Pew Research Center (2013) reported that African Americans were five times more likely to be incarcerated than White men in 1960, but as of 2010, African Americans were six times more likely to be incarcerated than their White counterparts.

Contrary to popular belief, the racial disparities in the U.S. prison population are not reflective of racial disparities in crime rates (Alexander, 2012). Despite the fact that

the majority of illegal drug users and dealers in America are White, three quarters of all people imprisoned for drug offenses have been Black or Latino (Mauer & King, 2004, p. 3). In addition, Lum et al. (2014) reported that the roughly four-fold increase in the per capita incarceration rate between 1978 and 2011 was not matched by a similar increase in Black-male criminality. Along similar lines, Davis (2003) stated that the massive increase in incarceration during the 1980s was not a response to an increase in crime; in fact, by the time the prison construction boom began, official crime statistics had already been falling (p. 17).

Even before imprisonment, many police departments in the U.S. unfairly profile minorities (Alexander, 2012, pp. 130–139). For example, journalists at the Orlando Sentinel obtained 148 hours of video footage documenting traffic stops in Volusia County, Florida. Despite the fact that the vast majority of drivers on the roads during the filming of the videos were White, more than 80% of the cars the police stopped and searched were driven by people of color (Brazil & Berry, 1992).

Awareness of racial discrepancies in police stops and in court sentencing is growing, but change is slow. As originally introduced, the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 was designed to help minimize the trend of racially unfair sentencing by eliminating the discriminatory disparity between crack and powder cocaine sentencing under federal law (Baker, 2010). Historically, crack users, who are predominantly Black, have been punished much more harshly than powder cocaine users, who are usually wealthier and White (Baker, 2010). However, members of the Republican Senate Judiciary Committee pushed for a deal that only reduced the disparity to an 18:1 ratio (Baker, 2010). This

disparity is unfair especially considering Western's (2006) finding that drug use is neither more prevalent nor more dangerous among African-Americans.

In addition to highlighting the continued influence of racism on the American criminal justice system, Angela Davis (2003) and others (Robbins, 2015; Sapien, 2014) have emphasized the prevalence of various forms of abuse in prisons. Guards not only neglect the medical needs of prisoners, but they also abuse them physically (Davis, 2003; Sapien, 2014). Davis (2003) even argued that sexual abuse has become an institutionalized component of punishment in women's prisons (p. 77).

The proportion of mentally ill people in prisons is another disturbing trend. There are more people with mental and emotional disorders incarcerated in jails and prisons than in mental institutions" (Davis, 2003, p. 108). Considering this fact, Davis asked, "Are we willing to relegate ever larger numbers of people from racially oppressed communities to an isolated existence marked by authoritarian regimes, violence, disease and technologies of seclusion that produce severe mental instability?" (p. 10).

Mass incarceration has also had devastating effects on non-incarcerated people living in neighborhoods where many residents end up in prison. Even after controlling for individual-level and neighborhood-level risk factors, Hatzenbuehler, Keyes, Hamilton, Uddin, and Galea (2015) reported that individuals living in neighborhoods with high incarceration rates were significantly more likely to suffer from depression and generalized anxiety disorder than were individuals living in areas with low incarceration rates. Lum et al. (2014) used the susceptible-infectious-susceptible model of infectious disease propagation to argue that incarceration works like an infectious agent:

incarceration can be “spread” to susceptible, non-incarcerated people through a social influence network. In other words, the people who are most likely to become incarcerated are those who are most directly affected by the absence of already-incarcerated people. Furthermore, given the infectious nature of incarceration, even slight racial differences in sentencing can have large effects on the disparity between Black and White incarceration rates (Lum et al., 2014).

In light of these trends, Alexander (2012) argued that mass incarceration is a pressing civil rights issue, “the new Jim Crow” as she calls it. Like the civil rights leaders of the 1960s, she argued that in order to address this enormous problem, we must be the change we wish to create. “We must lay down our racial bribes, join hands with people of all colors who are not content to wait for change to trickle down, and say to those who would stand in our way: Accept all of us or none” (p. 258).

The Relationship between Public Attitudes and Criminal Justice Policy

Unfortunately, many legislators and voters in the U.S. have little desire to widen their sense of community to include incarcerated people despite the fact that hundreds of thousands of newly-released inmates reenter the outside world every year (Alexander, 2012, p. 95). Legislative efforts are reflective of the viewpoint that incarcerated people do not deserve educational opportunities and other “perks” during and even after incarceration. For example, following the model of the federal No-Frills Prison Act (H.R. 663, 1995), many states eliminated or dramatically reduced the number of inmate programs, privileges, and services (Hensley, Koscheski, & Tewksbury, 2007). Furthermore, less than 25% of American inmates participated in *any* kind of educational

activity in 2005 (Roberts, 2005, as cited in Lahm 2009). Even in the traditionally “liberal” state of New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo faced bipartisan opposition when he tried to allocate \$1-million of the state’s annual \$140-billion budget to help give inmates access to college education (Keierleber, 2014). As a result of opposition from lawmakers, particularly those in the state senate, Cuomo later dropped the plan to use state money to pay for college classes for inmates (Kaplan, 2014).

It is not just politicians who have opposed inmate education programs and demonstrated negative attitudes toward incarcerated people. In fact, the New York legislators who opposed Cuomo’s proposal might have been responding to a Siena College poll, which showed that 66% of upstate voters opposed the governor’s proposal to help give inmates access to college education (Kaplan, 2014). Other researchers have found negative attitudes toward prisoners among the public, even among professionals whose job it is to serve them (Mandrachia et. al., 2013; Melvin et al., 1985; Shields & de Moya, 1997). In addition, Beale (2006) argued that the way the media cover issues of criminal justice contributes to the development of punitive attitudes within the public. In a national survey (National Opinion Research Center, 2013) conducted every year from 1985–2012, an average of 75.3% of Americans agreed with the statement that courts in their area do not deal harshly enough with criminals. Most relevant to the field of music education is Lenz’s (2002) finding that 70.6% of Florida residents opposed inmate access to musical instruments when tax dollars were used to purchase the instruments, and 36.1% opposed inmate access to musical instruments even if the prisoners used their own money to purchase them. Although Lenz did not specifically measure respondents’

attitudes toward prisoners, it is possible that the Florida residents' reluctance to allow inmates access to musical instruments is an indication that many of them harbor negative attitudes toward prisoners.

The creators of the Attitudes toward Prisoners scale (Melvin et al., 1985) emphasized the importance of understanding public attitudes toward prisoners as those attitudes relate to criminal justice policy and to the way inmates are punished. Likewise, Mandracchia et al. (2013) argued that because U.S. citizens have an indirect influence on public policy (i.e., via the voting process of electing officials), it is important to understand public attitudes toward prisoners and other criminal justice issues. The continued high rate of incarceration likely reflects the public's propensity toward punitive criminal justice policy (Mandracchia et al., 2013, p. 95).

In fact, research findings are suggestive of the trend that those who think that prisoners can and should be rehabilitated hold less punitive attitudes toward prisoners, and research findings are also supportive of the concept that public attitudes help shape criminal justice policy. Johnson, Bennett, and Flanagan (1997), for example, found that correctional administrators who view rehabilitation as the primary goal of incarceration are significantly more likely to support inmate access to education, vocational programs, and other amenities than were administrators who viewed incapacitation or retribution as the primary goal. Johnson, Bennett, and Flanagan (1997) also reported on the elimination of a variety of inmate programs and amenities at American correctional facilities. When asked where the impetus to eliminate those programs came from, 37% of surveyed American correctional administrators selected "the public," and another 34% selected

“the legislature” (elected by the public) (p. 37). In addition, researchers have argued that the public’s negative attitude toward offenders is one of the major barriers to prisoners’ successful reintegration into society upon release (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010).

In a study of prison songwriting program, Wilson (2013) stated that the community influences individuals, and that individuals influence the community. Along similar lines, Nugent and McNeill (2017) argued that public attitudes and views influence the likelihood that newly released people will return to prison. They used the term “desistance” to refer to the “ceasing and refraining from offending” (Nugent & McNeill, 2017, p. 412) and argued that the desistance of former prisoners depends to a large extent on the way the outside community deals with them.

Nugent and McNeill (2017) divide desistance into three aspects, which are not necessarily sequential: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Primary desistance is behavioral; it refers to when an individual stops committing crime (p. 412). Secondary desistance refers to a change in self-identity when formerly incarcerated people no longer think of themselves as offenders (p. 412). Tertiary desistance, on the other hand, refers to the role that the community plays in supporting formerly incarcerated people as they reintegrate:

Rather than viewing [desistance] as something that is down to the individual alone, the desistance process is also affected on how it is viewed by others. How other people view the individual undergoing change can and will impact on whether desistance is secured (Weaver, 2013, 2012, as cited in Nugent & McNeill, 2017)...[Tertiary desistance highlights] the importance of social recognition in securing a sense of

belonging in and commitment to community (Nugent & McNeill, 2017, p. 412).

In other words, positive attitudes toward currently and formerly incarcerated people can help create a stronger sense of community, which can help support returning citizens and ultimately reduce crime.

Rationale for the study. Given the public's power to influence the way prisoners are treated before, during, and after their release, it is necessary for those who support reforms in American criminal justice policy to understand public attitudes toward incarcerated people and to explore potential means for changing them. Cohen (2012c) provided evidence that people who sing with a prison choir can develop more positive attitudes toward incarcerated people, and in the current study, I build on Cohen's (2012c) work and continue to explore the role that music education could play in efforts toward criminal justice reform. In line with the NAFME (2017) commitment to "music for all," de Quadros (2015) emphasized the importance of inclusive practices in music education. Without a change in people's attitudes toward prisoners, however, incarcerated people may remain a neglected, underserved population.

On the Limitations of the Intergroup Contact Theory in Prison Contexts

Although experts have pointed to the important relationship between public attitudes and criminal justice policy, few have investigated how to change negative attitudes toward inmates. A great deal of research aimed at determining ways to reduce prejudice and change negative attitudes toward outgroup members is based on intergroup contact, which is not always possible in prison contexts. Even when intergroup contact is

permitted, however, there are additional constraints on research in correctional facilities. In fact, the intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998), one of the most frequently utilized theoretical frameworks on the reduction of prejudice, has a scope condition, which arguably renders it untestable with groups of incarcerated and non-incarcerated people: the groups must have equal status within the situation of contact. Regardless of the research design utilized in a prison context, participants likely know that the non-incarcerated people are free and the incarcerated people are not; they will not have equal status.

On the Limitations of Rorty's Views on Widening Our Sense of Community

In contrast to the intergroup contact theory, Rorty's views were not predicated on direct contact between groups. Rorty (1989) argued that the widening of our sense of community to include "others" is a task for narrative genres such as the ethnography, the docudrama, the novel, and even the comic book.

Angela Davis (2003) provided anecdotal evidence supportive of Rorty's claim. She argued that literature has long influenced campaigns around prison. For example, Robert Burns's (1932/1997) *I am a Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang*, and the 1932 Hollywood film upon which it was based, played a "central role in the campaign to abolish the chain gang" (p. 54).

Likewise, researchers have recently explored possible connections between the reading of fiction and empathy, which might be supportive of Rorty's argument. Specifically, researchers have found that people who frequently read fiction are more empathetic toward others than are people who do not frequently read fiction (Mar &

Oatley, 2008; Mar, Oatley, & Peterson, 2009). After controlling for certain variables associated with greater empathy (e.g., personality traits, age, and gender), Mar, Oatley, and Peterson (2009) even argued that the relationship between reading fiction and having higher levels of empathy could not be accounted for by mere individual differences. However, Bal and Veltkamp (2013) reported that fiction readers' empathy scores improved significantly over time but only if they felt transported into the narrative. No feeling of transportation into the narrative led to *lower* empathy. These findings are an indication that reading narrative fiction may not always be associated with increased empathy and can even reduce it under certain circumstances.

Researchers have also explored the roles that reading plays in the lives of incarcerated people. Sweeney (2010), for example, conducted extensive interviews with 94 incarcerated women and reported that they use reading to come to terms with their pasts, negotiate their present experiences, and reach toward different futures.

Nonetheless, the possibility that reading certain genres might be helpful in changing harmful attitudes or helping people cope with difficult experiences does not preclude the potential for other interventions to have a similar, or even greater, effect. Christopher Small (1998) claimed that when we explore ideal human relationships through music-making, we have the potential to change how we relate to those around us (p. 140). Small even went so far as to say that music-making is the "most concrete" and "least mediated" of all the arts when it comes to exploring human relationships (p. 143). Christopher Small's concept of musicking, described at length below, served as a

framework for Cohen's (2007a) theory of interactional choral pedagogy, upon which the current study is based.

Christopher Small's Concept of Musicking

Influenced by the theories of Gregory Bateson, an English biologist, anthropologist, social scientist, linguist, semiotician, and cyberneticist, Christopher Small (1998) emphasized the importance of context in understanding the meaning of any phenomenon. Everything exists in relation to other things, and nothing can be understood without considering those relationships. Because musicking is a human activity, it was important for Small to elucidate his understanding of human relationships.

According to Small (1998), human relationships involve how we act toward other beings and things, and those relationships define who we are: "who we are is how we relate [to others]" (p. 134). One of the primary ways in which we relate to others is through the use of biological communication called "paralanguage" (Small, 1998, p. 133). Paralanguage is a means of communication using bodily posture, physical gestures, facial expressions, and vocal intonation. In certain species, paralanguage is entirely hard-wired. Among humans, on the other hand, much of paralanguage, though not all of it, needs to be learned. Because biological language can change over time, the learning of paralanguage is an ongoing process for each individual. Furthermore, paralanguage can vary significantly from culture to culture and from generation to generation.

Although much of human paralanguage is elastic and culturally determined, it nonetheless performs functions in human life that words cannot (Small, 1998, p. 61). Small argued, "the gestural dialogue, including the audible gestures of vocal intonation,

will have more to tell us about the actual relationships between... conversers—and thus, quite possibly, about the real meaning of the encounter—than do the words that are being uttered” (p. 62). Even though paralinguistic cues can vary from culture to culture, Small argued that the differences between the gestural languages of different cultures are smaller than the differences between the verbal languages of those cultures. Furthermore, there is even some overlap between the gestural languages of different species. Because this interspecies overlap often includes gestures that concern issues of basic survival such as “attack and nonattack, edibility, defense, [and] alarm” (p. 62), people often experience powerful emotions in response to gestures—more so than they do with words alone (p. 133). In short, Small emphasized the power of paralinguistic cues in contrast to the limitations of verbal communication; without paralinguistic cues to contextualize a verbal dialogue, it is possible for the real meaning and emotional impact of an encounter to be lost completely.

At the same time, an understanding of the wider context of an encounter is necessary in order to grasp the full meaning of a paralinguistic gesture. Small (1998), like Bateson, recognized that meaning cannot be determined without an awareness of the full context of a situation. It is not enough to simply send and receive messages, even paralinguistic ones. For example, a dog bearing its teeth can mean different things in different contexts; the dog might be ready to fight, or it might just as well be ready to play (p. 58). For that reason, the dog will send other paralinguistic messages with its body to help convey the real meaning of the situation. It might, for example, wag its tail or stiffen its posture depending on its intentions. Likewise, a human shaking her fist might also smile to show that she is only joking and means no real harm.

Additional gestures such as those described above are messages about messages, or *metamessages*. Drawing on the work of Bateson, Small (1998) argued that metamessages play an essential role in art and games, activities which, on the surface, do not appear to have survival value, although humans engage in them with great seriousness (p. 58). For example, the athlete on a team might experiment with playing a dominant or a submissive role, and different kinds of artists might use metamessages to explore feelings of sympathy or cruelty toward others. By participating in art and games, then, humans can practice the use of metamessages and thereby explore different human relationships.

Beyond metamessages, additional context clues serve as further indications of the meaning of a human encounter. For example, one can tell a great deal about the meaning of a human interaction depending on the type of building in which it takes place. Is it in a church? A gym? A concert hall? A prison testing room?

In order to understand the full meaning of an interaction, then, one must understand the relationship between different entities (including their messages and metamessages) along with increasingly complex relationships between other factors and even the relationships among further relationships. Bateson grouped these relationships into the categories of first-, second-, and third-order relationships in an effort to understand events in nature.

Likewise, Small described the same relationships present in the context of a musical performance. First-order relationships exist between entities such as sounds or people. Second-order relationships—relationships between relationships between

entities—might include the “relationship between the relations between composer and performers, on the one hand, and the relationship between the sounds, on the other” (Small 1998, p. 199). Third-order relationships are even more complex and difficult to discuss verbally:

For instance, one set of second-order relationships between the first-order relationships between, on the one hand, performers and composer and, on the other, between performers and audience relates in a third-order relationship to a second set of second-order relationships between the first-order relationships between the sounds, on the one hand, and, on the other, those between the sounds and space in which they are played. (Small, 1998, p. 200)

Because Small (1998) found no meaning without context, he argued that music is not an abstract thing existing outside of the context of human action. He therefore viewed music as a verb rather than as a noun, and his ideas contrasted with the ideas of aesthetic philosophers who viewed musical pieces as autonomous objects (pp. 135–136). For that reason, Small coined the term “musicking.” Musicking is not a thing; it is a human activity involving complex sets of relationships between and among sounds, people, and objects.

According to Small (1998) an important part of the meaning of a performance involves the exploration of human relationships. Small argued that in the examination of a performance, one can potentially discern how participants view ideal human relationships. For example, many of the salient sociocultural conventions of the Western

industrial world can be observed in a contemporary symphony orchestra concert. Hierarchy and division of labor are present in the organization of the orchestra and even in the architectural design of the concert hall. The composer, for instance, has the most power; she provides a full score, which shows how the music should sound. Another powerful individual, the conductor, stands downstage, center with the score in front of him and relays the information it provides to the performers. Next in terms order of power come the concertmaster and then the principal players in the other instrumental sections, and their positioning on stage is an indication of the orchestral hierarchy. Each section of the orchestra also plays a different part that contributes to a greater, often complex whole. The performers are experts, and the architectural designs of most contemporary concert halls ensure that the performers are kept separate from the audience before, during, and after the performance. This physical division is representative of the division between experts and lay people, which is so typical in the contemporary technological world (Giddens, 1990). Concert halls are also designed to discourage audience members from communicating with each other and trying to participate in the performance (Small, 1998, p. 27). In contrast to the social interactions present during communal, participatory musicking in Bali or Mozambique (Small, 1998, p. 114), for example, the audience at a symphony orchestra concert is expected to respect each other's privacy and not to make any noise during the performance (p. 28). In addition, even before the performance begins, "market values" are evident in the advertising and the sale of tickets, and those values are influential in determining who is able to attend the concert at all (p. 32).

Beyond issues of spatial positioning, architectural design, and advertising, there are additional gestures—both sonic and visual—through which those involved in the performance can explore human relationships. The physical gestures of the conductor contrast markedly with the limited movements of the orchestral players. The paralinguistic interactions between them serve as another indication of the hierarchical relationship present in the performance, which, Small (1998) argued, is similar to the kind of power structure found in other enterprises in Western society (p. 35).

Continuing his argument, Small (1998) argued that, over time, a variety of additional meanings have also crystalized in the relationships between sounds produced by the orchestral players. In his semiotic analysis of auditory paralinguistic in symphonic compositions, Small (1998) argued that Western composers of instrumental music have internalized gestures from other genres including opera, military music, and sacred music in such a way that those gestures have become symbols for concepts such as masculinity, femininity, heroism, and religious piety. As a result, listeners familiar with the conventions of Western music-making can experience the unfolding of a narrative involving relationships—often the overcoming of some obstacle—when listening to symphonic compositions (pp. 148–168).

Thus, through performing (or observing and listening to) the interactions between the auditory and physical gestures of musicking, one can potentially explore ideal human relationships. Furthermore, because musicking includes the use of paralinguistic gestures which humans use to express their relationships with each other, Small (1998) argued that “musicking, dancing, and other facets of the great performance art we call ritual are more

potent means of teaching about relationships in all their complexity and of impressing them by the emotions they arouse than are words” (p. 133).

When musicking, it is possible for us to experience “directly” our own versions of the “world of right relationships,” and when we share this powerful experience with like-minded people, we feel good (Small, 1998, p. 142). On the other hand, Small (1998) pointed out that musicking takes place over time, so the relationships that exist at the beginning of a performance will not be identical to the relationships that exist afterwards:

Something has changed between the participants through the fact of having undergone the performance together. Who we are has changed, has evolved a little, either through our having been confirmed in our concepts of ideal relationships and of who we are or through having had them challenged. The relationships are all around us as we music, and we are in the midst of them. We need make no effort of will to enter into the world that the performance creates, for it envelopes us, whether we will it or not.
(p. 140)

I should underscore the fact that, for Small (1998), listening is not separate from musicking; when people listen to music, they are as much a part of the musicking process as the performers are. When we music, Small (1998) claimed, “relationships...are all around us, brought into existence by all those who are taking part, even if the only person who appears to be taking part is a jogger with a Walkman [i.e., someone using a personal listening device] or a solitary flute player in the African night” (p. 143).

To summarize the parts of Small's (1998) argument most relevant to this study, he posited that, through musicking (including listening), it is possible for a person a) to have her concept of ideal human relationships challenged, and b) to develop a new concept of ideal human relationships. Furthermore, with its inclusion of human paralanguage, musicking is better equipped than words alone to explore, and potentially change, one's concept of ideal human relationships.

Questioning Small's argument. However, the formalist reader might doubt the veracity of Small's claim that musicking can mean something—indeed, that it can mean anything at all—and that it has the potential to change people. The formalist critic Eduard Hanslick (1854) argued that the beauty of music lay in the formal relationships between the sounds; the content of music was *not* the representation of emotions (“Die ‘Darstellung von Gefühlen’ ist nicht der Inhalt der Musik” p. 20). During and after his lifetime, Hanslick's thinking has been hugely influential in the world of Western classical music. As Dahlhaus (1998) pointed out, “When even Hanslick's opponents called the text in vocal music an ‘extramusical’ influence, the battle against ‘formalism’ was lost even before it began, for Hanslick had already prevailed in the vocabulary with which they opposed him” (p. 10).

In contrast, Small (1998) did not separate music from human action. He attributed multiple levels and types of meaning to musical gestures without recourse to anthropomorphism. All of the human actions associated with a musicking experience contribute to its meaning.

Yet, there is no guarantee that any two people will interpret the human actions

associated with musicking exactly the same way. Even renowned musicologists often disagree with each other, such as the way Higgins (1993) took issue with McClary's (1991) interpretations for coming "perilously close to prescribing a dogmatic orthodoxy at odds with the spirit of feminism itself" (pp. 175–176).

In addition, although I agree with many of the ideas in Small's (1998) book, even I disagree with some aspects of Small's interpretation of Western classical compositions. For example, I do not share Small's (1998) perception of physical violence in Beethoven's music (pp. 170–176). When considering Beethoven's letters such as the Heiligenstadt Testament (1802/1992), I think it is just as plausible, if not more so, to perceive a struggle with fate or circumstance in much of Beethoven's music rather than physical violence. Furthermore, E.T.A. Hoffmann's (1813/1908) interpretation of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony shows that I am not the only one with an understanding different from Small's (1998). Hoffmann (1813/1908), a contemporary of Beethoven, perceived eternal longing rather than physical violence in the Fifth.

Another issue I have with Small's (1998) book is his tendency to speak in a monolithic way about certain cultures, often glossing over the rich variety of practices in different tribes, countries, and time periods. For example, he speaks in broad generalities about "Anglo-Saxon people," "Latins," and "Africans and people of African descent" (Small, 1998, p. 62). About the latter group, Small (1998) wrote that they possess perhaps the "most exuberant and at the same time subtle virtuosity" in the use of vocal gestures in music. While he clearly means this generalization as a compliment, I feel it belittles the various peoples of Africa by reducing them to a single stereotype.

Along similar lines, Small (1998) even acknowledged his friends' criticism of his description of the "solitary flute player" in the African night. According to Small (1998), his friends argued that his solitary flute player comes too close to the exotic "'other' that has beset European thinking about the rest of the human race—one thinks of Edward Said's (1978) eloquent protest—and that he appears to be an idealized and interchangeable creature who has no real existence as a human being" (p. 201). Although Small (1998) countered that, to him, the flute player is no created "other," but a friend and respected fellow musician (p. 201), his description of this "herdsman playing his flute as he guards his flock in the African night" still seems like the archetypal noble savage to me (King, 2006, p. 22). In sum, I find it problematic that Small (1998) consistently praised non-Western cultures in a one-dimensional way, treating individuals from those cultures as exotic "others."

I also argue that Small (1998) did not acknowledge the full variety of ways it is possible to perform so-called Western classical music. To his credit, Small (1998) did mention the existence of some experimental ensembles, such as conductorless orchestras (pp. 85–86), whose sense of ideal relationships differs from the hierarchical mindset of other ensembles. However, he failed to recognize or anticipate the variety of performance practices other ensembles have developed. For example, there are orchestras that seat audience members among the performers (Experiential Orchestra, 2017; Meyer, 2016), orchestras that encourage the audience to dance (Experiential Orchestra, 2017); orchestras growing dramatically in diversity of membership (Erlich, 2008); and music conservatories that do not charge tuition (Erlich, 2008). Likewise, the "Empowering

Song” approach described earlier also offers an inclusive, democratic approach to choral music (de Quadros, 2015).

Nonetheless, to the extent that one can generalize about Western classical music the way Small (1998) did, I am not bothered by the trends he described. I do not think the hierarchy and division of labor present in many orchestral performances are automatically bad things, because I do not globalize the world of right relationships the way Small (1998) seemed to do. For me, the world of right relationships present in a given performance can be context specific; it need not be generalized to all areas of life. While many human interactions can and should be completely egalitarian and democratic, others probably should not be. For example, when I am sick, I prefer to be treated by trained medical experts, not lay people. Likewise, I would not feel comfortable with a randomly selected passenger landing the plane when I fly. Sometimes expertise is necessary, and I enjoy traditional orchestral performances as symbolic celebrations of one form of excellence. To be sure, I want conductors to be kind, and I want orchestras to be more welcoming to all kinds of people than some ensembles are, both in terms of their members and their audiences. I also applaud the innovations of the ensembles described above, and I enjoy many other genres of music, as the less formal sense of ideal relationships implied in them is appropriate in other contexts of life. Still, I have no issue with the basic conductor-ensemble-audience model Small (1998) criticized.

That being said, my issues with Small’s (1998) book do not undermine my support for his basic argument. I agree with him that music is an action that takes place in time rather than a static object, and I agree that people can explore, affirm, celebrate, and

potentially even change their sense of ideal relationships while musicking. The fact that my sense of ideal relationships is not exactly the same as Small's (1998) does not contradict his argument; if anything, it lends support to it, as Small (1998) acknowledged that different people will have a different sense of ideal relationships. In addition, my disagreement with Small's (1998) interpretation of Beethoven's music (and much of the so-called Western canon) does not negate his basic argument. Phenomena do not need to have absolute, universal meanings in order to be *meaningful* and influential in people's lives. Small (1998) acknowledged that there are no final or definite answers to the questions he posed in his book. Furthermore, Small pointed out that his readers are perfectly capable of coming up with their own answers to the questions he posed about the meaning of musicking.

But not all answers are equally plausible. Although no definite answers exist to the kinds of questions Small posed, he argued, like Rorty, that there are "useful and useless answers," answers that lead to the enrichment of experience or to the impoverishment thereof (p. 17).

In order to arrive at useful answers regarding the meanings of a musicking experience, it is important to understand Small's (1998) thinking on the first-, second-, and third-order relationships involved with a performance. In other words, one needs to know as much as possible about the cultural semiotics of the sound relationships; the cultural meanings attached to the type of venue in which the performance is taking place; the meanings behind the positioning of those participating and the clothes they wear; the meaning of the paralinguage they use; and the first, second, and third-order relationships

among all of the people and objects involved in the ritual of performance. The less one knows about those relationships, the less useful and meaningful her understanding of the experience will be. For example, it would not be very plausible to interpret the pious performance of a slow Bruckner motet in a cathedral as being evocative of a frenetic bacchanal.

Because the meanings and impact of musicking experiences are highly context dependent and open to a variety of plausible interpretations by different people, Small (1998) could not offer an exhaustive list of the variables that need to be present in a musicking experience in order for people to have their concepts of ideal human relationships challenged and even changed. However, Cohen (2007a) used Small's concept of musicking as a framework for a theory of interactional choral singing pedagogy, through which she asserted that, under certain conditions, the behavior of choristers can change in a positive way through participation in a prison choir. In the following section, I discuss this theory and its necessary scope conditions in detail.

The interactional theory of choral pedagogy. Cohen (2007a) used Christopher Small's concept of musicking as a framework for developing a theory of choral singing pedagogy in prison contexts. Compared to the music education philosophies of Estelle Jorgensen, Bennett Reimer, and David J. Elliott, Cohen found Small's concept better able to respond to two primary assumptions about choral singing: "(a) choral singing typically entails the articulation and communication of words ('the word factor') and (b) choral singing evidences a union between musical agent and musical instrument ('the somatic factor')" (p. iii). Again, Small (1998) disagreed with aesthetic philosophers who viewed

musical pieces as autonomous objects. Therefore, he did not see song texts, i.e., the word factor, as separate from the “music itself;” rather, he perceived the texts within songs as part of the musicking experience. In addition, Small rejected mind-body dualism. His holistic perspective on the human body and mind easily accommodates the somatic factor, which Cohen (2007a) argued is a central part of choral singing. After all, Small viewed paralinguistic gestures including bodily posture, movement, facial expression, vocal timbre, and intonation as important communicative elements of musicking.

In contrast, Cohen (2007a) argued that Reimer’s (1989) aesthetic philosophy accommodates neither the word factor nor the somatic factor of choral singing. Cohen (2007a) argued that his view of the word factor is especially problematic. Reimer (1989) indicated that sung words are nonmusical aspects of music teaching (Cohen, 2007a, p. 263).

Jorgensen, on the other hand, has discussed the importance of song texts, albeit to a limited extent. According to Cohen (2007a), Jorgensen acknowledged that music teachers often select songs with texts that are supportive of the values they wish to address. However, “she did not...explore the possible ramifications of the somatic factor in terms of choral singing pedagogy” (p. 263).

Elliott’s (1995) “praxial” philosophy was also found lacking with respect to the word and somatic factors. Elliott “tended to deemphasize the word factor suggesting the structural aspects of choral songs can exist independently of words” (Cohen, 2007a, p. 263). In addition, Elliott’s concept of the somatic factor “centered on cognitive processes rather than holistically-conceived somatic aspects of choral singing” (p. 264). In short,

according to Cohen (2007a), Elliott underestimated the connection of words and pitches along with the importance of the body in choral singing.

After clarifying the argument that Small's theory is the most capable of responding to the word factor and the somatic factor, Cohen (2007a) offered a review of the literature on prison choirs and then proposed a new theory of choral singing pedagogy in prison contexts. Cohen (2007a) argued, "singing in a prison choir appears to provide a means for inmates to cope with incarceration, develop a sense of personal identity, construct and celebrate ideal futures, and learn new behaviors." Cohen then proposed the theory of interactional choral pedagogy:

Choral musicking experiences in prison contexts facilitated by a knowledgeable teacher-conductor results in assessable growth in desirable personal and social behaviors by individual prison choristers, when those choral musicking experiences include (a) engaging choristers in appropriate ways with combinations of the somatic and word factors unique to choral singing including the thoughtful selection of musical pieces, (b) the intentional development of mutual and simultaneous relationships between musical sounds produced by prison choristers, the social interactions between and among people making or listening to such sounds, and the relationships between such singing and such people, such that (c) growth in desirable personal and social behaviors occurs in a manner specific to choral musicking that can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively (p. 293).

Cohen (2007a) added the caveat that “[this] theory recognizes that each participant’s level of engagement, attitude toward the learning process, and awareness level of those processes influence individual growth” (p. 293). Furthermore, because every prison-based choir is unique, Cohen listed the following scope conditions necessary for the theory of interactional choral singing pedagogy for prison choirs: (a) opportunity for regular, ongoing and formal choral singing experiences for prisoners facilitated by a knowledgeable teacher-conductor, (b) prison choristers must attend rehearsals consistently, (c) the higher the attendance rate the greater the opportunity for prison choristers to achieve assessable growth, (d) the teacher-conductor must learn the risks and needs of a prison population and prepare to work in a correctional facility by attending volunteer training sessions if offered at the facility and continue to learn strategies for working with this population, (e) the teacher-conductor must be skilled in facilitating the process of interacting sets of musicking relationships, including those between choral sounds and persons making or listening to those sounds, as well as somatic factors and word factors, rather than focusing simply upon constructing a finished performance product for its own sake, (f) the teacher-conductor must prepare careful, thoughtful, well-planned learning experiences for the prison choristers, including those that afford opportunities for prisoners to construct their own learning in choral singing contexts, and must be able to adapt and change plans as necessary, (g) the teacher-conductor must present learning material in a way that appeals to inmates, and (h) the correctional facility must provide support for the program in terms of providing access to rehearsal space, communicating to inmates about the rehearsal schedule, and if

performances occur outside of the facility, provide staff and vehicles to escort inmates to the performance venue and return to the prison (pp. 300–301).

In Chapter 2, I review literature that tests Cohen’s theory or is closely related to it. Researchers report outcomes of incarcerated people in choral singing programs. Some of these outcomes might also extend to non-incarcerated volunteers in a prison choir. In fact, Cohen (2012a) examined the attitudes of community singers (i.e., volunteers from the outside) in a prison choir. Using a pre-test-post-test design, Cohen reported that the volunteers’ attitudes toward prisoners improved significantly after participation in the joint inmate-volunteer prison choir.

Statement of the Problem

Although Cohen’s (2012a) findings suggest non-inmates who sing with inmates develop more positive attitudes toward prisoners, important questions remain unanswered. Because Cohen tested participants immediately after their first concert with the prison choir, the longer-term duration of the positive changes in attitudes toward prisoners remains unclear. How might continued involvement with the prison choir affect the volunteer choristers’ attitudes toward prisoners? Could there be a relationship between the number of concerts volunteers have sung with the prison choir and their attitudes toward prisoners? Also, the question of whether or not these findings are consistent with volunteer choristers from different prison choirs remains. Yet, the examination of attitudes of people who sing with inmates is important, but it is not the only kind of research into possible influences of choral singing upon people’s attitudes toward prisoners.

There is a dearth of research on the attitudes of audience members at a prison choir concert despite Cohen's (2007a) call for research involving such concertgoers. According to Cohen (2012b), some members of the Kansas Music Educators' Conference who attended the 2008 President's Concert in Wichita initially expressed negative attitudes toward prisoners (p. 229). However, at least one of those attendees felt more positive about the prison choir after hearing their performance. Aside from that anecdote, data-based research on prison choir audience members' attitudes toward incarcerated people is rare to non-existent.

Small (1998) argued that it is possible for people to have their concept of ideal human relationships challenged and even changed through music listening experiences, but he did not specify the conditions under which those changes might occur. Because Darrow, Johnson, Ollenberger, and Miller (2002) suggested that audience members' attitudes toward both teens and older persons changed and became more positive after attending a performance by an intergenerational choir, it might also be possible for audience members to develop more positive attitudes toward prisoners after attending a prison choir concert. On the other hand, Bodner and Gilboa (2009) tried to see if listening to several different genres would diminish the prejudice between secular and religious Israelis; they reported that listening to recordings of Israeli crisis songs did lessen those feelings of prejudice, but listening to love songs had little to no effect on participants' feelings toward each other. Clearly, not every musical listening experience changes people's attitude toward others, so the issue warrants further investigation.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of (a) singing with incarcerated choir members and (b) attending a live prison choir performance, on non-incarcerated people, focusing particularly on the effects of such experiences on participants' attitudes toward prisoners. Participants include: 1) non-incarcerated volunteer singers from four Midwestern prison choirs ($n = 41$); 2) a control group of Midwestern community choir members who have had no experiences in a prison context or with a prison choir ($n = 19$); and 3) non-incarcerated, adult audience members at a Midwestern prison choir concert ($n = 78$). In part 1 of the study, the volunteer singers and control group completed the Attitudes toward Prisoners scale (ATPS; Melvin et al., 1985) following the completion of their respective winter concerts, and the volunteer singers also responded to the following open-ended items: 1) Think back to when you began singing in a prison choir to now. How has the experience affected you? (Cohen, 2012a); and 2) Describe your attitude toward prisoners since you began singing in a prison choir. In part 2 of the study, adult audience members completed the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) before and after attending a Midwestern prison choir concert. After the concert, the audience members also responded in writing to the following open-ended item: 1) Tell me about your experience at the prison choir concert tonight. What stands out in your mind? Any surprises? In addition, the audience members completed a demographic questionnaire to determine participants' level of familiarity with prisoners (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010) and if they have previously attended any prison choir concerts. My research questions are:

1. How do the ATPS scores of the volunteer prison choir singers compare to the

ATPS scores of the control group? What is the relationship between participation in a prison choir and ATPS scores?

2. What relationship, if any, is there between the number of concerts the volunteer singers have sung with a prison choir and their ATPS scores?
3. What changes, if any, are there between audience members' pre-test and post-test responses to the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985)?
4. What effects, if any, do volunteer singers and audience members report regarding their experiences with a prison choir?

In order to answer the first question, I used a Mann-Whitney U test to compare volunteer prison choir singers' ATPS scores with the scores of the control group. To answer the second question, I matched the ATPS scores of each volunteer prison choir singer with the number of concerts each of them has sung with their choir. Then, I calculated the Spearman correlation coefficient to determine whether or not a statistically significant relationship exists between the number of concerts the volunteers have sung in a prison choir and their ATPS scores. For the third question, I used a Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare audience members' pre- and post-ATPS scores. Finally, to answer the fourth question, I used an open coding, axial coding, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006) to look for emergent themes in participants' open-ended answers.

Detailed descriptions of my data analyses and results can be found in chapters 4 through 7. Chapter 4 contains the quantitative analysis for part 1, and Chapter 5 contains the qualitative analysis for part 1. Chapters 6 and 7 contain the quantitative and qualitative results for part 2.

Delimitations

This study's generalizability is limited to volunteers and audience members who have experiences with the particular joint inmate-volunteer prison choirs examined in this research. As such, its scope is rather limited. However, no previous studies have collected data from three main groups: non-incarcerated prison choir volunteers, a control group of choir members, and prison choir audience members, in order to answer the question of how might participation in a prison choir and attending a prison choir concert influence attitudes toward prisoners.

Also, selection bias is a common problem in research on intergroup contact (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 69), and this study may be no exception to that trend. It is possible that the most prejudiced people would be the least likely to volunteer to participate in a study involving contact with a stigmatized group. Perhaps, for example, many people interested in attending a prison choir concert already demonstrated relatively positive attitudes toward prisoners. On the other hand, it is also possible that some audience members might have negative attitudes toward prisoners and attend performances out of curiosity. The issue warrants further investigation.

Definitions

In preparation for the completion of this study, I read studies in the fields of music education, criminal justice, and psychology. The definitions used in this study were found through my careful review of the related literature in those fields.

Attitude. An attitude is, "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 1).

Choral singing. For purposes of this investigation, choral singing is defined as it was in Cohen's (2007a) study: choral singing is group singing, with sufficient individual voices in a particular group to produce a psychoacoustical "chorusing effect" (Daugherty, 1999; Ternström, 1994). Typically, a chorusing effect occurs when there are three or more singers phonating the same frequencies. Therefore, choral singing occurs when there are three or more singers for each voice part employed (often soprano, alto, tenor, bass) in singing either scored or improvised choral literature.

Prisoners. I use the terms "incarcerated person," "inmate," and "prisoner" interchangeably in the current study to refer to people who are "confined in long-term facilities run by the state or federal government or private agencies. They are typically felons who have received a sentence of incarceration of 1 year or more" (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014). Frequently, however, I use the term "incarcerated person" in an effort to show respect for the humanity of people in prison. In certain contexts, on the other hand, it is also necessary to use the terms "prisoner" and "inmate," because those terms are used in the Attitudes toward Prisoners scale (Melvin et al., 1985) and in related literature.

Prison choir. For the purposes of this study, I define this term as a choral group that rehearses in an adult prison and is comprised, at least in part, of incarcerated singers. The prison choirs involved with the current study are comprised of both incarcerated and non-incarcerated members.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review is divided into three sections. In the first section I summarize studies in which researchers utilized the Attitudes toward Prisoners scale (ATPS; Melvin et al., 1985) and reported that negative attitudes exist. In the second section, I describe investigations on prison choirs, in which the researchers provided evidence supportive of ideas within Cohen's (2007a) theory that certain prison choir musicking experiences can lead to growth in desirable social and personal behaviors. In the final section, I discuss studies on the effect of music listening, either via recordings or live concert attendance, on people's attitudes and behavior. The authors of the studies provide evidence that listening to music can alter people's attitudes toward others, although Bodner and Gilboa (2009) indicated that not every musical genre is effective in this goal.

Studies on Attitudes toward Prisoners

Melvin, Gramling, and Gardner (1985) argued that an understanding of public attitudes toward prisoners is especially important with respect to overpopulation in prisons and a need for alternative incarceration programs such as work release, early release, and community-based programs. Alternative programs may not be politically viable if negative attitudes toward prisoners are common in the voting public or among elected officials. In an effort to address this issue, Melvin et al. (1985) developed and tested the Attitudes toward Prisoners scale (ATPS).

Initially, the authors (Melvin et al., 1985) included 73 items on the ATPS, but, using a factor analysis, they narrowed the item pool down to 36 final items. Of those

items, 19 are negative, and 17 are positive. Each item is scored using a 5-point Likert scale with the following response alternatives: Disagree Strongly, Disagree, Undecided, Agree, Agree Strongly. Each item is scored from 1–5 with 1 representing the most negative attitude and 5 representing the most positive. After a constant of 36 is subtracted from each total score, possible scores range from 0 (most negative) to 144 (most positive).

Melvin et al. (1985) sought to establish test-retest reliability by administering the ATPS to 40 students in a college psychology class and then retesting the same students two weeks later. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient between pre-test and post-test scores was .82, “indicating reasonable stability across time” (p. 244). Ortet-Fabregat, Perez, and Lewis (1993) conducted a study, discussed below, using a Catalan version of the ATPS and also reported that the scale is reliable.

The authors (Melvin et al., 1985) counteracted acquiescence bias by placing the negative and positive items in a random sequence. They also had participants complete the Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability scale (Crowne & Marlow, 1960, as cited in Melvin et al., 1985). The authors found no correlation between participants’ social desirability scores and their attitudes toward prisoners. In other words, a sense of social desirability does not seem to have skewed participants’ attitudes toward prisoners as measured by the ATPS.

In an effort to demonstrate validity, the authors (Melvin et al., 1985) tested the following contrasting groups: Tuscaloosa, Alabama law enforcement officers ($n=23$); correctional officers from a Mississippi state prison ($n=56$); diverse residents of

Tuscaloosa ($n=64$); students enrolled in a psychology course at the University of Alabama ($n=90$); male and female prisoners from several prisons ($n=157$); and members of prison reform/rehabilitation groups ($n=19$). The authors hypothesized that law enforcement officers would score lowest on the ATPS while prison reform/rehabilitation workers and the prisoners themselves would score significantly higher. Using an analysis of variance, the authors confirmed their hypothesis. Reform/rehabilitation workers and prisoners had the most positive attitudes with average scores of 108.3 and 109.5, respectively; law enforcement officers had the most negative attitudes with an average score of 67.0. The other groups had mid-range scores: the community members had an average score of 87.4; students had an average score of 90.5; and correctional officers scored 90.7 on average.

Melvin et al. (1985) used a rigorous methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of the Attitudes toward Prisoners scale. Their results are an indication of the strong reliability and validity of the ATPS. Furthermore, their findings are also an indication that participating students, community members, corrections officers, and especially law enforcement officers had mid-range to low scores on the ATPS. Various researchers, including the authors of each of the studies summarized below, have since administered the ATPS to diverse populations.

Ortet-Fabregat, Perez, and Lewis (1993) translated the ATPS into Catalan and administered the translated scale to different groups in Catalonia: prison rehabilitation professionals ($n=47$); defense attorneys ($n=31$); correctional officers ($n=62$); law enforcement officers ($n=65$); and Autonomous University of Barcelona medical students

($n=191$). In an effort to confirm the reliability of the translated scale, the authors retested 74 of the students four weeks after their first test. The Pearson correlation coefficient between the two administrations of the scale was $r(72)=0.92$, $p < 0.1$.

Next, the authors validated the translated scale by comparing participants' scores on the ATPS to their scores on the Wilson-Patterson Attitude Inventory (WPAI; Ortet, Perez, & Wilson, 1990, as cited in Ortet-Fabregat, Perez, & Lewis, 1993). The WPAI measures attitudes on various political issues with higher scores representing more conservative ideology. As predicted, the authors found a significant negative correlation between the two sets of scores. To further validate the Catalan ATPS scale, the authors also used the method of contrasted groups. The mean scores for each of the five groups were as follows: prison rehabilitation professionals – 103.6; defense attorneys – 99.4; university students – 92.1; law enforcement officers – 81.9; and correctional officers – 77.9. These five scores were significantly different from each other.

The findings of Ortet-Fabregat et al. (1993) are an indication that, like the English ATPS, the Catalan ATPS is reliable and valid. Furthermore, their findings were similar to those of Melvin et al. (1985): prison rehabilitation workers scored highest, students were in the middle, and law enforcement officers and correctional officers scored lowest.

Shields and de Moya (1997) administered the ATPS to 146 nurses practicing at 19 correctional facilities in five states. Their purposes were to measure the attitudes of correctional health care nurses toward inmates and to identify variables that might influence such attitudes (p. 39). After scoring participants' ATPS scales, they averaged all scores together and then compared the nurses' collective score with the scores of

previously tested groups as reported in two earlier studies: Melvin et al. (1985) and Ortet-Fabregat et al. (1993). Then, the authors used analysis of variance to examine the relationship between ATPS scores and several independent variables including: age, gender, nursing license, education level, years in nursing, and years worked in corrections.

The mean ATPS score of the entire sample of nurses was a surprisingly low 70.6. In fact, their score was nearly as negative as the score of law enforcement officers (67.0) in Melvin et al. (1985). When the sample of nurses was divided by institution type, however, the jail nurses scored significantly higher (i.e., more positively) than prison nurses. Also, older nurses were significantly more likely than younger nurses to have more positive attitudes toward inmates. The authors did not find a significant relationship between ATPS scores and any of the other demographic variables. Although one nurse with a master's degree was an outlier with a score of 99, the authors cautioned that there were not enough nurses with master's degrees in their sample to draw conclusions about that variable.

Surprisingly, the mean score of the nurses was the second lowest of all the ATPS scores listed in the literature up to that point (Shields & de Moya, 1997). The authors admitted that comparing their sample's mean ATPS score to those of previously tested groups has its limitations. Nonetheless, the fact remains that a large sample of nurses in correctional facilities scored low on the ATPS.

In a study conducted in Norway, Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad (2007) administered the ATPS along with a related questionnaire on criminal justice issues to the

following groups: prisoners in four Norwegian prisons ($n=298$); prison employees working at those same prisons ($n=387$); and college students ($n=183$). The authors conducted multivariate analyses to compare the scores of their participants.

Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad (2007) reported the following average scores for each large group of participants: prisoners – 106; prison employees – 98; students – 90. The authors then compared the results of subgroups within each larger category of participants. For example, convicted prisoners had the most positive attitudes toward prisoners of any of the groups, and the relationship was statistically significant; and remanded prisoners had significantly less positive attitudes than convicted prisoners. Among prison employees, those who worked at female-only prisons had significantly more positive attitudes toward prisoners than those who worked in male-only prisons. Correctional officers had the lowest score of any group in the study, although their score of 90.7 was close to the average score of college students (91). The authors considered these scores in the low 90s, “fairly negative” (Kjelsberg, Skoglund, & Rustad, 2007, p. 77). Of the college students, those majoring in business economics held the most negative attitudes, whereas those majoring in nursing had the most positive attitudes.

Perhaps the most striking result, however, was the strong correlation between low ATPS scores and punitive attitudes as measured by the authors’ questionnaire on criminal justice in Norway. Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad (2007) reported that this trend was especially strong among the sample of prison officers. They also stated that 75% of the college students sampled expressed the belief that the punishment level in Norway is too mild.

Despite the fact that the authors conducted their study in Norway, Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad (2007) reported that their findings were remarkably similar to those of the American authors Melvin et al. (1985), lending support to the validity of the ATPS. The sample of prisoners in Kjelsberg et al. (2007) had an average ATPS score of 106, whereas the prisoners in Melvin et al. (1985) had an average score of 109.5. Furthermore, college students and correctional officers all scored in the low 90s in both studies. These scores are also similar to those included in Ortet-Fabregat, Perez, and Lewis (1993). It is also noteworthy that Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad (2007) reported a strong correlation between highly punitive attitudes and negative ATPS scores.

Researchers have also utilized the ATPS in Hong Kong. Chui and Cheng (2012) administered the ATPS to prison volunteers ($n=54$), non-prison volunteers (i.e., people who do volunteer work, but not in a prison; $n=146$), and non-volunteers (i.e., people who do no volunteer work anywhere; $n=77$). The prison volunteers scored highest with a mean score of 133.74. Next came the non-prison volunteers with a mean score of 129.55, and the non-volunteers scored lowest with a mean score of 120.80. The authors used a one-way ANOVA to test for significant differences between the groups. There was a significant difference between the scores of the prison volunteer group and the non-volunteer group ($p<0.001$), and there was also a significant difference between the scores of the non-prison volunteer group and the non-volunteer group ($p<0.001$). However, there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores of the prison volunteer group and the non-prison volunteer group. The authors speculated that the reason for the lack of a significant difference between the scores of the two volunteer groups was that

“those who choose to volunteer and assist others without monetary reward are already more compassionate and hold a better view of more marginalized groups” (p. 109).

Comparing these results to those of earlier studies raises interesting questions about cultural differences in attitudes toward prisoners. Although the non-volunteers’ scores in this Hong Kong-based study were significantly lower than those of the volunteer groups, their scores were still higher on average than any of the groups in Melvin et al. (1985), Ortet-Fabregat, Perez, and Lewis (1993), or Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad (2007), all of which were conducted in either the U.S. or Europe.

Mandracchia et al. (2013) asked undergraduate students at a university in Texas to complete several questionnaires designed to measure attitudes toward prisoners and also measure attitudes toward several criminal justice issues: the Attitudes toward Prisoners scale (ATPS; Melvin, Grambling, & Gardner, 1985); the Attitudes toward Prison Reform scale (APRS; Silvia, 2003); the Attitudes toward the Death Penalty scale (ATDP; Hingula & Wrightsman, 2002, as cited in Mandracchia et al., 2013); and the Insanity Defense Attitude scale (IDAS; Skeem & Evans-DeCicco, 2004, as cited in Mandracchia et al., 2013). The experimental group was comprised of students in a senior-level forensic psychology course; they completed the questionnaires both before and after the semester. The authors also asked a control group of students enrolled in a general, nonpsycholegal psychology course to complete the same questionnaires at the beginning and the end of the semester. Finally, the authors compared the results of both groups, and, using multivariate analyses of covariance, they also looked for attitudinal differences between different demographic groups: Whites and non-Whites; males and females; and seniors in

college and non-seniors in college.

Mandracchia et al. (2013) reported a significant interaction between the type of class participants were in (i.e., forensic psychology or nonpsycholegal psychology) and their results on three of the four tests. Often, the students enrolled in the forensic psychology class developed more liberal views on the topics in question compared to the beginning of the semester, and, on average, their views were usually more liberal than those of their counterparts in the comparison group. Over the course of the semester, for example, students in the forensic psychology class developed significantly more progressive views on prison reform (APRS) and toward the insanity defense (IDAS). In contrast, the comparison groups' scores did not change significantly on the APRS, and although their scores changed on the IDAS, they changed to a lesser extent than the scores of the students in the forensic psychology course. However, neither groups' ATPS results changed significantly.

According to Mandracchia et al. (2013), demographic findings in their study were more complicated than expected. For instance, non-senior White students (i.e., freshmen, sophomores, and juniors) were more progressive and liberal when it came to issues of prison reform than their non-White counterparts (i.e., freshman, sophomore, and junior students of color). Among seniors, however, there was no difference in prison reform attitudes by gender or race (p. 110).

Mandracchia et al. (2013) argued that, "it is clear" that education can change students' attitudes with respect to certain criminal justice issues (p. 110). However, neither group's ATPS results changed significantly indicating that not every type of

intervention will alter people's attitudes toward prisoners.

In contrast, Cohen (2012a) found that the ATPS results of non-incarcerated volunteers did change significantly after they rehearsed and performed with a prison choir. That study is described in the next section of this review along with several other studies involving prison choirs, each of which is supportive of Cohen's (2007a) interactional theory of choral pedagogy that certain kinds of choral music-making activities have the potential to lead to changes in people's behaviors and attitudes.

Research on Prison Choirs

With its focus on the long-term effects of prison choir participation, Richmiller's (1992) study is particularly relevant to the current study. Richmiller (1992) examined the residual effects of inmates' music education experiences 29 years after their participation in a prison choir. Former choir members who had stayed in touch with the director of the choir ($n=17$) and former staff members ($n=10$) completed a questionnaire about their experiences, and the author also interviewed selected former inmate choristers and staff members in an effort to answer the following questions:

Did the music activity improve the inmates' formal musical skills under these conditions [imprisonment]? Had there been a long-term residual musical effect on these skills? Was this choir program effective in solidifying communication, socialization, and discipline skills? What effect did this music program have on the prisoner's own self-image? Did this choir program contribute to the inmate's prison adjustment and/or post-incarceration adjustment? Did this program alter the lives of the

inmates in any other way? (pp. 1–2)

Richmiller (1992) noted the strong feeling of commitment these former inmates had to the choir and its director nearly 30 years after their participation in it. The author also reported that all of the inmates reported that they had learned and/or refined musical skills while they were in the choir. However, 9 of the 17 former inmate choristers no longer participated in any public music-making activities.

Richmiller (1992) argued that, “the body of long-term positive effects on the choir members was not musical learning, but rather involved related personal and sociological values” (p. vi). Nonetheless, musical learning initially played an important role in the development of those positive effects. Specifically, the author noted that the program had a “tremendous impact” on the self-esteem and rehabilitation of the participants, which could be attributed to the successful achievement of musical goals and the recognition of that achievement through performances inside and outside the prison. In fact, the majority of both the former inmates and staff members agreed that the performances outside the prison were especially beneficial.

Through participation in the choir, Richmiller (1992) argued, the inmates learned a number of life-skills important for readjustment and successful living in the community. They learned goal-oriented behavior; self-discipline gained from the daily rehearsals; improved communication and socialization; and, in some cases, musical skills, which were useful for the few participants who were involved in music-related careers post-incarceration.

An additional social benefit involved efforts to overcome racial prejudice. Choir

members, an equal number of Blacks and Whites, initially protested against the idea of singing in an integrated choir, but the conductor, Chaplain Grandstaff, insisted that the choir would remain half Black, half White if it was to perform at all. The members of this integrated prison choir performed together successfully for the remainder of the choir's existence. Furthermore, the majority seemed to have readjusted successfully to life outside the prison; even after 29 years, Richmiller (1992) reported a recidivism rate of only 11.76%. It should be noted, however, that Richmiller's statistics were taken not from the whole sample of the prison choir, but from the sample of participants who kept in touch with their former director, Chaplain Grandstaff.

In a qualitative study of an Israeli women's prison choir, Silber (2005) explored the therapeutic benefits of multi-part choral singing. Silber asked, "If we were to establish a choir among a [population of incarcerated people]...and document its intricate workings, what correlation, if any, would we observe between the various aspects of the choir setting, and members' therapeutic needs?" (p. 252). In attempting to answer this guiding research question, Silber emphasized the fact that she is a music educator, not a music therapist, and she hypothesized that "a proper choir with no manifest therapeutic goal—as opposed to a music therapy program or a therapeutic singing group—might have incidental therapeutic benefits" (p. 252).

Silber's decision to conduct the study in a prison setting was influenced by her understanding of criminological "control theory" (also known as "bond theory") in which the commission of a crime is seen as a break in the criminal's bonds to family, community, and society as a whole (Hirschi, 1969). In addition, because the prisoner's

sense of social alienation is compounded by the prison experience itself (Sykes, 1970), the prisoner must be given the experience of a normative social situation in order to develop a positive identity and relationship with society (Jones & Shmid, 2000). Silber argued that a prison choir could be an “alternative community” (Linden & Perry, 1983) in which prisoners could experience more normative social situations, learn non-criminal skills, and develop a new identity through group association.

Silber (2005) also posited that skills pertaining to common personal and interpersonal dysfunctions in the prison population would be exercised in the workings of a choir. In particular, multi-part singing has unique benefits, because the multi-part choir is “a metaphor for relationship” (p. 253) in which the individual must strike a “delicate balance” requiring:

both personal skills—self control, patience, ‘finding’ one’s own voice, self-expression, intuition—and the relational skills necessary to produce a harmonic whole in negotiation and cooperation with a diverse group—listening, yielding, trusting (as for other voices to come in), sharing and supporting. (p. 254)

Silber (2005) also argued that participation in a multi-part prison choir enables inmates to improve their self-esteem through the learning of new skills, and, since they will usually work with a conductor, participation also “offers a venue for learning to navigate a relationship with an authority figure” (p. 254).

Silber (2005) served as both choir conductor and researcher in this qualitative study. She recorded video footage of each weekly, 90-minute rehearsal and conducted

personal interviews with choir members. She also kept a journal documenting the entire experience.

Throughout the process, Silber (2005) found that the “vertical relationship” between choir members and conductor improved. Silber was able to use musical concepts such as breathing, dynamics, and head voice along with conducting hand signals to get the inmate choristers to respond more appropriately to authority. For example, when one of the inmates did not respond to Silber’s request to be silent, Silber asked her to demonstrate how conductors make cut-offs or musical stops. A different chorister responded, and when she made the gesture, the rest of the chorus followed her example and became silent. “This served to defuse the head-off” between Silber and the woman who had made the disturbance (p. 259).

Silber (2005) asserted that it was not only the inmate choristers who had to work on their relationship with the conductor; the conductor also needed to work on establishing a strong relationship with the choristers. One way Silber did so was by introducing a repertoire of songs not from her world, but from “a genre familiar to the choir members”, which Silber also arranged harmonically (p. 258). This choice was “an act of joining, of reaching out into the other’s world” (p. 258).

The “horizontal relationships,” or peer interactions, improved too. At first, “The more outgoing choir members sought attention through joking, smoking, and raucous laughter (often at the expense of others), while the more soft-spoken ones were passive, distrustful and detached” (p. 259). Silber knew that a greater level of group cohesion would be needed if the choir were to perform together successfully. Silber used the power

of ritual to help unite the group; each rehearsal was begun and concluded with the Hebrew song “*Chazak*” (“Be Strong”). In addition, Silber helped the choir members develop greater sensitivity towards others by having them practice listening exercises. To reinforce intimacy, the participants learned how to establish eye contact, “an intervention whose therapeutic benefits have been documented in the context of adults traumatized as children” (Austin, 2001). Breathing and head voice exercises were used to help curb aggression among the inmates, and “dialogue through musical arrangement,” i.e., call and response and harmonic backup, enhanced trust among the participants (p. 262).

On an individual level, participants gained a sense of empowerment and improved self-esteem. The self-control of certain choir members also improved markedly. Silber (2005) argued that the improvement in self-control might be attributed to the fact that the technique of anticipating a pitch before singing it is “reminiscent of a ‘think first’ technique used in anger management programs” (p. 264).

While “far from conclusive,” Silber (2005) argued that, “the findings provide ample evidence of how the [prison] choir provides many points of access for promoting development in [one’s relationship to authority figures, relationship to peers, and sense of empowerment]” (p. 268). Finally, while Silber encouraged music therapists to conduct similar research, she wondered if the choir would retain its status as a “protected” alternative community in the eyes of the participants if its manifest goal were therapeutic. She also asked rhetorically if the choir would retain its “normalizing” effect if the program were removed from the realm of music education and associated with music therapy instead. In sum, Silber’s (2005) findings were strongly supportive of Small’s

(1998) claim that people have the potential to explore human relationships through musicking.

Cohen (2007a) conducted the first study of a joint inmate-volunteer choir in an effort to explore the meanings of participants' ($N=44$) experiences in that choir. The investigation, which took place at a minimum-security prison in the Midwest, had two phases. In the first, a survey instrument was administered in an effort to answer the following questions: (a) What are the demographic characteristics of the choir? (b) What is the musical background of the participants [both inmates and outside volunteers]? (c) What are the self-reported attitudes, preferences, and beliefs of participants as measured by selected summative rating scale items? (d) What are participants' self-reported memories of particular choir experiences and their motivations for joining the choir according to open-ended survey items? And (e) Are there significant differences between inmates and volunteers with respect to these variables? (p. 62).

In the second phase of the study, Cohen (2007a) utilized a qualitative, grounded theory methodology in an effort to “enrich contextual understanding of survey data, gain new insight, and generate a theory for subsequent research and reflection” (p. 62). The data for this portion of the study included over 200 pages of interview transcripts, field notes, programs, news articles, and newsletters.

Cohen (2007a) indicated that the inmates and volunteers differed in terms of age, amount of formal education completed, and previous musical experience. Whereas all of the volunteers reported participation in a choir during their adolescent years, only 55% of the inmates had done so. However, all of the inmates reported a desire to join a choir

after their release.

In order to test for significant differences between inmates' and volunteers' responses to the Likert-type scale items of the survey instrument, Cohen (2007a) used an independent samples t-test ($\alpha=.05$). Despite the demographic differences listed above, Cohen reported significant agreement between the two groups that their participation in the choir afforded a means to peak experience with momentary disappearance of stresses and a sense of accomplishment. At the same time, inmates reported more improvement in interpersonal skills than volunteers, whereas volunteers reported more success in identifying out-of-tune singing than their incarcerated counterparts.

A number of themes emerged from the qualitative phase of the study. Cohen (2007a) listed five categories of subjective phenomena resulting from participation in the choir. Participants reported: (a) social connections (the development of positive social bonds with volunteers, for example); (b) joy (resulting from the experience of mental release from prison through shared music making and other positive experiences); (c) increased feelings of self-worth (thanks to the mastering of difficult choral arrangements, sometimes in a foreign language); (d) frustration (with members who showed up late to rehearsal, or with the limitations of their own musical skills, for instance); and (e) sadness (volunteers expressed sadness at the plight of the prisoners, for example).

In addition, participants reported the following outcomes of singing in the prison choir: (a) meeting a goal through a slow process; (b) broadening perspectives (including greater acceptance of people from different races/ethnicities); (c) working cooperatively (with others including the conductor); (d) gaining a sense of pride and accomplishment;

(e) learning a new leisure skill; and (f) experiencing an emotionally moving activity (Cohen, 2007a).

Based on these data, Cohen (2007a) constructed the following theory of transformation: “The complex relationships through the sung texts, the choir’s social and cultural contexts, interaction with audience members, and inmates’ enhanced self-perception, afford potential for positive transformative change. Seeds of such change include, but encompass far more than an understanding of musical experience strictly as interaction with a score and a conductor” (p. 69). This theory is related to Cohen’s (2007a) theory of interactional choral singing pedagogy. The idea that social and other contextual relationships are not separate from the “music itself,” but rather essential components of choral musicking is a central assumption in both theories.

Finally, Cohen (2007a) recommended a number of research possibilities. For example, future researchers might test the theory of transformation by collecting data from inmate choristers’ family members and correctional staff with respect to inmate behavior. Other studies on prison choruses might investigate current inmate singers’ disciplinary report rates; former inmate singers’ employment status, musical practices, and recidivism upon release; and explore how listening to a live prison choir concert influences audience members’ perception of inmates (p. 70). The latter suggestion served, in part, as the impetus behind my current study.

Cohen (2008) conducted a multiple case study of six Kansas prison choirs and examined conductors’ perspectives of those choirs. Qualitative methodologies were utilized in an effort to answer the following questions: “(a) When and how did each

chorus begin? (b) What are the unique characteristics of conducting a choir in a prison? (c) How do conductors perceive their respective programs? (d) In what ways do data from this investigation support or require revision of prison choir participation?" (p. 320).

In order to answer the first three research questions, Cohen (2008) collected qualitative data through questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and material culture, including concert programs and newsletters. To answer the fourth question, Cohen used pattern matching in an effort to determine whether or not patterns of observed data would coincide with two related theories: the theory of transformation (Cohen, 2007a) and the theory of interactional choral pedagogy (Cohen, 2007a).

The prison choirs examined in the study included: the East Hill Singers, West Wall Singers, Rock Castle Chorus, Veritas Voices, the Labette County Correctional Camp for Men, and the Labette County Correctional Camp for Women. Elvera Voth influenced the formation of all but the last two of these choirs, and Cohen reported that only the Labette County choirs did not have volunteer choristers.

Cohen (2008) suggested that the unique characteristics of conducting a prison choir related to the particularities of both the inmate population and the prison setting. According to prison choir directors, many inmates lack experience in one or all of three singing-related domains: cognitive, physical, and psychological. For example, some inmates have little experience with basic vocabulary of musical terminology, and they may have minimal notation and language reading sufficient to understand certain songs and arrangements. With regard to physical limitations, conductors reported that most inmates have never learned how to use their body in order to sing. In addition, choir

directors in the study reported that some inmates have a short attention span, a reluctance to trust others, and a self-centered attitude, all of which challenge their abilities to perform with a choir.

According to Cohen's (2008) study, conductors also reported that prison settings are unique in a number of ways. For example, inmates are frequently unable to attend rehearsals due to infractions, conflicts with other prison activities, and personal reasons including illness and visits from family members. Specific correctional facility rules also impede the progress of the choristers (e.g., inability to study scores in between rehearsals). Also, prison staff frequently act in a strict, authoritative manner such as refusing to let inmate choristers enter the performance area early enough to warm up properly. Furthermore, prison staff members often fail to relay important information between the director and inmate-choristers (p. 328).

However, conductors perceived their programs as positive in a number of ways. They perceived in the lives of their inmate choristers a number of transformational changes along with growth in desirable personal and social behaviors. According to Cohen (2008), the transformational changes were supportive of her theory of transformation and were rooted in social, performance, and singing factors:

For example, interactions with other singers helped inmates build trust among one another and develop a sense of group responsibility. Inmates developed an increased attention span as they prepared for performances...Preparing for a choral performance required goal-directed behavior and responsibility to the group. The development of physical

skills necessary for singing helped them learn breath management, facial expression for communicating sung text, and complex skills of coordinating laryngeal muscles. (p. 331)

The inmate choristers also gained knowledge of new musical terminology, they learned how to follow conducting gestures, and they discovered a “broader cultural context through texts and themes of choral selections” (p. 331). Conductors also reported that inmates who were able to interact with audience members seemed to develop a more positive sense of self.

Cohen (2008) also cited data in support of the theory of interactional choral singing pedagogy. “With respect to personal behaviors, conductors imply that some inmates appear to develop new levels of self-awareness by becoming more sensitive to their own feelings. Conductors state that inmates ‘feel human’ through choral singing” (pp. 331–332). Cohen also listed a number of resultant behaviors, which could be termed as both desirable personal and social behaviors: increased attention span, increased attention to detail, enhanced cognitive and physical skills specific to choral singing, and broadened cultural understanding through critical awareness of choral literature.

In the conclusion section, Cohen (2008) suggested areas for future research. For example, although the data from this study are supportive of Cohen’s (2007a) theory of transformation, the data are not indicative of the duration and quality of such transformative change. As a result, Cohen argued that future researchers should explore questions pertaining to the nature, quality, and duration of such changes. In addition, researchers might explore the perceptions of inmates, volunteers, and inmates’ family

members both during and after incarceration. The possible relationship between certain kinds of song texts and personal and social growth could also be examined.

In another study, Cohen (2009) conducted two experiments to investigate well-being measurements among inmates involved in two prison choirs as well as a control group of inmates not in a choir. Cohen utilized mixed methods. The Friedman Well-Being Scale (FWBS) was the dependent measure. The FWBS is a twenty-item semantic differential scale used to measure composite well-being along with five subscales: (a) emotional stability, (b) sociability, (c) joviality, (d) self-esteem, and (e) happiness (Friedman, 1994). To supplement the data gathered using the FWBS, Cohen also completed a content analysis of inmate choristers' written evaluations of their feelings.

In the first of the two experiments, Cohen (2009) compared well-being measurements of a prisoner-only choir ($n=10$), referred to as the therapeutic community inmate singers (TCIS), with those of a control group of prisoners who were not in a choir ($n=10$). All participants in this experiment were incarcerated adult males enrolled in a nine-month substance abuse treatment community, the goal of which was to change participants' addictive behavior through cognitive restructuring. TCIS members attended ninety-minute rehearsals once a week for nine weeks and also participated in a final performance in front of approximately 100 inmates, staff, approved guests, and the control group.

Cohen (2009) found no significant differences between the composite well-being scores of the control group and the experimental group (TCIS), but there was a significant increase in pre- and post-composite well-being scores for these groups ($F(1,$

18) = 6.080, $p = 0.024$). In addition, Cohen found no significant difference between groups on all subscales of the FWBS, but the pre- and post-measurements on the subscales for joviality and emotional stability increased significantly in both groups. (Joviality: $F(1, 18) = 9.889$, $p = 0.006$); emotional stability: $F(1, 18) = 5.761$, $p = 0.027$).

In the first experiment, Cohen (2009) also collected nominal data in the form of TCIS members' written responses to the question: "How are you feeling today?" At the end of the program, TCIS participants also provided their reactions to their performance experience and their overall choral experience.

Cohen (2009) sought to answer two research questions in this first experiment:

"(a) Will the experimental group's self-reported responses to the weekly question, 'How are you feeling today?' be choir-related, and will these responses have a positive or negative connotation? (b) Will the experimental group's self-reported responses to prompts about their reactions to performing a concert and their overall choral experience be related to their well-being, according to Ryff and Singer's (1996) dimensions of well-being [i.e., self-acceptance, positive relations with others, personal growth, and autonomy]?" (p. 57)

Of the 96 written responses to the first question, 21 were choir-related and positive, whereas only one response was choir-related and negative. The only choir-related negative response concerned a participant's insecurity about how his scar from nose surgery would look during the performance. With regard to the second research

question, “all responses were deemed to correspond to Ryff and Singer’s dimensions of well-being” (Cohen, 2009, p. 58). Inter-rater reliability was 100%.

In the second experiment described in the article, Cohen (2009) compared FWBS measurements of a larger experimental group ($n=48$) with the same control group ($n=10$) from experiment one, both before and after a public performance of a joint inmate-volunteer choir. The experimental group was comprised of (a) the TCIS ($n=10$), the same group that participated in experiment one, (b) male general population inmate singers (GPIS) ($n=13$) housed at a different correctional facility, and (c) male volunteer singers ($n=25$) from the surrounding community. Each of these three groups came together to form a joint inmate-volunteer choir that performed a concert held at a church in a metropolitan city. The audience size was approximately 400. The control group did not travel to this off-site concert.

Cohen (2009) completed a repeat measures analysis of variance mixed design and found “no significant difference between control and experimental groups in amount of improvement for composite well-being” (p. 59). Although there was no significant difference between the groups’ composite well-being scores, all four groups showed significant improvement in their well-being scores. However, there was a significant difference between control and experimental groups in four subscales: (a) sociability ($F(1, 18) = 11.872, p = 0.003$), (b) joviality ($F(1, 56) = 11.484, p = 0.001$), (c) emotional stability ($F(1, 56) = 18.475, p < 0.001$), and (d) happiness ($F(1, 56) = 6.233, p = 0.016$). The experimental groups’ scores showed significantly more improvement in those subscales than the control group’s scores. In addition, although there was no significant

difference between the groups' composite well-being scores, the GPIS had the highest scores on this measure. Cohen argued that this difference might be attributable to the fact that the GPIS rehearsed more frequently than the other groups.

In addition to quantitative data, Cohen also collected qualitative data in an effort to explore participants' feelings about the experience of performing in the prison choir. For example, quotes from the inmates after the public concert included: "The warmth of the people after the concert was overwhelming," and "It makes me feel that people overlooked my incarceration" (p. 60).

Cohen's (2009) results are an indication that participation in choral musicking experiences, especially in concerts outside of the correctional facility, benefits inmates' perceived well-being. In addition, it is noteworthy that in the second experiment the incarcerated singers scored higher than the control group on four subscales of the FWBS.

Nonetheless, it may strike the reader as surprising that there was no significant difference in FWBS scores—including both composite and all subscale scores—between the experimental and control groups in Cohen's (2009) first experiment. However, Cohen (2009) stressed the fact that the control group attended the concert in the first experiment but did not attend the off-site concert in the second experiment. As Small (1998) suggested, listening to a performance, as the control group did in the first experiment, is musicking. Perhaps the control group in the first experiment experienced increased feelings of well-being as a result of their musicking at the concert.

Roma (2010) reported about UMOJA, a men's chorus in a close security Ohio prison in an effort to understand how the men's choral community impacts inmate self-

perception, intra-group relationships, and external connections. Roma conducted formal and informal interviews with the choristers “over a period of years” (p. 95).

Roma (2010) reported that some inmate choristers found redeeming value and spiritual meaning in choral singing. One inmate argued that, “Singing is almost like the redeeming value of prayer, you know, to me. When I sing I’m praying sometimes, it has that value to me, it’s important” (p. 95).

Inmates also reported that the choir gives them a “purpose” (Roma, 2010, p. 96) and “something to shoot for” (p. 95). Participation gives the choristers a sense of belonging and pride and “gets [their] spirit up” (p. 96); one member even argued that hearing the choir gives inmates who are not in the choir a sense of pride. In addition, a young rapper described the improvement and broadening of his musical abilities: “I feel like I have room to grow again, not just being in one dimension with music” (p. 97). Another choir member noted that he had learned a great deal about African American history through singing spirituals.

The inmates also described a number of interpersonal benefits gained through participation in the choir. The choir seems to have helped certain members be less withdrawn or “unapproachable” (p. 97) and to form positive social relationships. According to one inmate: “[Had] we not come to this, we probably would’ve never even met or let anyone actually, you know, talk, really to each other” (p. 96). Participation in the choir seems to have promoted racial tolerance and understanding too; one member noted that he had begun to “relate with different people, not only black, but white” (p. 97). Another inmate reported the desire to help others: “You never know how you affect

people, how you help them when you sing a good song” (p. 96). In a related comment, a different chorister argued that choral singing opens people’s minds and makes them want to do more positive things.

Roma (2010) also discussed the recording and releasing of CDs and the effect the CDs had on prisoners’ relationships with people in the outside community. The CDs often include original songs composed by the choir members, which gives those members a chance to get personal messages to the outside community. Proceeds from the CD sales benefited charities of the inmates’ choosing. The choristers also created a ten-minute video called Peer Pressure with a stand-alone song also called “Peer Pressure” and an accompanying rap. The project was designed to discourage the use of drugs and violence, and it emphasized the importance of making responsible choices. According to Cohen (2010a) this project was an example of a restorative practice (Zehr, 2002), a means to help heal harms, which is based on the concepts of restorative justice. Cohen argued that restorative justice is a complex but “worthy process for healing hurt individuals and communities” (p. 5).

Through these findings, Roma (2010) provided further support to an idea that people can change their attitudes toward others through musicking experiences. By their own account, members of UMOJA became more likely to interact with people of other races and to consider the effects of their actions on the wider community through participation in a prison choir. Through their singing and songwriting, the members of UMOJA explored themes such as inclusivity, healing, and community service.

Cohen (2012a) conducted a study utilizing the ATPS with community members

who participated in a prison choir. (Throughout this section on Cohen's (2012a) study, I refer to these non-incarcerated singers as "community members"). The community members included citizens with little to no experience in prisons; some members had a great deal of choral experience. The purpose of the study was twofold: 1) to measure changes in community members' attitudes toward prisoner singers, and 2) to document changes in prisoner singers' perceptions of their social competence. To complete the first objective, Cohen (2012a) asked community members to complete the ATPS twice: before meeting the prisoners and then, after performing in a concert with them inside the prison gymnasium following three months of rehearsing. In order to complete the second objective, Cohen asked prisoner singers and community members to answer open-ended items about their experiences singing in the prison choir. These items included: (1) Think back to when the project started to now. What have you noticed about yourself? How has the experience affected you? Any surprises? (2) What has this prison choir experience meant to you? (3) What does singing in this chorus do for you, in terms of memories, pleasure, or pain? (4) (For prisoners only) Has this experience affected your life in prison? If so, in what ways? If not, why not? (5) In what ways, if any, has this experience affected important people in your life? (6) Have your relationships with people changed since you've been in this chorus? (7) Any other comments you wish to share? (Cohen, 2012a, p. 50).

According to Cohen (2012a), participation in the prison choir had a positive impact on community members' attitudes toward prisoners. Using a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, Cohen reported a significant difference between community members' pre- and

post-test scores ($z=2.82$, $p < .01$, two-tailed). The pre-test mean was 105.92, with a standard deviation of 11.45; the post-test mean was 119.33, with a standard deviation of 9.97. These findings are an indication that attitudes toward prisoners can improve even in a group of people who, to begin with, were interested in volunteering their time with prisoners.

Cohen (2012a) analyzed prisoners' and community members' responses to the open-ended items following an open coding, axial coding, and selective coding process. According to Cohen (2012a), two primary categories emerged from both groups' data: self-gratification and relationships with others (p. 50). For the prisoners, Cohen linked four subcategories to self-gratification: self-confidence, enjoyment, self-expression, and a realization that they can contribute positively to the outside world (p. 50). For community members, subcategories included enjoyment and gratitude for their own lives (p. 50).

With regard to prisoners' relationships with others, five subcategories emerged: feeling respected, getting along with others better, making new friends, connecting to something outside prison, and improving family relationships (Cohen, 2012a, p. 51). Prisoners noticed that they were more outgoing and communicative both with community members and other inmates. One even remarked that he felt like attending rehearsals was like meeting with a family he had not seen in years.

Community members' relationships with and views of incarcerated people were also affected. Specifically, through their experience participating in the prison choir, community members' stereotypes of prisoners were shattered. Community members enjoyed meeting new people—both prisoners and other community members—and some

reported they were more aware of issues that affect prisoners. However, one community member suggested that interactions with the prisoners lacked authenticity. Cohen (2012a) argued that this perceived lack of authenticity was “evident in that [community member] volunteers are trained by the prison not to share personal information” (p. 51).

Overall, however, Cohen’s (2012a) findings were positive. Prisoners’ self-perceptions improved. Cohen argued that “prisoners developed a sense of worthiness through their relationships with volunteers and a sense of social competence through their successful choral performances, thereby realizing the two components of Mruk’s (2006) definition of self-esteem: worthiness and competence (p. 28). Most relevant to the current study, however, is the fact that community members’ attitudes toward prisoners improved significantly through only three months participation in a prison choir. Individual community members interested in volunteering with a prison choir still had room for improvement in their attitudes toward prisoners.

Music Listening and Attitudes toward Others

Although the study did not involve a prison choir, the work of Darrow, Johnson, Ollenberger, and Miller (2001) is particularly relevant to the current study. The authors used a pre-test-post-test design in an effort to determine if audience members’ attitudes toward teenagers and senior citizens would change in a positive direction after attending an intergenerational choir concert.

The participants in the audience consisted of teenagers and senior citizens, and Darrow et al. (2001) also divided participants by gender. All audience members completed the Age Group Evaluation and Description Inventory (AGED; Knox, Gekoski,

& Kelly, 1995, cited in Darrow et al., 2001) before and after the performance of a choir comprised of teenagers and senior citizens.

Darrow et al. (2001) found that the attitudes of male and female teenagers toward male and female seniors changed in a positive direction. Likewise, the attitudes of male and female seniors toward male and female teens moved in a positive direction. These findings are supportive of Small's (1998) assertion that people's ideal human relationships can be challenged in a musicking experience and can potentially change as a result.

Bodner and Gilboa (2009), on the other hand, examined whether listening to recordings of certain genres of songs would be effective at reducing stigmas and prejudice between secular and religious Israelis. The authors asked religious and secular Jews to listen to recordings of either patriotic Israeli crisis songs (CS), love songs (LS), or no songs at all (NS), and they then asked participants to express their attitudes toward their respective outgroups. Participants were randomly assigned to one of those three conditions: CS ($n = 69$); LS ($n = 66$); NS ($n = 45$). Participants completed a free associations form while the music was playing, or when instructed to do so for those in the NS group, and then they completed questionnaires and measures including: *the stereotype measure* (SM; Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999, cited in Bodner & Gilboa, 2009); *the prejudice questionnaire* (PQ; Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999); *the perceived similarity questionnaire* (Barnea, 1977, cited in Bodner & Gilboa, 2009); *graphical overlap representation*; and *the social distance scale* (Bogardus, 1925, cited in Bodner & Gilboa, 2009). The authors hypothesized that the participants exposed to the

CS would lessen their prejudice toward their respective outgroups because the Israeli CS would appeal to listeners' superordinate, common ingroup identity (CII; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) as Israelis.

Bodner and Gilboa (2009) used a series of one-way ANOVAs to compare between the experimental conditions. Based on their data, the authors argued that CS improved participants' attitudes toward outgroup members. Overall, exposure to CS caused participants to be significantly less prejudiced regarding their outgroups. The CS group also differed significantly from the other groups in terms of stereotype scores, similarity scores, and overlap scores (pp. 91–92). CS group members did not stereotype outgroup members to the extent that LS and NS group members did, and CS members also perceived greater similarity and common destiny with outgroup members than did LS and NS members. In contrast, Bodner and Gilboa (2009) asserted that LS generally had no effect on participants' attitudes.

The results of Darrow et al. (2001) and Bodner and Gilboa (2009) are supportive of an idea that music listening (whether as part of a live audience or not) may affect attitudes toward outgroup members. However, Bodner and Gilboa demonstrated that not every listening experience has such an effect. The effect of music listening is clearly context dependent. It remains to be seen whether or not audience members' attitudes toward prisoners will change through their attendance of a Midwestern prison choir concert.

Summary

Researchers who have utilized the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) have reported that negative attitudes toward prisoners exist both in America and abroad, particularly among law enforcement officers (Melvin et al., 1985; Ortet-Fabregat et al., 1993) and even among some nurses who work in correctional facilities (Shields & de Moya, 1997). Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rustad (2007) even stated that the prison officers and college students who participated in their study had fairly negative attitudes toward prisoners, which correlated to punitive attitudes. Mandracchia et al. (2013) found that college students' attitudes toward prison reform became more progressive after a semester in a criminal psychology course; however, the authors also found that students' attitudes toward prisoners did not change significantly. In other words, not every kind of intervention may influence people's attitudes toward prisoners.

Cohen (2012a), on the other hand, indicated that non-incarcerated, volunteer choristers' attitudes toward prisoners moved significantly in a positive direction after participation in a prison choir. However, Cohen (2012a) did not examine the longer-term effects involvement with a prison choir on volunteer singers.

Additional studies related to prison choirs contain evidence that musicking activities can lead to positive changes in behavior and attitudes (Cohen, 2007a, 2008, 2009; Richmiller, 1993; Roma, 2010; Silber 2005). Furthermore, such positive changes are not limited only to those who sing in a choir; audience members' attitudes toward both teens and older persons moved in a significantly positive direction after attending a concert of an intergenerational choir (Darrow et al., 2002). Even religious and secular

Israelis who listened to crisis songs had more positive attitudes toward each other than participants in the love song and control groups. With those findings in mind, I propose to ask not only non-incarcerated, volunteer choristers to complete the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985), but also audience members at a prison choir concert to do the same.

Why this research matters. Mandracchia et al. (2013), Melvin et al. (1985), and Shields and de Moya (1997) argued that public attitudes toward prisoners have an impact on American criminal justice policy. Incarcerated Americans, especially people of color with low socioeconomic status, are treated unfairly before, during, and after their incarceration (Alexander, 2012), so changing negative attitudes toward prisoners could help pave the way for reforms that would make the criminal justice system more just and fair. Mass incarceration has negative effects on incarcerated people and the communities from which they come (Hatzenbuehler et al., 2015; Lum et al., 2014). Mass incarceration also places great financial demands on federal, state, and local budgets (Schmitt, Warner, & Gupta, 2010), so reforms that reduce mass incarceration could have far-reaching, positive effects. As I argued in chapter 1, citing the work of Rorty (1982; 1989), Shklar (1984), and Alexander (2012), moving negative attitudes toward prisoners in a positive direction is an important goal for those who seek to treat every human with dignity.

Related to concepts of equity, the National Association for Music Education (NAfME, 2014) included in their mission statement that every individual should be guaranteed opportunities to make music and share in musical experiences. However, not every American has opportunities to share in musical experiences. For example, at the time they conducted their study, Cohen, Duncan, and Anderson (2012) found that many

incarcerated American youths did not have access to music education programs. With those research findings in mind, it seems that changing negative attitudes toward prisoners among music educators and other musicians may assist NAFME (2017) move toward its goal of music for all. Perhaps, for example, music educators who develop positive attitudes toward prisoners may be more likely to pursue teaching opportunities in prison contexts so that more incarcerated people have opportunities to participate in musical experiences. Maybe some of those teachers will work with additional underserved groups. In addition, perhaps music educators with positive attitudes toward prisoners will be more sensitive to the needs of students whose parents are incarcerated. Changing negative attitudes toward prisoners, then, could have a positive effect on the field of music education by fostering greater inclusivity and awareness of the needs of different kinds of students.

The following chapter includes a restatement of the purpose of my study along with my research questions and hypotheses. I describe how I answer those questions and provide an explanation for the selection of my research design. In addition, I also discuss the selection of participants and the logistics of data collection.

III. METHODOLOGY

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of (a) singing with incarcerated choir members and (b) attending a live prison choir performance, on non-incarcerated people, focusing particularly on the effects of such experiences on participants' attitudes toward prisoners. Participants included: 1) non-incarcerated volunteer singers from four Midwestern prison choirs ($n=ca. 30$); 2) a control group of Midwestern community choir members who have had no experiences in a prison context or with a prison choir ($n=ca. 50$); and 3) non-incarcerated, adult audience members at a Midwestern prison choir concert ($n=ca. 50$). In part 1 of the study, the volunteer singers and control group completed the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) following the completion of their respective winter concerts, and the volunteer singers also responded to the following open-ended items: 1) Think back to when you began singing in a prison choir to now. How has the experience affected you? (Cohen, 2012a); and 2) Describe your attitude toward prisoners since you began singing in a prison choir. In part 2 of the study, adult audience members completed the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) before and after attending a Midwestern prison choir concert. After the concert, the audience members also responded in writing to the following open-ended item: 1) Tell me about your experience at the prison choir concert tonight. What stands out in your mind? Any surprises? In addition, the audience members completed a demographic questionnaire to determine which participants have prior personal familiarity with any prisoners or prison choirs (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010). Research questions asked included:

1. How do the ATPS scores of the volunteer prison choir singers compare to the ATPS scores of the control group? What is the relationship between participation in a prison choir and ATPS scores?
2. What relationship, if any, is there between the number of concerts the volunteer singers have sung with a prison choir and their ATPS scores?
3. What changes, if any, are there between audience members' pre-test and post-test responses to the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985)?
4. What effects, if any, do volunteer singers and audience members report regarding their experiences with a prison choir?

Hypotheses

Prior to data collection I hypothesized the following:

1. For research question 1, the ATPS scores of the volunteer singers would be significantly more positive than the ATPS scores of the control group.
2. For research question 2, there would be a correlation between the number of concerts the volunteer choristers have sung with the prison choir and their ATPS scores; more concerts with the choir will correspond to higher ATPS scores.
3. For research question 3, the post-test ATPS results of audience members with no prior connection to prisoners or to a prison choir would be significantly higher (i.e., more positive) than their pre-test scores.

Null Hypotheses

1. For research question 1, the ATPS scores of the volunteer singers would not be significantly more positive than the ATPS scores of the control group.
2. For research question 2, the ATPS scores would be the same regardless of the number of prison choir concerts in which volunteers have sung.
3. For research question 3, the post-test ATPS results of audience members with no prior connection to prisoners or to a prison choir would not be significantly higher (i.e., more positive) than their pre-test scores.

Participants and Data Collection

Again, participants included: 1) volunteer singers from four Midwestern prison choirs ($n=ca. 30$); 2) a control group of singers who had no previous experiences in a prison context or with a prison choir at the time of data collection ($n=ca. 50$); and 3) adult audience members at a Midwestern prison choir concert ($n=ca. 50$). The four prison choirs were selected, because both non-incarcerated, volunteer singers and incarcerated singers participate together in each of the choirs. Also, one of the prison choirs leaves the prison to give concerts at public venues; the audience members in this study attended a performance of that choir. It should be noted that I did not collect data from any currently or formerly incarcerated people. The control group members came from four urban, Midwestern community choirs. Each community choir, from which the control group members were selected, rehearsed at a location within 50 miles of the correctional facilities where the four prison choirs involved with this study were based. Most of the volunteer choristers lived in the same cities as the control group members.

Upon approval of my dissertation proposal by my committee and the approval of my IRB application, I emailed each of the participating choirs' directors to request study participation from their members. In the body of the email, I explained that participation is voluntary and that their names and personal information will be kept strictly confidential, along with all of the IRB requirements for the study introduction letter. The email also contained a hyperlink to a site run by *Qualtrics* where participants were able to complete the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) and open-ended questions online. By clicking "OK" next to the first item on the linked site, participants confirmed their agreement to participate in the study. The audience members, on the other hand, confirmed their agreement to participate in writing, and they also completed the ATPS and responded to the open-ended items on paper at the venue of the prison choir performance. All documents given to participants are included in the appendix.

Selection of Research Design and Data Analysis

I used a mixed-methods design to answer my research questions. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) offered a definition of mixed methods research: "As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone" (p. 5). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argued that qualitative and quantitative research have more common ground than some purists admit—both kinds of research, for example, involve empirical observation—and they proposed that researchers take a pragmatic approach when deciding on a research design.

In other words, the appropriateness of a research design should be determined by its usefulness at relating to the study's purpose and answering a particular set of research questions.

Although a variety of methodologies have the potential to yield interesting results in the exploration of attitudes toward prisoners, I argue that a mixed methods approach was especially appropriate in the current study. After all, the rationale for the study was based on the pragmatic thinking of Rorty (1982; 1989) and Small (1998), and, like pragmatists, proponents of mixed methods research are not purists when it comes to the search for answers. They are interested in finding the most useful tool to answer specific questions using an “outcomes-oriented” approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 16). Likewise, just as I was concerned with the usefulness of the study in general, I was also concerned about the usefulness of my research methods. Researchers have reported that the quantitative ATPS is an effective, reliable tool at measuring people's attitudes toward prisoners (Mandracchia et al., 2013; Melvin et al., 1985; Shields & de Moya, 1997). However, attitudes are complex, and in a study on attitudes toward formerly incarcerated people, Rubio Arnal (2014) argued that mixed-methods approaches seem best suited to examining attitudes toward others. Researchers can use a quantitative instrument to determine whether or not attitudes have changed, and they can use qualitative techniques to gain depth of understanding of the quantitative results and perhaps learn why attitudes have or have not changed. Similarly, I used the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) to collect quantitative data, and I used an open coding, axial coding, and selective coding process to analyze responses to the open-ended items (Charmaz,

2006). In short, by using both quantitative and qualitative techniques, I sought to gain a fuller perspective on how participants have responded to experiences with a prison choir.

Harwell (2011) described six basic mixed methods research designs, and of the six, I decided that the *concurrent triangulation design* (p. 155) was the best fit for the current study. In contrast to the sequential designs Harwell listed, the concurrent triangulation design involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time, as I did in the current study, which allows the researcher to attempt to corroborate findings from a single study and to help provide an explanation for those findings. In addition, the concurrent collection of both kinds of data has the advantage of being more time efficient than the sequential designs (Harwell, 2011, p. 155). As an example, Harwell (2011) cited a study (Howell et al., 2002), in which the authors reported that the achievement of African American students who received vouchers to attend private schools was higher than those who did not receive vouchers. In contrast, this voucher-related achievement gap did not emerge in other student groups. Through their examination of quantitative data, Howell et al. (2002) reported that there was an achievement gap, but they did not offer an explanation for it. Harwell (2011) argued that the use of a concurrent triangulation design in that study could have allowed the authors to provide an explanation for the achievement gap through the simultaneous collection and interpretation of qualitative data.

In the current study, the quantitative data were the primary database, and the qualitative data were the secondary database. Participants' qualitative responses to the open-ended items helped contextualize and give fuller meaning to their quantitative

scores on the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985). In part, I modeled this research design on Cohen's (2012a), because I also examined attitudes toward prisoners following participants' experiences with a prison choir. Part 1 was similar to Cohen's (2012a) design, although I looked at the attitudes of volunteer singers from four different prison choirs as opposed to just one. In part 2, I measured audience members' attitudes toward prisoners before and after a prison choir concert. Through my examination of ATPS results, I sought to quantify and compare participants' attitudes toward prisoners. With my analysis of open-ended answers, on the other hand, I sought to explore participants' experiences in a prison choir and potential reasons for why their attitudes toward inmates might have changed. Such variables are more nuanced and personal than a quantitative instrument like the ATPS alone is capable of measuring.

I selected nonparametric tests to analyze the data from the quantitative items, because some of my samples were too small to assume a normal distribution (Mordkoff, 2011). In order to answer the first question, I used a Mann-Whitney U test to compare volunteer singers' ATPS scores with the scores of the control group. To answer the second question, I matched the ATPS scores of each volunteer chorister with the number of concerts each of them had sung with the choir. Then, I calculated the Spearman correlation coefficient to determine whether or not a statistically significant relationship exists between the number of concerts sung and ATPS scores. For the third question, I used a Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare audience members' pre- and post-ATPS scores. Finally, to answer the fourth question, I used an open coding, axial coding, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006) to look for emergent themes in participants'

open-ended answers.

The open coding, axial coding, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006) used in this study was part of an informed grounded theory approach. Informed grounded theory refers to “a product of a research process as well as to the research process itself, in which both the process and the product have been thoroughly grounded in data by [grounded theory] methods while being informed by existing research literature and theoretical frameworks” (Thornberg, 2012, Informed Grounded Theory, para. 2).

This process is different from the grounded theory approach initially proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), which involved delaying the writing of the literature review until the data analysis is almost complete. The idea in this “classic” approach to grounded theory is that the researcher should avoid studying the existing literature prior to the data analysis process in an effort to avoid outside influence on her interpretation of the data; classic grounded theory involves “pure induction” (Thornberg, 2012).

In his defense of the informed grounded theory approach, Thornberg (2012) listed six criticisms of the purely inductive grounded theory approach. First of all, if researchers must avoid studying the related literature until their study is nearly complete, they would not be able to conduct studies in their own areas of expertise. Similarly, the purely inductive approach seems to rationalize lazy ignorance of the literature. Third, with every study researchers complete, the number of topics about which they have never read research will dwindle, eventually driving themselves “into a corner” because of the “accumulative reduction in possible research topics” (Thornberg, 2012, Problems with Delaying Literature Review, para. 2). Fourth, researchers often need to submit proposals

with literature reviews in order to secure funding, so the purely inductive approach is often unfeasible for pragmatic reasons. Next, “ignoring established theories and research findings implies a loss of knowledge” (para. 5). Finally, proponents of the purely inductive approach underestimate researchers’ ability to “appreciate extant theories without imposing them on the data” (Thornberg, 2012, para. 5, referring to Urquhart, 2007).

In contrast to the purely inductive approach of classic grounded theory, informed grounded theorists should utilize a “constant interplay between induction (in which he or she is never a tabula rasa) and abduction” (Thornberg, 2012, *The Abductive Turn*, para. 6). Abduction involves the selection or invention of a hypothesis that better explains the data than any other candidate hypotheses, and rather than being verified as true, the chosen hypothesis is a “worthy candidate for further investigation” (Douven, 2007a; Douven, 2007b; Douven, 2011b, as cited in Thornberg, 2012).

In chapters 5 and 7, I describe my analysis of participants’ open-ended responses, a process in which I utilized both induction and abduction as part of an informed grounded theory approach. Prior to each those chapters, I provide my analysis of the quantitative data for part 1 of the study (Chapter 4) and for part 2 (Chapter 6).

IV: PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS FOR PART 1

I used both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the data in this study. For clarity of analysis, the findings of each method in each part of the study are reported separately: Chapter 4 includes the quantitative results for part 1 of the study, and Chapter 5 includes the qualitative findings for part 1. Chapter 6 includes the quantitative results for part 2 of the study, and Chapter 7 includes the qualitative findings for part 2. Finally, chapter 8 contains the discussion of results, findings, and conclusions.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data for part 1 of this study included the measurement of participants' attitudes toward prisoners using the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985). Participants completed the questionnaire online through qualtrics.com. They used a five-point Likert-type scale to indicate the degree to which they agreed with each of the 36 items on the ATPS. Upon completion of the data collection stage, I imported participants' responses from qualtrics.com into SPSS statistical analysis software in order to analyze the data and to answer the quantitative-based research questions related to part 1 of the study (research questions 1–2). Descriptive statistics for participants in part 1 of the study are listed below.

Participants in Part 1. In total, 68 choristers participated in part 1 of the study. More specifically, 46 volunteers in prison choirs (experimental group) along with 22 community choir singers (control group) took part. However, the results of five prison choir volunteers were excluded along with those of three community choir singers, because those individuals started but did not complete the online questionnaire.

Therefore, I analyzed data for a total of 41 prison choir volunteers and 19 community choir singers.

Gender. Of the 41 prison choir volunteers who completed the questionnaire, 24 were female (58.5%), and 17 were male (41.5%). In the control group of community choristers (n = 19), 15 were female (78.9%), 3 were male (15.8%), and 1 participant selected “other” and typed in “gender non-conforming” (5.3%). The genders for both the experimental and control groups combined (N = 60) were: 20 males (33.3%), 39 females (65%), and 1 gender non-conforming individual (1.7%).

Age. Most participants in part 1 of the study were 50 years of age or older. In the experimental group of prison choir volunteers, only two participants were between 18 and 29 (4.9%) at the date of completion, and only two were between 30 and 49 (4.9%). In contrast, 17 prison choir volunteers were between 50 and 64 (41.5%), and 20 participants were 65 or older (48.8%).

In the community choir control group, five members were between 30 and 49 years of age (26.3%). The rest were all 50 or older: 12 singers were between 50 and 64 (63.2%), and two were 65 or older (10.5%).

In total (both groups combined), only 3.3% of all participants in part 1 of the study were between 18 and 29 (n = 2). Only 11.7% of all participants were between 30 and 49 (n = 7). Therefore, a large majority (85%) of all participants in part 1 were 50 or older. More specifically, 48.3% were between 50 and 64 (n = 29), and 36.7% were 65 or older (n = 22).

State of residence. Participants in part 1 of the study were instructed to list their state of residence. The prison choir volunteers were drawn from four choirs, but they reported living in five states: three participants were from Colorado (7.3%); 19 were from Iowa (46.3%); 10 were from Kansas (24.4%); one was from Missouri (2.4%); and seven were from Ohio (17.1%). One prison choir volunteer neglected to respond to the item on state of residence.

I invited members of four community choirs located in the same geographical areas as the prison choirs to participate in part 1 of the study. However, members of three out of the four choirs participated. Ten participants were from a choir in Colorado (52.6%); six were from a choir in Iowa (31.6%); and three were from a choir in Ohio (15.8%).

Looking at participants from both the experimental and control groups combined, 13 were from Colorado (21.7%); 25 were from Iowa (41.7%); 10 were from Kansas (16.7%); one was from Missouri (1.7%); and 10 were from Ohio (16.7%). Again, one participant did not provide his or her state of residence, which is why the percentages listed here do not add up to 100. See Table 1 for the distribution of participants by state.

Table 1

Distribution of participants by state

State	Prison choir members	Control group members	Combined
Colorado	3	10	13
Iowa	19	6	25
Kansas	10	0	10
Missouri	1	0	1
Ohio	7	3	10

Control group’s familiarity with incarcerated people. The questionnaire for the control group included the following item: “How many people have you known personally or professionally who have ever been incarcerated? (Note: by ‘incarcerated,’ we mean held in a prison or jail for one month or more).” Out of the 19 members of the control group, 10 reported having known one to three people currently or formerly incarcerated (52.6%); one participant reported having known four to six people in that category (5.3%); one participant reported having known seven or more people currently or formerly incarcerated (5.3%); and seven participants reported that they have never known anyone in that category (36.8%).

Experimental group’s number of prison choir performances. Members of the experimental group were instructed to select the number of times they had performed in prison choir concerts. Eight of the 41 experimental group participants had sung in one to

two concerts (19.5%); seven had sung in three to four concerts (17.1%); four participants had sung in five to six concerts (9.8%); five had sung in seven to ten concerts (12.2%), and the remaining 17 had sung in 11 or more concerts (41.5%).

Effect of participation in prison choir on ATPS scores. In order to answer my first research question, I used the Mann Whitney U test to compare the mean scores of the experimental group to those of the control group. Again, I selected the nonparametric version of the t-test, because I determined that the distribution of data in the experimental group is not normal; the significance score was less than 0.05 for both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests.

Results of the Mann Whitney U test. The mean ATPS score of the control group was 110.95 (SD = 11.76), whereas the mean ATPS score for the experimental group was higher at 114.44 (SD = 21.49). Although the mean for the prison choir volunteers (experimental group) was higher, I ran an independent samples Mann Whitney U test and found that the relationship was not statistically significant (sig. = 0.071 > α = 0.05). As a result, I retained the null hypothesis for research question number one. However, it is worth noting that when I deleted one extreme outlier from the experimental group who had a total ATPS score of 4 and who had written negative comments in the open-ended section (see Chapter 5), I found there was a statistically significant difference between the means (p = 0.045 < α = 0.05). The outlier is discussed further in Chapter 8.

Gender and ATPS scores. In addition to comparing the means of the control and experimental groups, I ran a series of nonparametric tests to look for potential relationships between the different demographic variables and ATPS scores. I failed to

find a significant relationship in nearly all of the tests I ran. For example, using a Mann Whitney U test, I found that there was not a significant relationship between gender and ATPS scores in the experimental group ($p = 0.172 > \alpha = 0.05$). There were more than two gender responses in the control group (male, female, and other), so I conducted an independent samples Kruskal-Wallis test and also found that there was not a significant relationship between gender and ATPS scores for that group either ($p = 0.09 > \alpha = 0.05$). When the scores for all participants from both the experimental and control groups were combined, I ran a Kruskal-Wallis test and found that there was still not a significant relationship between gender and scores ($p = 0.540 > \alpha = 0.05$).

Age and ATPS scores. Using a Kruskal-Wallis test, I determined that there was not a statistically significant relationship between age and ATPS scores ($p = 0.719 > \alpha = 0.05$) in the experimental prison choir group. Likewise, I found that the distribution of scores was statistically the same across the different age groups in the control group; there was not statistically significant relationship between those variables ($p = 0.775 > \alpha = 0.05$). The same trend continued when both groups were combined for analysis. There was not a statistically significant relationship between the scores of all participants ($N = 60$) and their ages ($p = 0.550 > \alpha = 0.05$).

State and ATPS scores. Next I conducted a Kruskal-Wallis test to look for a possible relationship between the distribution of scores across the category of state of residence. There was not a significant relationship in the experimental group ($p = 0.577 > \alpha = 0.05$), the control group ($p = 0.165 > \alpha = 0.05$), or in the full sample of all participants ($p = 0.717 > \alpha = 0.05$).

However, when I compared the experimental and control groups' scores on a state-by-state basis, there was a statistically significant relationship between the scores of the experimental group ($n = 19$) and those of the control group ($n = 7$) in Iowa ($p = 0.025 < \alpha = 0.05$). In other words, the scores of the prison choir group in Iowa were significantly higher than those of the Iowa community choir group. That trend did not hold true in the Colorado and Ohio groups, however. Although the average scores of the experimental groups were higher than those of the control group in both of those states (Colorado: $117.3 > 113.2$; Ohio: $114 > 109$), the relationship was not statistically significant. It is worth noting, however, that the samples in those states were small. For example, there were 13 participants from Colorado, only three of which were prison choir volunteers, and out of nine participants from Ohio, only two were community choir singers. In addition, no community choir singers from Kansas or Missouri participated, so I was unable to compare the scores of the control and experimental groups in those states.

Control group's familiarity with incarcerated people and ATPS scores. I also ran a Kruskal-Wallis test to check the null hypothesis that the distribution of ATPS scores is the same regardless of the number of incarcerated people known by participants. The relationship was not statistically significant ($p = 0.93 > \alpha = 0.05$), but it is worth noting that groups of participants who reported knowing larger numbers of incarcerated people had higher mean ATPS scores than groups who reported knowing smaller numbers of incarcerated people (see Table 2 below):

Table 2

Mean ATPS scores by number of incarcerated people known

Incarcerated people known	Mean ATPS score	Number	Standard Deviation
None	108.3	7	11.29
1–3	110.3	10	11.66
4–6	116	1	–
7+	131	1	–
Total	111.3	19	11.92

Unfortunately, the sample sizes are small—two groups only had one participant each. It would be interesting to replicate this test with larger samples to see if the trend would continue in a statistically significant manner.

Experimental group’s number of prison choir concerts. Finally, I ran another Kruskal-Wallis test to look for a potential relationship between ATPS scores and the number of times volunteer singers had sung in prison choir concerts. I found no statistically significant relationship existed between those variables ($p = 0.512 > \alpha = 0.05$). The participants who had sung in five to six prison choir concerts had the highest mean at 123.25, whereas those who had participated in seven to ten or 11 or more concerts had mean scores of only 109.4 and 111.76 respectively (see Table 3). For this research question, I retained the null hypothesis.

Table 3

Mean ATPS scores by number of prison choir concerts

Number of prison choir concerts	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
1–2	118.13	8	13.820
3–4	115.29	7	5.964
5–6	123.25	4	6.185
7–10	109.40	5	17.300
11 or more	111.76	17	30.567
Total	115.57	41	21.497

Summary

In conclusion, I retained the null hypothesis for both of my first two research questions. In the case of the first research question, there was not a significant difference between the prison choir volunteers' ATPS scores (experimental group) and the community choir singers' ATPS scores (control group). However, if one were to omit a single, extreme outlier in the experimental group, then there would be a significant relationship between participation in a prison choir and positive attitudes toward prisoners as measured by the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985). In addition, when comparing the ATPS scores of the experimental and control groups in Iowa only, one finds a statistically significant relationship between participation in a prison choir and higher

ATPS scores. However, the same was not true in Colorado and Ohio. Regarding the second research question, I found that there was not a significant relationship between the number of prison choir concerts in which volunteers have sung and their ATPS scores. Surprisingly, the participants who had sung in seven or more prison choir concerts had a lower mean ATPS score than the participants who had only sung in five to six prison choir concerts.

The findings from the qualitative data for the prison choir volunteers (part 1 of the study) can be found in the next chapter. The data for the audience members (part 2 of the study) begin in Chapter 6 and continue through Chapter 7.

V: PRESENTATION OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS FOR PART 1

In addition to quantitative data, I also collected qualitative data via participants' typed responses to open-ended items in part 1 of the study. The two open ended items were: 1) Think back to when you began singing in a prison choir to now. How has the experience affected you? (Cohen, 2012a); and 2) Describe your attitude toward prisoners since you began singing in a prison choir.

Once the period of online data collection ended, I analyzed these open-ended responses using an open, axial, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006). In my analysis, I did not separate the responses to the two different items but instead combined them on a person-by-person basis. In so doing, I hoped to gain a more holistic look at participants' thoughts on participation in the prison choir and how it might relate to their attitudes toward prisoners.

Trustworthiness and Reliability

The primary means of establishing trustworthiness and reliability in the qualitative analysis of my data include the auditability of my data analysis process and the concurrent collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, which allowed for concurrent triangulation of data (Harwell, 2011). For example, the quantitative data from a participant's ATPS responses could help clarify an ambiguous comment in the open-ended section.

In addition, the use of NVivo qualitative data analysis software allowed me to check the exact frequency of certain words and phrases in the open-ended responses, which enabled me to crosscheck and refine my list of open codes. Furthermore, two

colleagues assisted me with peer debriefing; they helped me locate themes I had missed, and they also pointed out areas where my unconscious bias had affected my interpretation of the data.

Unfortunately, member checks were not possible. Because concerns about privacy can influence survey response rates (Tourangeau & Plewes, 2013), I chose not to collect contact information from participants (with the exception of the email addresses of participants who elected to enter the raffle for the gift card).

Statement of researcher biases. According to Phillips (2008), it is “absolutely essential” that researchers recognize their own subjectivity and monitor how it functions in the research context, and it is desirable for authors to share that information with the reader. Transparency regarding my own biases, then, is an important means of establishing trustworthiness.

Several beliefs impacted my desire to conduct this study, and those same beliefs may have influenced my analysis of the qualitative data. First of all, I believe that cruelty is the worst thing we do as humans (Shklar, 1984); all people deserve to be treated with dignity. In addition, I also believe that most people have the capacity to change their behavior and attitudes at least to some degree. As a result, I support large scale criminal justice reform in the United States including, but not limited to: 1) an end to the death penalty; 2) an end to solitary confinement; 3) an end to private prisons; 4) the alteration of drug laws and mandatory minimum sentence laws in an effort to dramatically reduce the size of the U.S. prison population; 5) the use of restorative justice programs where appropriate; 6) greater access to music and other educational programs for inmates; and

7) efforts to reduce racial bias in policing and sentencing.

Given these biases, it is possible I was more likely to see evidence of positive attitudes toward prisoners in the open-ended comments. However, I tried to be conscious of that bias and also consult the quantitative results frequently in an effort to prevent my bias from influencing my analysis.

Description of Data Collection

On April 18, 2016, I sent an email invitation to the directors of four prison choirs and four community choirs. The email included instructions, the consent form, and a link to the survey on qualtrics.com, which the directors then forwarded to their non-incarcerated members who could choose to participate or not. It should be noted that only outside volunteer members of the prison choirs were asked to respond to the open-ended items.

Participants' written responses. Whereas 41 prison choir volunteers completed the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985), only 39 participants responded to the open-ended items. In the initial stage of the coding process, I read and reread the responses several times. Then I sorted the responses into the following broad categories: positive, negative, mixed (i.e., had both positive and negative comments), and neutral (i.e., neither negative nor positive). As can be seen in Table 4, the vast majority of the comments were positive (87.2 %). It should also be noted that 29 of the 39 research participants (74.4%) specifically discussed some change in their attitudes, thoughts, or behavior resulting from their experience singing with a prison choir. In addition, 27 out of the 39 commenters (69.2%) specifically discussed positive changes in their attitudes toward prisoners

resulting from their experience singing with a prison choir.

Table 4

Tone of responses

Positive	34
Mixed	3
Neutral	1
Negative	1

Open coding. After dividing the responses into these four broad categories (positive, mixed, neutral, and negative), I then began the process of open coding (Charmaz, 2006). After reading the comments again several times, I wrote short summaries of each response, which I used to create open codes for some thematic chunks of data that emerged in my analysis (see Figure 1). I also used NVivo qualitative analysis software to check and refine my list of open codes.

The open codes included: *Advocacy/desire for criminal justice reform; Already had experience dealing with inmates/criminals; Criticism of others; Criticism of the ATPS; General praise; Gratitude; Had no bias to begin with; Humanity of inmates; Increased positive feelings toward inmates; Inmates' sense of inner freedom/transcendence; Opportunity for reciprocal support; Power of music making;*

Praise for inmates' abilities and successes; and Social bonds with inmates. In Figure 1 (see below), the open codes are ranked by frequency of appearance in the responses. Because participants often addressed multiple topics in their open-ended responses, the number of total responses in all of the open codes exceeds 39. Following Figure 1, I include a quote from one participant, which shows how many different themes were often covered in a single comment. Then, I discuss each open code in detail, citing specific quotes from the participants.

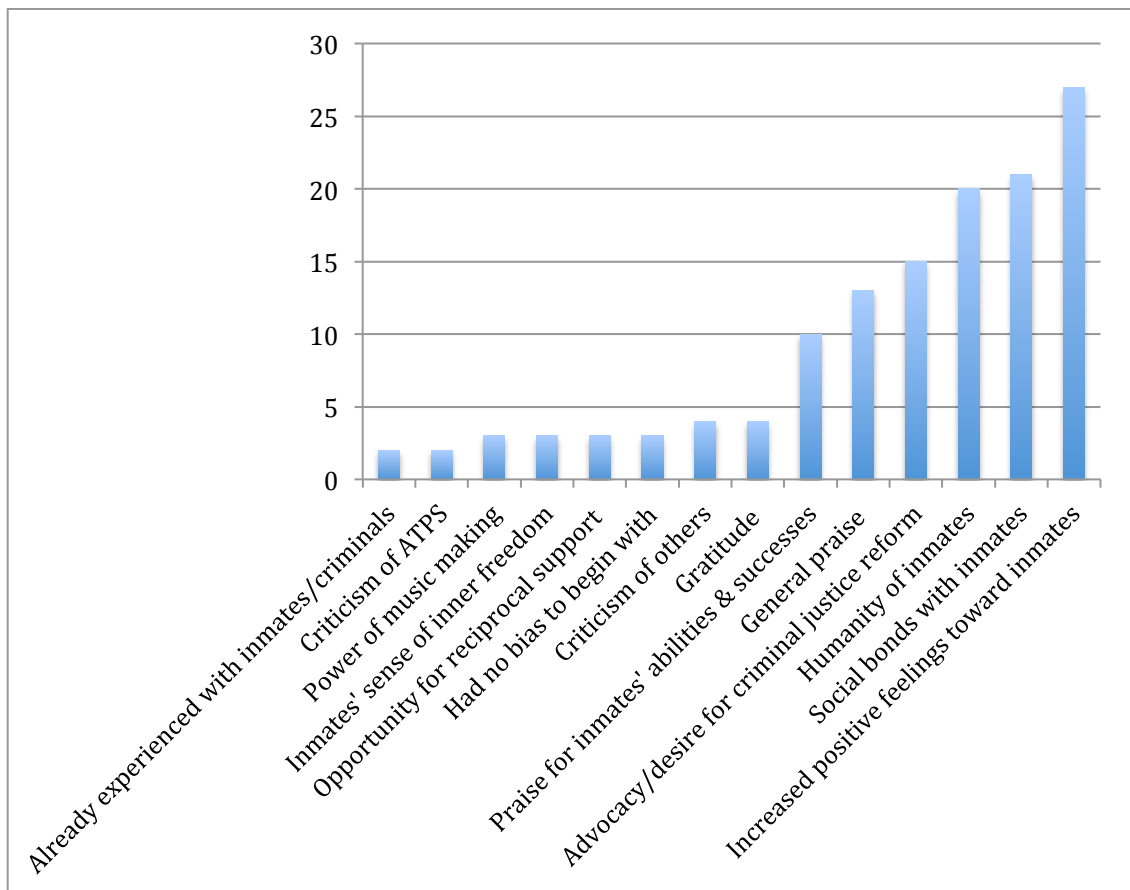


Figure 1. Open codes from volunteer singers' responses

Again, the number of comments related to these open codes exceeds the total number of participants, because each participant's comments often touched on multiple topics. For example, one participant wrote:

I recently reviewed musical scores from the seven years we've been singing. Lyrics written by men who are incarcerated have deeply touched me and given insights into their past & current situations...Although relationships with "inside" choir members has [sic] limitations I have been surprised and grateful for their appreciation—through words, facial expressions, clapping & cheers, certificates. Many men have also expressed concern or offered to pray for me (or other volunteers) when they hear about an illness, death in the family or other difficult event. So there is a deeper connection shared on a weekly basis within the choir that doesn't typically happen unless one is part of another caring community (such as with church members). My experience with the choir has also taught me to better informed [sic] and I've chosen to be an advocate for those who may be stigmatized (now or in the future) by their incarceration. I have written emails to state & national officials/legislators about prison sentencing, felons losing voting rights and other prison issues. I also read "Just Mercy" by Brian Stevenson and attended his lecture as well as one by Sister Helen Prejean ("Dead Man Walking") because of their amazing advocacy for people on Death Row.

In comments like this, participants touched on a variety of topics, which I broke down into the open codes discussed in detail below.

Appearing in 27 of participants' responses, *Increased positive feelings toward inmates* was the most frequent open code. One participant, for example, wrote, "My attitude toward people in prison has changed. I now believe they are human beings just like me and you." Along similar lines, one prison choir volunteer reported, "[My attitude toward prisoners] went from being more on the ambivalent to negative side to being much more positive." Another stated, "I came to trust them in the situation...even though we were trained to be on guard..." Still another reported, "I am a more empathetic person [after my experience in a prison choir]." That same individual added, "I have changed from being leery to feeling about the prisoners I come in contact with the same way I feel about people on the outside." The comments in this category often indicated an increase in feelings of compassion or empathy, understanding, and/or comfort and trust.

Social bonds with inmates (n = 21) was the next most frequently appearing code. Over half of the participants discussed how close they have become to the inmates, and some even said that they are good friends with them. For example, one participant praised "the friendships I have gained, especially with those who have been released and are finding positive experiences outside the walls." Another stated, "I love some of the men and women I work with in prison choirs." Others expressed concern for their new friends: "I've made some friends who are prisoners, and I worry about what life will be like for them when they are released." In addition, another participant's comment indicated social bonds with inmates and also overlapped with the category *Increased positive feelings*

toward inmates: “Before I met any person in prison, I merely thought ‘them’ and ‘us’ as two different groups... a lot of former inmates are now my close friends!” Others expressed fondness for the inmates, or stated that they have enjoyed their social interactions with them.

Next, 20 participants provided comments that highlighted the *Humanity of inmates*. The idea that there is little difference between inmates and outsiders was a recurring theme. For example, one wrote, “None of us are innocent or better than the other. They are people just like I am a person.” Another argued, “Learned that there is very little difference between myself and someone who is in jail. Difference seems to be opportunities that were available to me during my early years and circumstances seem to play a major role.” Others pointed to the value of people-first language, described shared hopes and dreams, or cited religious doctrines in support of the idea that we are all of equal worth.

The code of *Advocacy/desire for criminal justice reform* appeared in 15 participants’ responses. They criticized different aspects of the criminal justice system (e.g., racial bias, punitiveness, and the harsh behavior of guards), and they spoke of their desire to advocate for prisoners. “My experience with the choir,” wrote one participant, “has also taught me to better informed [sic] and I’ve chosen to be an advocate for those who may be stigmatized (now or in the future) by their incarceration.” Along similar lines, one reported, “I want to stand up for them more.” Others criticized the criminal justice system arguing that it is racially biased and/or overly punitive, and some even mentioned their efforts to speak out on the issue by calling senators, writing letters, and

signing petitions.

General praise (n = 13) was also a frequently occurring code. Participants wrote comments such as, “I can truthfully say it has been a 100% positive experience for me;” “A very enriching and enjoyable experience for me;” and “A very positive experience.” These comments contained high praise without specifics.

On the other hand, some participants (n = 10) took the opportunity to offer *Praise for inmates’ abilities and successes*. For instance, one wrote, “Respect for individual participants’ abilities and efforts.” Another reported, “I’m also impressed by their artistic talent which has developed through the writing workshop, song writing opportunities & singing or playing instruments in the choir.” Some participants also stated that they take pride in seeing former inmates’ successes on the outside.

Several participants (n = 4) also expressed *Gratitude* in their responses. “I have extreme gratitude for this experience,” wrote one participant. Another added, “I now have experience singing with and getting to know several prisoners and have a much greater appreciation for them.” In addition, one participant expressed gratitude for the other volunteers who sing in the choir: “[I am] so appreciative of the volunteers and the opportunity to sing together.” Some commenters also mentioned that they found the inmates to be very grateful for the opportunity.

Participants also praised *Power of music-making* (n =3) they had perceived in their experiences with a prison choir. One, for example, reported that she had worked as a prison legal services attorney inside the walls of Michigan men’s and women’s prisons. She supervised prisoner paralegals who were difficult to supervise, and she said she often

felt manipulated. She came into the prison choir with a level of comfort, but also guardedness based on her past experiences. “At this point,” she wrote, “three and a half years in, I feel far less guarded...primarily for me, the experience of making music is the key — and I have found such joy in making music with our inside singers.” Along similar lines, another participant stated, “[My experience singing with the prison choir] makes me know even more that music is and can be a unifying language.”

Inmates’ sense of inner freedom/transcendence was another code found in three participants’ comments, two of which overlapped with the code *Praise for inmates’ abilities and successes* and *gratitude*. For instance, one commenter wrote:

I have enjoyed my interactions with every single incarcerated man I’ve met, sung with, or worked with... They are always open in expressing their gratitude for the outsiders who come in to see them or participate in activities with them. I have been blown away by the amount of creativity that is unleashed by their participation in singing and writing music, as well as in other activities which are offered to them, such as writing workshops, pen and paper class, etc. I have also been impressed with the ability of many of these men to transcend the loss of freedom by participating in such creative activities—and the social aspects of doing so. I have seen men cooperate and help each other in a very moving way. All of these experiences have belied any notions I may have held before about what prisons and prisoners are like. I feel that everyone who attends the concert as a guest also have [sic] similarly enlightening experiences.

Another added, “I am very impressed by their ability to triumph over their confinement through creative expression, kindness to others and keeping a positive attitude as much as possible.” The final commenter in this category reported that she perceived a sense of “inner freedom” in the inmate-choristers.

For some participants (n = 3), the prison choir offers an *Opportunity for reciprocal support* between the volunteers and the inmate-choristers. In other words, both groups receive benefits from their participation prison choirs. One volunteer wrote, “I feel it was at least as much a ‘service’ to me and my own growth and heart opening as it was to the inmates, whom I call ‘the residents’.” Another stated that he experiences the same kind of rehabilitation as the inmates, and the final commenter in this category cited the Golden Rule when pointing out that the choir gives the opportunity both to give and receive kindness.

Whereas many participants reported a positive change in their attitude towards prisoners, three stated that they *Had no bias to begin with*. One, for example, wrote, “No change. I already knew that not all prisoners are evil/bad.” Another added, “I came into the experience without any bias or preconceived notions.” Some participants (n = 2) added that their attitude toward prisoners did not change because they *Already had experiences dealing with inmates/criminals*.

Some participants’ (n = 4) comments fell into the category of *Criticism of others*. One criticized the unwelcoming behavior of prison guards, which overlapped with the category of *Advocacy/desire for criminal justice reform*. She wrote that she was “alarmed by the way I was treated by the guards...I felt like I was doing something wrong. I was

being judged, and I surely did not feel welcomed.” However, she added that she worked through the discomfort caused by the guards, because she decided that, “this work needed to be done.” Another praised the inmate-choristers he sings with but added that they are only minimum-security prisoners: “There are some really bad folks in medium and max.” One volunteer singer expressed negative perceptions of male inmates as opposed to female ones: “I do believe that as a woman, it is much easier for me to work in a woman’s prison than in a men’s prison. I think I would be more on guard as I would in general with men.” On the other hand, one participant went so far as to express complete and utter disdain for all inmates: “Thought they were scum and still do. I am in the choir to monitor these untrustworthy scumbags.” This participant’s score on the ATPS was the lowest possible, so there does not appear to be any room for nuance or irony in the interpretation of his comments.

Finally, two other participants offered *Criticism of the ATPS*. For instance, one wrote, “Most of the questions I answered with ‘undecided’ are questions which unfairly make an improperly generalized statement about prisoners.” The other participant in this category made a similar argument stating that “it depends” would be a better answer than “undecided.” “For example, I would not want to live next to a sex offender or a murderer.” This last statement was in direct response to item 23 on the ATPS, which pertains to participants’ willingness to live next door to an ex-prisoner.

The comments in these 14 open codes ranged from extremely positive to extremely negative. Although the bulk of the comments were positive, no common thread was immediately apparent, despite some overlap between several of the codes.

Axial coding. Upon completion of the open coding process, then, I began to seek connections among the open codes I had identified (Charmaz, 2006). After reading the comments and open codes, it became apparent to me that certain open codes were related and could be placed in larger, more inclusive axial codes: *Positive comments about inmates* (n = 93); *Praise for the prison choir experience* (n = 23); *Neutral comments/no change in attitudes* (n = 5); and *Negative comments* (n = 4). It should be noted that the frequency counts for these axial codes are an indication of the total number of appearances of comments fitting in those categories. In other words, a single participant could have written several different sentences that each fit into the same axial code, and that same single participant might also have made statements that fit into the other axial codes. Due to the multi-part nature of their comments, the total number of comments in the combined axial codes exceeds the number of participants who responded to the open-ended items.

Six open codes fit in the axial code *Positive comments about inmates* (see Figure 2). These open codes included: *Increased positive feelings toward inmates* (n = 24); *Social bonds with inmates* (n = 21); *Humanity of inmates* (n = 20); *Advocacy for inmates* (n = 14); *Praise for inmates' abilities and successes* (n = 10); and *Inmates' sense of inner freedom/transcendence* (n = 3). Although there was overlap among some of the open codes in the axial category *Praise for the prison choir experience*, I divided the open codes into these axial codes based on the focus of the comment. For example, one could argue that the comments in the open code *Inmates' sense of inner freedom/transcendence* could be perceived as *praise for the prison choir experience*, since the prison choir

experience is arguably what provides inmates with feelings of inner freedom or transcendence. However, the participants who discussed *Inmates' sense of inner freedom/transcendence* focused on the agency of the inmates rather than the nature of the prison choir experience. One commenter, for instance, wrote, "I am very impressed by their ability to triumph over their confinement through creative expression, kindness to others and keeping a positive attitude as much as possible."

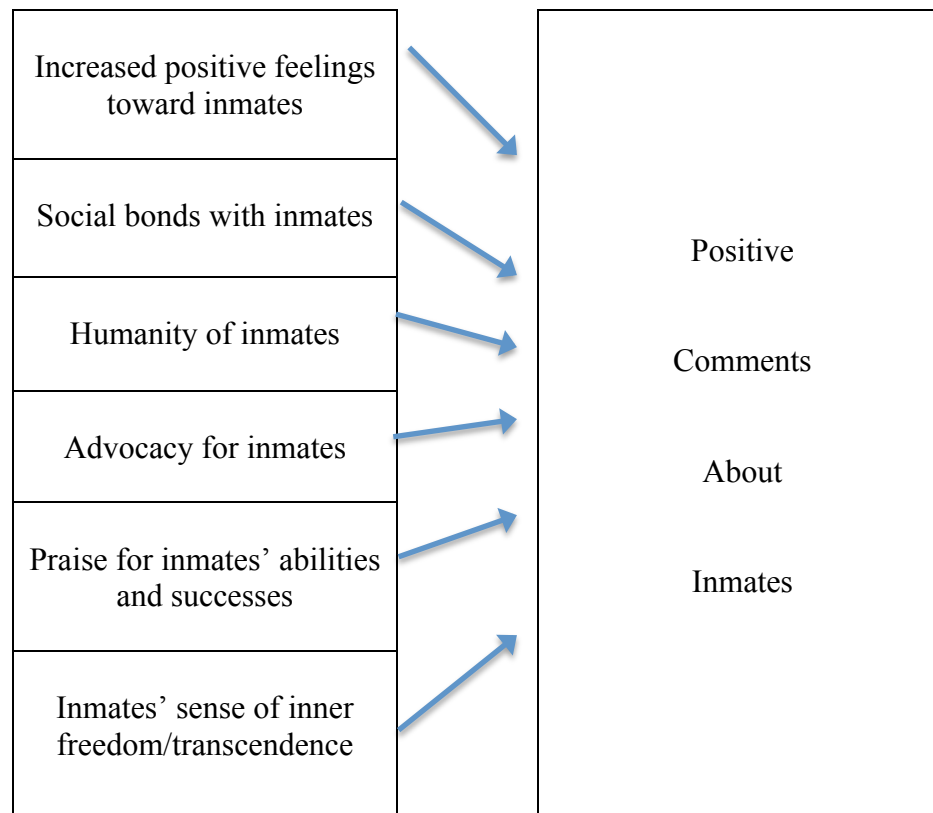


Figure 2. Axial coding process: First grouping of open codes

The following four open codes fit in the axial code *praise for the prison choir experience: general praise, gratitude, power of music making, and opportunity for*

reciprocal support (See Figure 3). Again, comments in this axial code focused more on the experience of singing in a prison choir and the opportunities it provides.

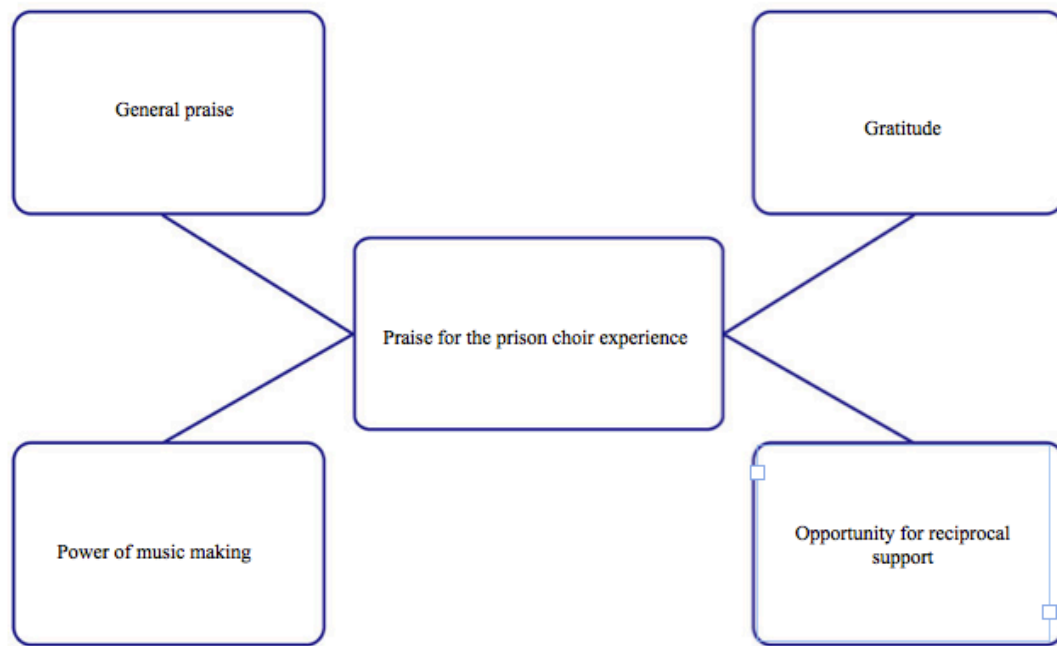


Figure 3. Axial coding process: Second grouping of open codes

The last two axial codes are much smaller in terms of the number of comments included in them. For example, there were only five comments in the axial code *Neutral comments/no change in attitudes*, which included the open codes *Already had experience dealing with inmates/criminals* and *Had no bias to begin with* (see Figure 4). Finally, the axial code *Negative comments* ($n = 5$) included the open codes *Criticism of others* and *Criticism of the ATPS* (see Figure 5). In the following section, I discuss the selective coding process.

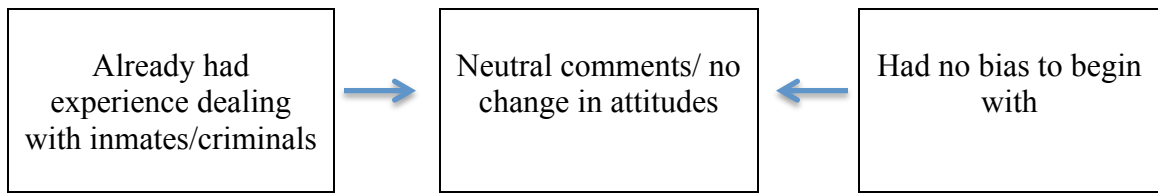


Figure 4. Axial coding process: Third grouping of open codes

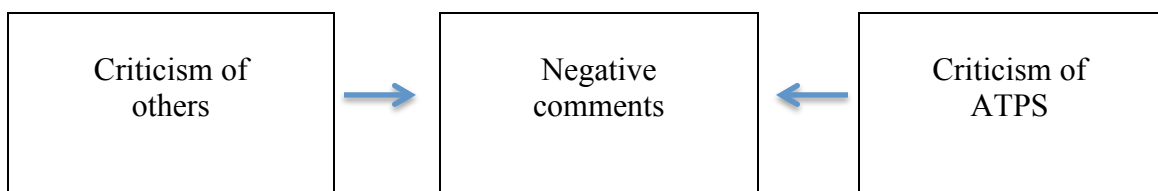


Figure 5. Axial coding process: Fourth grouping of open codes

Selective coding. In selective coding, all categories identified up to that point are unified around a central “core” category, which represents the central phenomenon of the study (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). In other words, all categories in the study relate to the core category, or selective code (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

Although nearly all of the comments were positive in tone and the majority evidenced positive changes in participants’ attitudes toward prisoners, some were different and made the selective coding process a difficult one. Several of the codes do not seem related at first glance, and some of the comments even contain diametrically opposing views. For example, whereas some participants discussed their social bonds with, and even love for, prisoners, one commenter, clearly an outlier, discussed his dislike for prisoners, calling them “untrustworthy scumbags.” Finding a unifying theme in such comments was a challenge.

However, as I read and reread the comments, I began to notice that the prison choir experience had given the volunteer choristers an opportunity to explore their sense of ideal human relationships. This trend held true in each of the participants' comments.

When, for example, participants praised their prison choir experiences, they lauded the way the experiences helped volunteers and inmate choristers support each other; they expressed gratitude for the sense of community it fostered; and they argued that music is a "unifying force" that can bring different people together. Implicit in these comments are the views that a sense of community is a good thing, that supporting others when they are struggling is a good thing, and that bringing different kinds of people together in a unified group is a good thing.

When participants wrote positive comments about inmates, they pointed to the importance of inmates having social bonds, and they highlighted the good that prisoners can contribute to society. They argued for the importance of inmates feeling free, and they advocated for changes in criminal justice policy. In short, they painted a picture of how they treat incarcerated people and how they think others should treat them.

When participants wrote neutral comments, they stated that their attitudes toward prisoners had not changed while singing in the prison choir because either a) they had already had experiences working with prisoners, or b) they had had no bias to begin with. Implicit in these comments is the belief that prejudice or bias against prisoners is a bad thing.

Even the negative commenters revealed much about their sense of ideal relationships. Those who criticized the ATPS, for example, did so because they thought

that the questionnaire had wrongly grouped all prisoners together; they argued that certain types of criminals (e.g., those convicted of murder or child molestation) should be treated differently from less violent criminals (e.g., those convicted of larceny or drug offences). Two other commenters differentiated between minimum and maximum-security prisoners and male and female prisoners, respectively, arguing that those groups are essentially different and should be treated accordingly. One participant's sense of ideal relationships was implied by her criticism of the unwelcoming behavior of prison guards. In her view, guards should be more supportive of the prison choir project. Finally, even the outlier who expressed strong dislike of prisoners and called them, "untrustworthy scumbags" revealed something about his sense of ideal relationships: he views prisoners as essentially bad people who need to be monitored.

Peer debriefing. I asked two members of my doctoral cohort to read through my analysis of participants' open-ended responses to enhance reliability. Only one of those doctoral candidates completed the peer debriefing process. That individual agreed with my analysis in all but one instance. She argued that the comment, "I don't even think about it anymore," which I had categorized as positive, could be categorized as neutral. I agreed that my bias had caused me to read positive intentions into that comment. I moved the comment to the neutral category.

Summary

I began my analysis of the qualitative data in part 1 of the study by reading through participants' open-ended responses several times. I then grouped them into the broad categories of positive, negative, neutral, and mixed. Next, I reread the comments

and began the process of open, axial, and selective coding (Charmaz, 2006).

I first grouped the comments into 14 open codes before seeking axial connections among them. The four axial codes I identified included: *positive comments about inmates, praise for the prison choir experience, neutral comments/no change in attitude,* and *negative comments.*

The selective coding process proved challenging. Although most of the comments were positive in tone and expressed similar beliefs about prisoners, it is clear that not all participants in part 1 of the study shared the same sense of ideal human relationships. What can be said, however, is that participation in a prison choir provided the volunteer choristers with an opportunity to explore their sense of ideal human relationships, and, as a result, many, though not all, of them self-reported a positive change in their attitudes toward prisoners and even an increased desire to advocate for an improvement in the way inmates are treated in the United States criminal justice system.

VI: PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESULTS FOR PART 2

In part 2 of the study, I attended a prison choir concert in Olathe, Kansas where I asked audience members to complete the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) before and after the performance. Afterwards, I manually entered participants' responses into SPSS statistical analysis software and analyzed the quantitative data, which are presented below.

Qualitative data from the open-ended item of the questionnaire can be found in Chapter 7.

Participants in Part 2

The prison choir concert took place in a church and was free and open to the public. A freewill offering allowed audience members to donate to the nonprofit organization that supported the choir. Approximately 200 people were in attendance, of which 78 completed both the pre- and the post-test. An additional nine audience members participated, but failed to complete both the pre- and post-test, so I did not analyze their data. There was also one participant whose answers were too confusing to analyze; in several cases, the individual circled several numbers in response to the same question, so I discarded that individual's data.

Gender. Of the audience members who completed both the pre- and post-test, 50 were female (64.9%) and 27 were male (34.6%). One participant neglected to respond to the item about gender (1.3%).

Age. The majority of participants (79.5%) were 50 years of age or older. There were no participants in the 18 to 29 age bracket. Meanwhile, 16 (20.5%) participants were between 30 and 49 years old; 28 (35.9%) participants were between 50 and 64 years

old; and 34 (43.6%) participants were 65 years of age or older.

Audience members' familiarity with incarcerated people. Participants also responded to the following item on the background questionnaire: "How many people have you known personally or professionally who have ever been incarcerated? (Note: by 'incarcerated,' we mean held in a prison or jail for one month or more)." In total, 12 participants (15.4%; 9 females and 3 males) reported that they did not know incarcerated people. 30 participants (38.5%; 19 females and 11 males) reported knowing 1–3 incarcerated people. 7 participants (8.9%; 4 females, 2 males, and 1 unknown) reported knowing 4–6 incarcerated people, and 29 (37.2%) reported knowing 7+ incarcerated people.

Prior prison choir concert attendance. Next, audience members responded to the following item (#4) on the background questionnaire: "Is tonight's performance your first time hearing a prison choir? Yes / No." Out of the 78 total participants, 18 (23.1%; 10 females and 8 males) reported that it was their first time hearing a prison choir. The remaining 60 participants (76.9%; 40 females, 19 males, and 1 unknown) reported that it was not their first time hearing a prison choir.

I also wanted to determine how many concerts those 60 participants had attended, but I worded the instructions and the follow-up question (#5) in a confusing, incorrect manner. The instructions stated, "If you answered 'yes' for number 4, please also answer number 5. If you answered 'no' for number 4, please move on to the next page marked 'Part 2'." I then asked how many prison choir concerts they had attended. Obviously, the instructions should have said, "If you answered 'no' for number 4, please also answer

number 5...” I noticed the mistake before the concert, and I made an announcement to the audience correcting the error. However, 13 participants neglected to answer the question anyway. In addition, two of the ranges for concerts attended overlapped (see Background Questionnaire for Audience Members in the appendices). Given the confusion surrounding item number 5, I decided to ignore the results of that question.

Comparison of pre- and post-test scores

This section addresses research question 3. While looking through the 78 pre- and post-tests after the concert, I discovered an unanticipated difficulty associated with the data analysis for part 2 of the study. Although I paid a professional print shop to copy the pre- and post-tests, all of the post-tests were missing page four (questions 23–30). Two of the pages must have stuck together while the staff members at the print shop were copying the tests. As a result, I was forced to compare only pages 1–3, and 5 of the pre- and post-tests, which contained questions 1–22, and 31–36 of the ATPS. The fact that the same items were on pages 1–3, and 5 of both the pre- and post-test allowed for a straightforward comparison of participants’ scores. However, their incomplete scores could not be compared to the complete scores of participants in part 1 of the study, nor, for that matter, could they be compared to the complete scores from any other study. In addition, because participants in part 2 of this study could not respond to every item on the ATPS, I did not subtract the constant of 36 from participants’ scores.

I completed a Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare the pre- and post-test scores for the full sample of audience members who participated ($N = 78$). The results are summarized in Tables 5, 6, and 7 below.

Table 5

Audience members' pre- and post-test descriptive statistics

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Pre	78	112.62	12.407	73	136
Post	78	115.68	11.617	95	140

Table 6

Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test: Ranks

	N	Mean Ranks	Sum of Ranks
Negative Ranks	23 ^a	28.72	660.50
Positive Ranks	48 ^b	39.49	1895.50
Ties	7 ^c		
Total	78		

- a. Post < Pre
- b. Post > Pre
- c. Post = Pre

Table 7

Test Statistics

	Post - Pre
Z	-3.545 ^a
Asymp. Significance (2-tailed)	.000

Note. a. Based on negative ranks

Participants' post-test scores were significantly more positive than their pre-test scores ($p = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$), therefore I rejected the null hypothesis.

Comparison of pre- and post-test scores by prior concert attendance. Next, I divided the participants into two groups: those who had never been to a prison choir concert (first timers) and those who had already been to a prison choir concert (non-first timers). Then, I compared the pre- and post-test scores of just the first timers using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and I did the same for the non-first timers. All but two out of the 17 first timers scored higher on the post-test than on the pre-test, and the difference between the first timers' pre- and post-tests was significant ($Z = -3.5267$; $p = 0.00042 < \alpha = 0.05$). Meanwhile, the change for the non-first timers was not significant ($Z = -1.881$; $p = 0.060 > \alpha = 0.05$). Only a slight majority of non-first timers (32 out of 60) had a positive change in ATPS scores from pre- to post-test; 22 out of the 60 had a negative change, and the remaining six had no change in scores.

Comparison of pre- and post-test scores by age. As can be seen in the chart below, the youngest age bracket (30–49) had the highest mean ATPS score, and the oldest age bracket (65+) had the lowest mean score. On the other hand, the middle bracket (50–64) had the largest average change between pre- and post-test scores (see Table 8 below). However, using a Kruskal-Wallis test, I found that the relationship between age and ATPS scores did not quite reach statistical significance ($p = 0.055 > \alpha = 0.05$), and I retained the null hypothesis. In addition, the relationship between age and score change was also not statistically significant ($p = 0.523 > \alpha = 0.05$).

Table 8

Change in ATPS scores by age

Age		Score	Change
30–49	Mean	121.25	2.19
	Standard Deviation	13.55	6.70
50–64	Mean	116.53	4.18
	Standard Deviation	10.71	6.18
65+	Mean	112.36	3.12
	Standard Deviation	10.99	7.69

Comparison of pre- and post-test scores by gender. Female participants had a slightly higher mean ATPS score than male participants (female $\bar{x} = 116.82$, $SD = 11.87$;

male $\chi = 113.70$, $SD = 11.64$). However, using a Mann Whitney U test, I determined that there was not a statistically significant relationship between gender and ATPS scores ($p = 0.384 > \alpha = 0.05$). Neither was there a statistically significant relationship between gender and score change ($p = 0.507 > \alpha = 0.05$).

Comparison of pre- and post-test scores by familiarity with incarcerated people. Using a Kruskal-Wallis test, I found a significant relationship between the number of incarcerated people known and ATPS scores ($p = 0.019 < \alpha = 0.05$). Although the group of participants who reported having known seven or more incarcerated people had the highest average ATPS score of the sample, the average scores were not distributed linearly; the lowest average score belonged to the 4–6 group (see Table 9 below).

Table 9

Change in ATPS scores by familiarity with incarcerated people

Number of Incarcerated People Known		Score	Change
None (n=12)	Mean	112.08	5.00
	Standard Deviation	13.40	5.34
1–3 (n=30)	Mean	115.60	4.93
	Standard Deviation	10.63	8.96
4–6 (n=6)	Mean	104.83	.1667
	Standard Deviation	5.81	3.97
7+ (n=29)	Mean	119.62	1.59
	Standard Deviation	11.75	4.84

In contrast, there was not a statistically significant relationship between the number of incarcerated people known and the change from pre- to post-test ($p = 0.138 > \alpha = 0.05$).

Summary

In part 2 of the study, I addressed research question 3: What changes, if any, are there between audience members' pre-test and post-test responses to the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985)? I found that there was a significant, positive change in audience members' ATPS scores from pre- to post-test. Furthermore, when I divided the audience members into first-time prison choir concert attendees and non-first timers, I found that there was a significant, positive score change in first timers' scores, but not in non-first timers' scores. In the following section, I provide data from audience members' responses to the open-ended item at the end of the questionnaire.

VII: PRESENTATION OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS FOR PART 2

In part 2 of the study, qualitative data were collected in an effort to gain depth of understanding of the quantitative results. After completing both the pre- and post-test ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985), I asked participants to respond to the following open-ended item: “Tell me about your experience at the prison choir concert tonight. What stands out in your mind? Any surprises?” I analyzed participants’ open-ended responses in an open, axial, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006), and I was particularly interested in themes related to participants’ attitudes toward prisoners.

Trustworthiness and Reliability

The primary means of establishing trustworthiness and reliability in the qualitative analysis of my data include the auditability of my data analysis process and the concurrent collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, which allowed for concurrent triangulation of data (Harwell, 2011). For example, the quantitative data from a participant’s ATPS responses could help clarify an ambiguous comment in the open-ended section.

In addition, the use of NVivo qualitative data analysis software allowed me to check the exact frequency of certain words and phrases in the open-ended responses, which enabled me to crosscheck and refine my list of open codes. Furthermore, an adjunct lecturer of music at a northeastern university who specializes in the collection and analysis of qualitative data assisted me with peer debriefing; she helped me locate themes I had missed and also pointed out areas where my unconscious bias had affected my interpretation of the data.

Unfortunately, member checks were not possible. Because people's concerns about privacy can influence survey response rates (Tourangeau & Plewes, 2013), I chose not to collect contact information from participants, which I would have needed in order to conduct member checks.

Statement of researcher biases. Again, Phillips (2008) argued that it is "absolutely essential" that researchers recognize their own subjectivity, monitor how it functions in the research context, and share that information with the reader. For a detailed description of my biases, please consult the statement of researcher biases in Chapter 5.

Description of Data Collection

The prison choir concert took place at a church in Kansas on May 1, 2016 at 4pm. I arrived in my rental car at 2pm and made sure I had each of the questionnaire packets organized and ready to go. I placed stacks of the packets by each entrance to the sanctuary so that the ushers and I could hand them to audience members along with the concert programs. At exactly 4pm I was given a microphone to read instructions to the approximately 200 people in the audience. While still standing in front of the church with the microphone, I also clarified the wording of questions #4 and #5 on the background questionnaire. Even after I offered my clarification, several people raised their hand and asked about the wording of those questions; they had apparently not been listening when I explained it the first time. Once I had finished reading the instructions, audience members had ten minutes to complete both the background questionnaire and the pre-test ATPS. At 4:12pm the choir began to sing. They performed a total of 13 songs, 12 of

which were introduced by incarcerated members of the choir. In fact, the incarcerated members of the choir selected many of the songs on the program, so it was often the individual who had selected a particular number who introduced it to the audience. Several of these inmate-narrators also read original poems or told personal stories about why they had chosen a particular song. Just prior to the final song on the program, I addressed the audience again with a microphone from the front of the church. I made sure that they all had a post-test along with an open-ended item section, and asked them to please complete those two sections. I asked them to place all of their materials in the manila envelope I had given them and to leave those envelopes under their seats when they were finished. They had approximately ten minutes to complete the post-test and open-ended section before the choir sang their final selection of the evening. After the concert ended and the enthusiastic applause died down, I spoke with several people who thanked me for conducting my research and/or offered advice regarding the wording of questions in both the background questionnaire and the ATPS. Finally, I collected all of the test envelopes and returned to my hotel where I sorted through them to find all of the complete, useable packets. I saved the completed and partially completed packets, threw the rest in recycling bins, and left for the airport the following day.

Participants' written responses. Whereas 78 audience members completed both the pre- and the post-test, only 55 participants responded to the open-ended item. In the initial stage of the coding process, I read and reread the responses several times. Then I sorted them into the following broad categories: positive, negative, mixed (i.e., had both positive and negative comments), and neutral (i.e., neither negative nor positive). Later, I

checked and finalized my sorting of these comments through the peer debriefing process. As can be seen in Table 10, the vast majority of the comments were positive (n=47; e.g., “Awesome music!” and “Just an awfully talented group of men!”). Only two comments, on the other hand, were negative:

1. Survey questions are too general. My opinion would be based on type of crime committed. A car thief is not the same as a serial killer.
2. As a wearer of hearing aid I was very disappointed with the acoustics — it was very difficult for me to understand the verbal parts. This is the first time of all the concerts I’ve attended that so many of the men were able to share their thoughts [and] feelings [and] it was very disappointing to not be able to understand.

Three of the remaining responses were mixed (e.g., “Excellent in every way. Only comment — couldn’t hear some of the men. Could they practice speaking more clearly?”). The other three responses were neutral (e.g., “Dr. [Name redacted for privacy] is the reason I came. I happen to know 2 volunteers in the choir as well”). There simply was not enough information in the neutral comments to infer whether the statements were positive or negative. See Table 10 for a frequency count of the comments in these categories.

Table 10

Sorting of audience members' responses by tone

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Positive	47
Negative	1
Mixed	4
Neutral	3

Open coding. After dividing the responses into those broad categories, I then began the process of open coding. First, I wrote short summaries of each response, which I used to create open codes for some thematic chunks of data that emerged in my analysis (see Figure 6). I also used NVivo qualitative analysis software to check and refine my list of open codes.

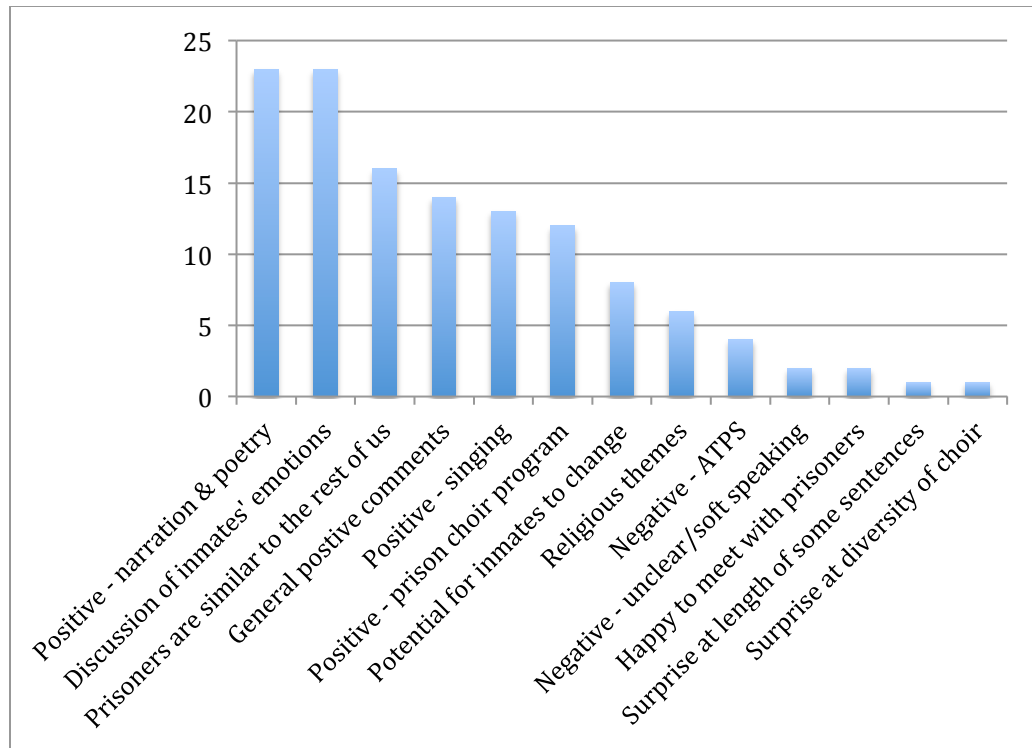


Figure 6. Open codes from audience members' responses

The total number of comments in all of the open codes combined is greater than 55 because many of those comments dealt with multiple topics. In other words, more than one code can be found in many of the open-ended responses.

The codes with the largest number of responses were *positive comments on the narrations and poetry* (n=23) and *discussion of inmates' emotions* (n=23). Next came *prisoners are similar to the rest of us* (n=16) followed by *general positive comments* (n=14) and *positive comments on singing* (n=13). Three other codes occurred in more than five responses: *positive comments on the prison choir program* (n=12); *potential for prisoners to change/hope for their futures* (n=8); and *religious themes* (n=6).

The remaining codes occurred in fewer than five responses each: *negative*

comments on the ATPS (n=4); *negative comments on unclear/soft speaking* (n=2); *happy to meet with prisoners* (n=2); *surprise at the length of some sentences* (n=1); and *surprise at the diversity of the choir* (n=1).

Comments related to the code *positive comments on the narrations and poetry* were often related to the perception that the incarcerated men were honest and open in the revelation of their stories and emotions. As a result, many of the comments in this code overlapped with comments in the code *discussion of inmates' emotions*. For example, one participant commented, "I enjoyed the genuine, honest responses and statements by the narrators and poets. Realistic and heartfelt." Another wrote, "What stood out tonight (this afternoon) was the transparency of the prisoners, especially the pain, anguish, backgrounds, revealed in the poetry." Other comments in this category contained praise for the eloquence and humor of the incarcerated men. For instance, one participant wrote, "I was surprised at how articulate the prisoners were in their introductions and personal remarks." In another comment, a participant wrote, "I was impressed how well they read." In addition, participants wrote, "Good to hear humor both in the introductions and in the poetry..." and "Loved the humor! I even liked the dark humor." Still other comments were more general. For example, one participant wrote, "I really loved the narrators."

The category with the next largest number of comments was *prisoners are similar to the rest of us* (n = 16). One participant wrote, "Their personal stories are reminders to me that we are all more alike then [sic] we are different." Another said, "I have worked with ex-cons — I no [sic] difference in the general population." In addition, one asserted,

“We are all the same...some just get caught.” Others added, “Such a good reminder that inmates are people,” and “I can...say that there are lots of good prisoners.”

By its nature, the next largest category of *general positive comments* included broad comments such as, “Enjoyed every minute!” Others wrote things like, “Excellent in every way,” and “I loved it!” None of these comments mentioned specific aspects of the event.

Comments in the category of *positive comments on the singing*, on the other hand, ranged from general to specific. At the more general level, one participant simply wrote, “Awesome music!” Other commenters were more specific. For example, one praised the “beautiful singing,” and another wrote that the “harmony was tremendous.” Another commenter praised the clarity of the choir.

Some participants wrote *positive comments on the prison choir program* and praised it for making a difference in people’s lives. One exclaimed, “The choir is making a difference in lives!” Another wrote, “This has made a difference in my husband’s life as well as our own church! Keep striving to make a difference!” An additional participant reported, “It’s nice to hear what difference the choir has made in these men’s lives.” Other positive comments on this prison choir program stressed the significance of group membership for the men in the choir (e.g., “It was interesting to hear them talk about the importance of belonging to the group and what it meant to them”); and one commenter in this category asserted that the prison choir program “[shows] why these programs are so important...we need to offer hope + respect to these men...”).

Eight participants wrote comments related to the *potential for prisoners to*

change. For example, one participant declared, “I also love it that there are so many volunteers willing + able to work + sing with them + shed light into what their futures could be.” Another wrote, “[I was surprised] how some prisoners revealed they have seen how their selfishness toward their families has come to light and they want to change that after they get out.” Several additional comments in this category also touched on the fact that most inmates will someday leave prison and return to free society.

The comments in the *religious themes* category included topics such as forgiveness, praise, evangelism, and prayers for the future. Most were clearly written from a Christian outlook, but it is possible that a few could have been written from a Jewish, Muslim, or other religious perspective. One comment simply included a Bible reference to Psalm 150:6, which contains the command, “Let every thing which hath breath praise the Lord” (The King James Version). Another participant alluded to forgiveness and wrote that the experience at the concert “encourages me to be a more outspoken Christian.” Other comments were more general and spoke of “ministry” or asked for God’s blessing on the prison choristers.

Four participants provided *negative comments on the ATPS*. They criticized the questionnaire for being too general and/or for lumping all prisoners together. One, for example, remarked, “Questions are general and you can’t compare crimes like child molestation to someone who has a DUI.” Another wrote, “Answers should relate to the crime.”

The remaining categories included only one or two comments each. For instance, two participants criticized the soft or unclear speaking of some of the narrators (e.g.,

“Only comment — couldn’t hear some of the men. Could they practice speaking more clearly?”). Another two commenters expressed happiness at being able to meet with the prisoners after the concert and connect with them in a more personal way (e.g., “...loved...the opportunity to connect with them in a more personal way.”). One participant expressed surprise at the length of some of the sentences (e.g., “How young + how long the sentence”); and one commented, “I was surprised by the diversity of the members of the choir”).

Axial coding. After dividing the comments into open codes, I began to look for connections among the broad categories of data. After many times of reading through the comments and the open codes, it became apparent to me that certain open codes were related and could be placed in larger, more inclusive axial codes: *praise*, *criticism*, and the *humanity of inmates*. *Positive comments on the narration and poetry*, *positive comments on the singing*, *general positive comments*, and *positive comments on the prison choir program* were all related in that they expressed praise (see Figure 7 below). With 62 comments, the axial code of *praise* was the most frequently occurring of the three axial codes.

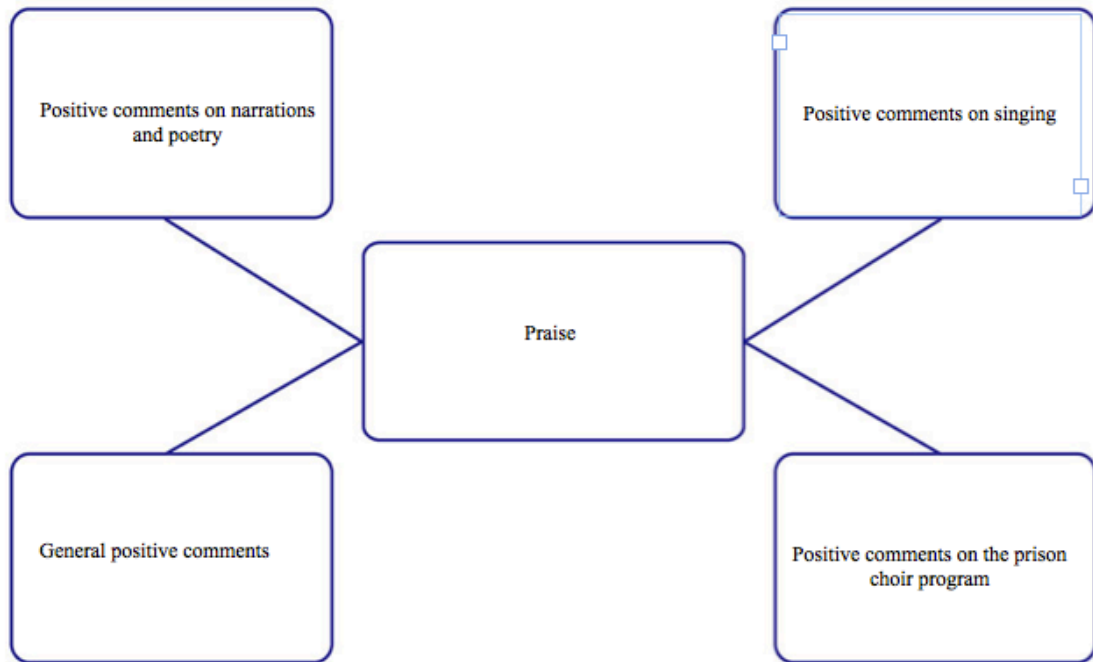


Figure 7. Axial coding process (part 2): First grouping of open codes

Next, I grouped both *negative comments on the ATPS* and *negative comments on soft/unclear speaking* together into the axial category *criticism*. See Figure 8 below.

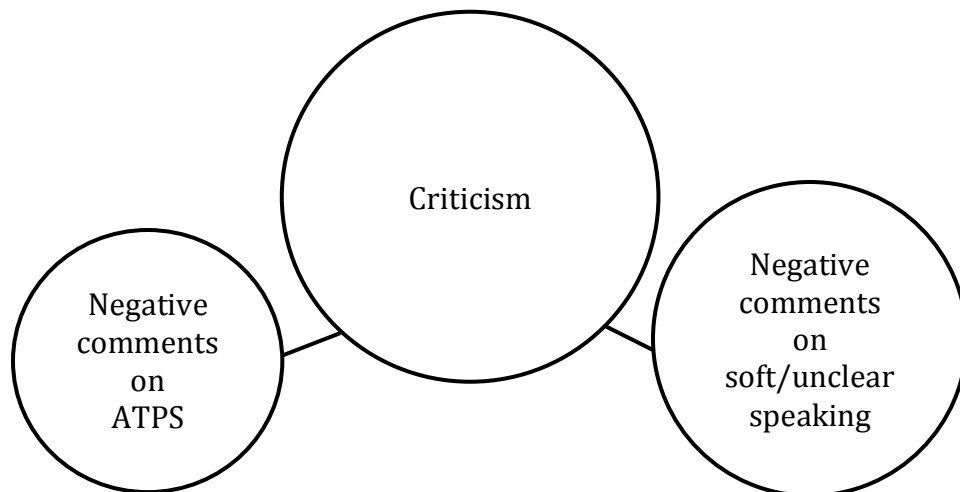


Figure 8. Axial coding process (part 2): Second grouping of open codes

With only six comments, “criticism” was the least frequently occurring of the axial codes.

Finally, the common thread in the seven remaining open codes was a recognition of the *humanity of inmates* (see Figure 9).

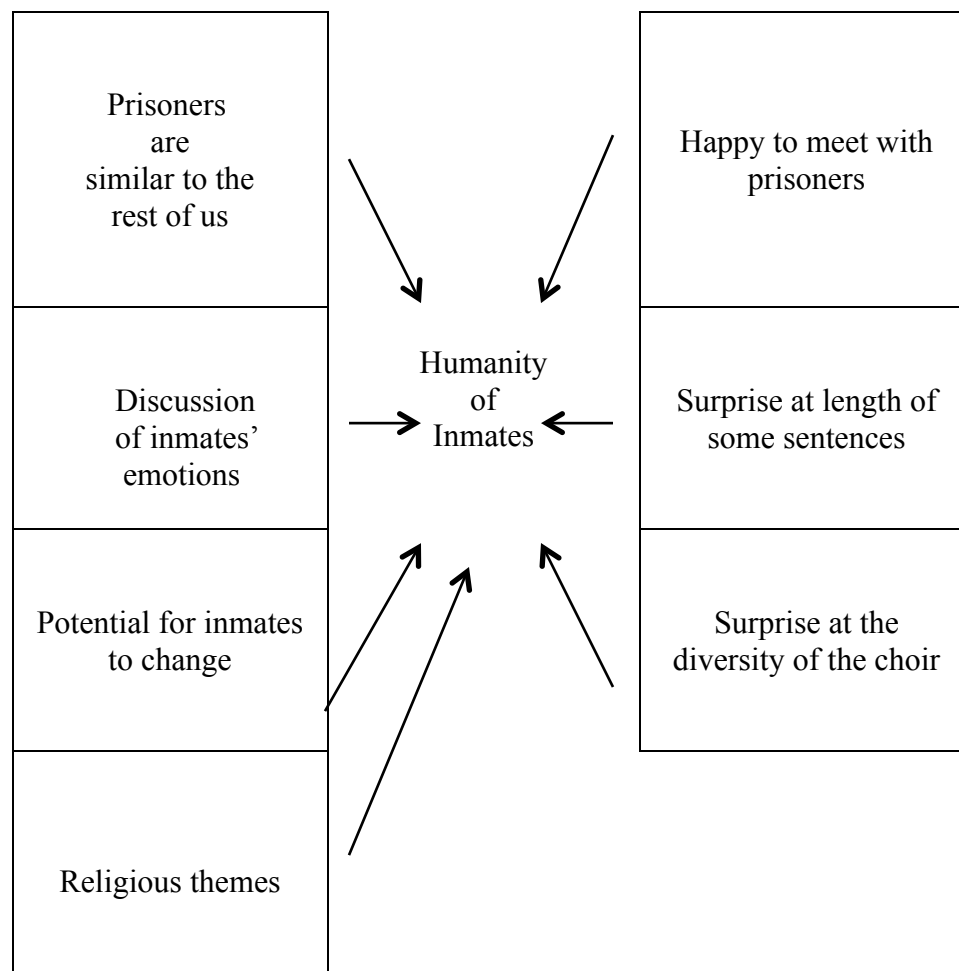


Figure 9. Axial coding process (part 2): Third grouping of open codes

With 57 total comments, the axial code of *humanity of inmates* was the second most frequently occurring of the axial codes. Some of the comments in this code contained explicit statements related to the humanity of inmates, especially comments in the open code *prisoners are similar to the rest of us*. For example, one participant stated, “We are all more alike than [sic] we are different.” One participant made a similar point and included a religious comment: “We are all the same...Jesus is love!” The comments in the other five open codes implied similar ideas related to the humanity of inmates. Some discussed the potential for prisoners to change and re-enter society as productive citizens. Still other participants praised the positive social interactions they had with the inmate-choristers after the concert. In a comment that arguably could have been placed in the axial code *criticism*, one audience member expressed surprise at the youth of some of the inmate-choristers and how long their sentences are. However, I placed it in the axial of *humanity of inmates*, because its focus was more on the inmates themselves than on the criminal justice system. Furthermore, even if this comment implies a critical view of the criminal justice system, it does so due to an underlying acceptance of the humanity of the young men in the choir. Finally, the participant who expressed surprise at the diversity of the choir gained a more nuanced view of this incarcerated population than he had previously had.

Selective coding. During the selective coding process, I looked for a common thread that unified all of the comments. As I made clear in the previous sections, the comments covered a wide range of themes, and they were positive, negative, mixed, or neutral in tone. Some comments overlapped between the axial categories of *praise* and

humanity of inmates, but the same was not true for *criticism* and the other categories. As such, it was not immediately clear that all of the comments had a unifying theme. Upon a deeper reading of the comments and a revisiting of my theoretical framework, however, I realized that the participants' comments each addressed the unifying thread of *ideal relationships* in some way.

As Christopher Small (1998) pointed out, musicking gives people the opportunity to explore the world of ideal relationships, and the audience members at the prison choir concert did just that, even if they were not always conscious of it. Some, for instance, praised the relationships between different sounds (e.g., “tremendous harmony”). Others criticized the relationship between certain sounds and the audience reception (e.g., “Only comment — couldn't hear some of the men. Could they practice speaking more clearly?”). Still other participants addressed the relationships among different people.

In commending the prison choir program, many participants offered their views on the ideal relationship between incarcerated people and non-incarcerated people. The comments of some audience members implied the view that the ideal relationship between prisoners and outsiders is one in which the outsiders provide support for the incarcerated people. For example, one participant wrote, “...these programs are so important...we need to offer hope + respect to these men...” Another added, “Keep up the excellent work. Your ministry is a blessing to all. Thanks!” Other commenters also praised the prison choir program, but they focused more on the way the program provides incarcerated people with the opportunity and tools to change their behavior in some way. For instance, one participant wrote, “How some prisoners revealed they...want to

change...These concerts impart self-confidence...” Another asserted, “I think it is awesome [sic] to work with these guys and give them an opportunity [sic] to do this concert and other things they are allowed. I believe it imparts responsibility and respect in them that will come back into society.” Still another opined, “These men have been given the guidance + respect to help them develop strong characters. Many of them didn’t have family + guidance. In speaking to inmates this has become family to them.”

For participants who discussed inmates’ emotions, their views of ideal relationships were implied in their comments, many of which overlapped with comments praising the narrations and poetry. For example, one wrote, “I enjoyed the genuine, honest responses and statements by the narrators and poets. Realistic and heartfelt. Great music — quality performance!” This comment included statements related to several open codes, but one clear implication is that it is good for incarcerated people to reveal their emotions to others in genuine, honest, and heartfelt ways. A different audience member stated, “It was good to see the smiles on the prisoners+joy of seeing family in the audience,” which implies that it is good when incarcerated people can interact with their family and feel joy.

Along similar lines, participants who expressed happiness at the opportunity to meet with the inmate-choristers after the concert seemed to imply that it is a good thing for incarcerated people to have the opportunity to interact with people from the outside society. For example, one audience member wrote:

There is good in people! Yes, I was surprised by a singer who recognized me as a former probation officer — not someone I worked with but knew

me from working at the probation office. It was a positive contact. He was appreciative of the interaction. Thank you!

From this comment, it is clear that the author viewed the meeting as a positive exchange for both himself and for the inmate-chorister. For this participant, the maintenance of connections with incarcerated people seems to be a part of his sense of ideal relationships.

Participants who wrote comments arguing that prisoners are similar to the rest of us implied that prisoners should not be stereotyped. For example, “This is my first time [at a prison choir concert] and I am speechless. I can really would [sic] say there are lots of good prisoners. It could be bad day and wrong time [sic] they ended up in jail.” Still another alluded to the possibility of redemption and a positive future for the inmates: “I also love it that there are so many volunteers willing + able to work + sing with them + shed some light into what their futures could be. Their personal stories are reminders to me that we are all more alike then [sic] we are different, + that love *always* lights the way.” These commenters, then, expressed the view that there is not a fundamental difference between incarcerated people and the rest of society, and they pointed to ways that society should interact with people in prison.

In contrast, audience members who criticized the ATPS emphasized differences among various categories of prisoners, and, in the process, they still revealed their views of ideal relationships between people who have committed certain types of crime and the rest of society. Specifically, the audience members who criticized the ATPS made it clear that society’s relationship to incarcerated people should depend on the type of crime

committed. For example, one participant wrote, “Survey questions are too general. My opinion would be based on type of crime committed. A car thief is not the same as a serial killer.” Another added, “[ATPS] answers should relate to the crime.” Again, many of the items in the ATPS pertain to how prisoners should be treated (e.g., “Prisoners should be under strict, harsh discipline”), so the implication when participants criticize the ATPS is that people who commit different types of crimes are fundamentally different and should be treated accordingly.

One participant, discussed earlier, expressed surprise at how young some of the inmates are and how long their sentences are. It seems this individual’s sense of ideal relationships was somehow contradicted by the youth and sentencing of some inmates.

Likewise, another participant expressed surprise at the diversity of the prison choir membership. Unfortunately, he did not explain exactly what he meant by “diversity.” He could have been referring to some combination of the racial makeup of the choir, the ages of the members, or other demographic variables. Nonetheless, he clearly expected the inmates in the choir to look a certain way and was surprised when they did not. The participant’s surprise shows that he came to the concert with expectations about the relationship between the makeup of the prison choir and the makeup of society in general.

Although the comments of general praise did not refer to specific relationships present at the concert, the authors of those comments were clearly impressed by some of the relationships involved with the musicking experience. For example, when a participant wrote, “I loved it!,” she clearly enjoyed some of the relationships present in

the musicking experience. When another participant stated, “Excellent in every way. Only comment — couldn’t hear some of the men,” she seems to have perceived nearly all of the relationships involved with the event as ideal. Either explicitly or implicitly, each of the open-ended responses from the prison choir concert contained an exploration of ideal relationships.

Peer debriefing. I asked two members of my doctoral cohort to read through my analysis of participants’ open-ended responses to enhance reliability. Only one of those doctoral candidates completed the peer debriefing process. For the most part, that individual agreed with my analysis of the comments in part 2. However, she argued that one particular comment did not fit in any of my codes: “Dr. [name redacted] is the reason I came. I happen to know 2 volunteers in the choir as well.” While I acknowledge that this comment does not reflect the participant’s attitude toward prisoners, it nonetheless implies something about ideal relationships with others. The participant felt it important to attend the concert, presumably to show support for an acquaintance taking part in it. Once I clarified my understanding of this comment, my colleague accepted my explanation.

Summary

Audience members at the prison choir concert responded to the following open-ended item: “Tell me about your experience at the prison choir concert tonight. What stands out in your mind? Any surprises?” In my initial reading of their responses, I found that the vast majority of participants’ comments were positive in tone, but several were negative, mixed, or neutral.

I then analyzed the responses using an open, axial, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006). After reading through the comments many times, I divided the data into 13 open codes based on recurring themes in the data. I then looked for connections among those open codes, and I grouped the related open codes into three broad categories, or axial codes: *praise*, *criticism*, and *humanity of inmates*. Encompassing 95.2% of all responses, the axial codes of *praise* and *humanity of inmates* represented the overwhelming majority of responses. In many cases, comments offering *praise* also overlapped with comments in the *humanity of inmates* category. However, the comments in those categories did not always overlap, and some of the critical comments made finding a selective code, or common thread, among all of the comments even more difficult. However, following a reexamination of participants' responses, I realized that every participant addressed ideal relationships, in Small's (1998) understanding of the term, either explicitly or implicitly in their comments. The peer debriefing process helped me confirm this interpretation of the data. Participants wrote about the relationship(s) among sounds; the relationship(s) between sounds and audience members; the relationship(s) between audience members and the inmate-choristers; the relationship(s) between incarcerated people and society in general; and they even wrote about the relationship between humans and the divine. Some, especially first-time prison choir attendees, even wrote about a positive change in their attitude toward prisoners or a change in the way they think society should treat prisoners.

VIII: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: PRISON CHOIRS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

I set out to answer four research questions in this study, and in this section, I discuss my answers to these questions in detail. Next, I reflect on the implications of my results and suggest areas for future research. Finally, I explore ways that the findings of this study relate to broader issues in music education and criminal justice.

Discussion of Research Questions

Question 1. My first research question was, “How will the ATPS scores of the volunteer prison choir singers compare to the ATPS scores of the control group? What is the relationship between participation in a prison choir and ATPS scores?” At 114.44, the mean score of the volunteer prison choristers was higher than the mean score of the control group (110.95), but the difference between the two groups’ scores was not statistically significant.

An extreme outlier with an ATPS score of 4 skewed the results. Consequently, my answer to this first research question is not a simple one. Although I retained the null hypothesis in my comparison of the scores of the experimental and control groups, when I omitted the outlier, the difference between the two groups’ scores *was* significant. In other words, when I omitted the outlier’s score, the prison choir volunteers had a significantly higher mean score than the control group.

Given the outlier’s extremely low score, I considered the possibility that the participant had misread the Likert-type scale, perhaps due to distraction or even dyslexia. However, when I consulted the same participant’s open-ended responses, it became clear

that the participant's low score matched the extremely negative attitude toward prisoners he expressed in his open-ended comments. For example, the participant wrote that, prior to his involvement with the prison choir, he thought prisoners were "scum," and he still does. He added that he is only in the prison choir to monitor "these untrustworthy scumbags." These comments were the most negative in the entire study. My mixed methods design helped confirm that this participant had answered the ATPS questions intentionally, but many questions remain that I cannot answer adequately with the kind of data I gathered. Did a prisoner or group of prisoners harm him at some point? Is it possible he was simply disrupting my research study for his own amusement? Regardless, this participant's responses skewed my results.

Assuming we can take him seriously, on the other hand, his results might help mitigate some of my initial concerns about selection bias in my study. It seems that non-incarcerated people who voluntarily choose to sing with a prison choir do not always do so because they have positive attitudes toward prisoners to begin with, which I had previously thought might be the case. Other prison choir volunteers also mentioned in their open-ended responses that they began with biased beliefs about prisoners, but their prejudice changed through their interactions with inmate-choristers. The outlier was the only participant whose attitude remained completely negative, despite the fact that he reported that he had performed with the prison choir 11 or more times prior to participating in my study.

It should also be stressed that the sample size for the non-prison-based community choir members was disappointingly low. The total population of the four participating

community choirs is approximately 275 singers. Orcher (2005) recommends a sample of 162 for a population of 280; only 19 community choir singers elected to participate in the control group of my study. Furthermore, after I had collected data, I found that two of the four non-prison-based community choirs involved in this study frequently have programs related to themes of social justice, a fact that might have influenced their members' attitudes toward prisoners and criminal justice reform. In fact, when compared to other groups in the literature, the community choir singers and the prison choir volunteers had relatively high ATPS scores. At 110.95 for the community choir singers and 114.44 for the prison choir volunteers, their mean scores were lower than the mean score of prison volunteers in Chui and Cheng (2012), which was 133.74, but they were higher than prison rehabilitation workers in Ortet-Fabregat, Perez, and Lewis (1993; mean ATPS = 103.6), the prisoners in Kjelsberg, Skogland, and Rostad (2007; mean ATPS = 106), and the correctional health care nurses in Shields and de Moya (1997; mean ATPS = 70.6).

In summary, the mean ATPS score of the prison choir volunteers was higher than that of the control group, but the difference was not statistically significant. However, the difference was statistically significant when the extremely low score of an outlier was omitted. Unfortunately, many questions about this outlier are unanswered and will remain so. Given the anonymous nature of participation in my study, I am unable to contact him and ask follow-up questions. It should also be noted that the sample size for the non-prison-based community choirs (control group) was low ($n = 19$).

Question 2. Next, I asked, "What relationship, if any, will there be between the number of concerts the volunteer singers have sung with a prison choir and their ATPS

scores?” To answer this question, I ran a Kruskal-Wallis test to look for a potential relationship between ATPS scores and the number of concerts in which volunteer singers had sung with a prison choir. There was not a statistically significant relationship between those variables ($p = 0.512 > \alpha = 0.05$). In addition, the scores did not rise in a linear fashion based on the number of concerts volunteers had participated in. The participants who had sung in five to six prison choir concerts had the highest mean at 123.25, whereas those who had participated in seven to ten or 11 or more concerts had mean scores of only 109.4 and 111.76 respectively. As a result, I retained the null hypothesis.

However, the results for research question 2 should be interpreted with caution for several reasons. First of all, the size of the different groups being compared varied substantially, and some of the groups were quite small. For example, only four volunteers had participated in 5–6 prison choir concerts, and only five volunteers had participated in 7–10. In small populations, the number of participants in the sample size should approach the total number in the population (Orcher, 2005, p. 240). Unfortunately, I do not know the exact number of volunteers in the participating prison choirs who had sung in either 5–6 or in 7–10 prison choir concerts, but it is possible that the number of people in those categories is significantly larger than my small sample sizes. Second of all, although the difference between the groups would remain statistically insignificant even with the omission of the outlier discussed above ($p = 0.406 > \alpha = 0.05$), the mean score of the group that had attended 11 or more concerts would have been nearly seven points higher (118.5) if it were not for the outlier’s low score.

In summary, I retained the null hypothesis for research question 2, as I did not find a statistically significant relationship between the number of concerts sung and ATPS scores. However, the small sample sizes of some of the groups may have skewed the results. In addition, the outlier's low score skewed the results slightly, although when I omitted his score the difference between the groups remained statistically insignificant.

Question 3. My third research question pertained to part 2 of the study: “What changes, if any, will occur between audience members’ pre-test and post-test responses to the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985)?” In order to answer this question, I conducted a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test and found that audience members’ post-test scores were significantly higher than their pre-test scores ($p = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$). More than three-fifths (61%) of audience members scored higher on the post-test than on the pre-test. For this question, then, I rejected the null hypothesis.

I also explored potential relationships between several demographic variables and test scores. I did not find a relationship between age or gender and test scores. Scores among the youngest audience members were the highest, and scores among the oldest audience members were lowest; however, the relationship was not significant. On the other hand, I did find that audience members who reported having known seven or more incarcerated people had significantly higher scores than those who reported having known fewer inmates. Curiously, however, those who reported having known four to six incarcerated people had the lowest scores of any of the groups. It is strange that scores would rise with the number of incarcerated people known, then take a sharp dip among those who have known four to six inmates, and then rise again among those who have

known seven or more. It would be interesting to explore this variable again at a future prison choir concert.

More significantly, however, when audience members were divided between first-time prison choir concert attendees and non-first-timers, an interesting trend emerged. Nearly all of the first timers (15/17 or 88.2%) scored higher on the post-test than on the pre-test, whereas only 32 out of 60 (53%) non-first-timers scored higher on the post-test. In fact, when I conducted a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test on the non-first-timers only, there was not a statistically significant difference between their pre- and post-test scores. Clearly, the impact of the prison choir concert was strongest among first-time attendees.

Similar to Darrow, Johnson, Ollenburger, and Miller (1998), the audience members in my study scored significantly higher on the post-test than they had done on the pre-test. However, this trend of higher was much stronger among first-time attendees of a prison choir concert than among non-first-timers.

Question 4. My fourth research question was, “What effects, if any, do volunteer singers and audience members report regarding their experiences with a prison choir?” In order to answer this question, I used an open, axial, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006) to analyze participants’ open-ended responses from parts 1 and 2 of the study.

Part 1. In part 1 of the study, the overwhelming majority of the volunteer prison choristers had positive things to say about the ways that singing in the prison choir have affected them and their attitude toward prisoners. In fact, 37 out of the 39 participants (94.5%) who provided open-ended responses had positive or at least partially positive

things to say about their experiences with the prison choir. In addition, 27 out of 39 (69.2%) specifically discussed a perceived positive change in their attitude toward prisoners resulting from their participation in a prison choir.

Of the 14 open codes in this section, the most common I observed were:

Increased positive feelings toward inmates (n = 27); *Social bonds with inmates* (n = 21); *Humanity of inmates* (n = 20); *Advocacy/desire for criminal justice reform* (n = 15); and

General praise (n = 13). Next, I grouped the open codes of part 1 into four axial codes:

Positive comments about inmates (74.4%); *Praise for the prison choir experience*

(18.4%); *Neutral comments* (4%); and *Negative comments* (3.2%). The percentages of the

axial codes serve as another indication that the overwhelming majority of participants

expressed positive thoughts about prisoners and the prison choir experience in their open-

ended responses. In fact, of the negative comments, only one was directed at prisoners:

the same participant whose low ATPS score was an outlier called prisoners

“untrustworthy scumbags.” However, the remaining negative comments were either

related to the perceived shortcomings of the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) or to the

perceived unwelcoming behavior of prison guards toward volunteer choristers. Although

those three comments are clearly negative, they are not expressive of negative attitudes

toward prisoners or the prison choir per se.

Clearly, most participants reported that their experience in the prison choir had a positive effect on them, often in terms of a change in their attitude toward prisoners.

However, because one of the participants had highly negative things to say about

prisoners, finding a unifying, selective code among the comments proved difficult. Most,

but not all comments were positive; most, but not all comments discussed a change in attitudes. Selective coding, however, involves the unification of *all* the categories in a study around a core category, which “integrates the entire analysis” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 14).

Upon further reflection, I eventually found my selective code: ideal relationships. Either implicitly or explicitly, all of the participants discussed their sense of ideal relationships in a similar sense to the way Christopher Small (1998) used the term.

According to Small (1998), people can explore, affirm, and even celebrate their sense of ideal relationships during a musicking experience; however, not everyone will share the same view of ideal relationships because those views often vary from culture to culture and from individual to individual (pp. 35–38). Likewise, not all of the prison choir volunteers held the same view of ideal relationships, despite their shared experience of singing with incarcerated people in a joint inmate-volunteer prison choir. The outlier who called prisoners “scumbags,” for example, had a very different view of ideal relationships than the rest of the participants. For him, an ideal relationship with prisoners is a retributive one, in which fundamentally “untrustworthy” inmates should be constantly monitored. In contrast, the rest of the participants had more rehabilitative views of ideal relationships with prisoners, views that affirmed their humanity.

It is interesting to note that although the ideal relationships one can explore through musicking could involve any type of relationship (Small, 1998), human relationships were the focus of the prison choir volunteers’ comments. This tendency to discuss human relationships was strong, even in participants’ responses to the item,

“Think back to when you began singing in a prison choir to now. How has the experience affected you?” In fact, only one of the responses to that item did not specifically address human relationships, despite the fact that the wording of that item did not necessitate a focus on connections among people. The one response that did not explicitly address human relationships was still positive: “A very enriching and enjoyable experience for me.”

In sum, the best way to summarize all of the open-ended responses in part 1 is that participation in a prison choir provided the volunteer choristers with an opportunity to explore their sense of ideal relationships. As a result of that exploration, many of them self-reported a positive change in their attitudes toward prisoners with some even indicating their increased advocacy for an improvement in the way inmates are treated in the United States criminal justice system.

Part 2. In part 2 of the study, audience members responded to the open-ended item, “Tell me about your experience at the prison choir concert tonight. What stands out in your mind? Any surprises?” Again, I utilized an open, axial, and selective coding process (Charmaz, 2006) to analyze their responses to that item.

Of the 13 open codes I identified in this section, the most common I observed were: *Discussion of inmates’ emotions* (n = 23); *Positive comments about the narrations and poetry* (n = 23); *Prisoners are similar to the rest of us* (n = 16); *General positive comments* (n = 14); and *Positive comments on singing* (n = 13). After looking for relationships among all of the open codes, I grouped them into three different axial codes: *praise, humanity of inmates, and criticism*. The vast majority of comments (95.2%)

contained sections that fit in the codes of *praise* and/or *humanity of inmates*. The few participants who wrote critical comments either complained that they had had difficulty hearing certain sections of the performance or that the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) has shortcomings as a research instrument. Only one of the critical responses was purely negative (“Survey questions are too general...”); the rest tempered their criticism with praise for other aspects of the experience.

Although the overwhelming majority of comments were at least partially positive, the selective coding process proved difficult. Reading through the open-ended responses, it became clear to me that the experience at the prison choir concert had varying effects on the participants, and it was not easy to find a code that encapsulated *all* of the categories (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Audience members focused on many different things: how uplifted or positive they felt afterwards; how strengthened in their religious faith they felt afterwards; the singing; the reading of poetry; the acoustics at the church; the wording of questions in the ATPS; social interactions with the inmates; the emotions and stories of the inmates; the perceived goodness or humanity of the inmates; the criminal justice system, and more.

Nonetheless, I argue, after careful consideration, that all of the comments had one thing in common. Either implicitly or explicitly, all participants touched on their sense of ideal relationships — in the sense that Small (1998) used the term. According to Small, musicking gives people the opportunity to explore their sense of ideal relationships. Again, these relationships could be among sounds, between people and sounds, between and among different groups of people, and more. In this study, audience members wrote

about the relationship(s) between sounds and other sounds; the relationship(s) between sounds and audience members; the relationship(s) between audience members and the inmate-choristers; the relationship(s) between incarcerated people and society in general; and they wrote about the relationship between humans and the divine. Some, especially first-time prison choir attendees, even described a positive change in their attitude toward prisoners or a change in the way they think society should treat prisoners.

The prison choir concert, then, had the effect of giving audience members a chance to explore their sense of ideal relationships. Just as Small (1998) suggested, some participants affirmed their sense of ideal relationships at the performance. For example, one participant stated that there were no surprises in the concert because he volunteers weekly with inmates. On the other hand, Small (1998) also suggested that people could have their sense of ideal relationships challenged through musicking. A first-time audience member, for instance, wrote:

I have never been. This is my first time and I am speechless. I...really would say there are lots of good prisoners. It could be a bad day and wrong time they ended up in jail.

It is clear that audience members at the prison choir concert explored their sense of ideal relationships at the concert. In the process, some were affirmed in, and even celebrated, their views, while others challenged and even changed them.

Informed grounded theory based on parts 1 and 2. Through my analysis of the open-ended responses in parts 1 and 2, I formulated the following theory: Musical activities with a prison choir (including both singing and listening) afford people the

opportunity to explore their sense of ideal relationships, and through that exploration their sense of ideal relationships can either be affirmed or challenged (Small, 1998), which, in the latter case, may lead to a change in their attitude toward prisoners. From a grounded theory perspective, it might seem circular for me to have developed a theory that so closely mirrors a part of my conceptual framework articulated by Small (1998), i.e., the idea that people explore their sense ideal relationships during musicking experiences, either affirming or challenging them in the process (p. 140). Nonetheless, I argue that my theory is the best fit for the *all* of the qualitative data in both parts of my study. Furthermore, I argue that from my *informed* grounded theory perspective, these findings are not actually circular, but rather offer research-based support for a previously untested idea.

In addition, my research goes beyond the work of Small (1998) by shedding light on *how* people's sense of ideal relationships can change through a musicking experience. Prior to their experience(s) with a prison choir, the participants who changed their attitudes toward prisoners had certain expectations of what prisoners would be like. Some saw prisoners as fundamentally different from the rest of society, but when they observed them making music and expressing their feelings, the participants began to recognize the humanity of the inmates. In other words, when participants' experiences with inmate-choristers contradicted their prior expectations, they challenged and changed their sense of ideal relationships, ultimately developing more positive attitudes toward incarcerated people.

In contrast, some participants' experiences with inmate-choristers confirmed their

prior expectations about prisoners. In most cases, these individuals began with, and maintained, a positive attitude toward prisoners. One participant, however, began with, and maintained, an extremely negative attitude toward prisoners. His sense of ideal relationships is evidently one in which “untrustworthy” prisoners should remain under strict supervision.

In sum, both the prison choir volunteers and the audience members explored their sense of ideal relationships through musicking experiences. It should be noted that the prison choir volunteers almost exclusively discussed human relationships, whereas some audience members focused only on relationships among sounds or relationships between the sounds of the choir and the audience. Nonetheless, some participants in both groups wrote in their open-ended responses that their attitudes toward prisoners became more positive through their musicking experience(s) with incarcerated people. Some of the prison choir volunteers even reported that they have become more eager to advocate for criminal justice reform.

Implications of the Research

The results of this study suggest that it is possible for people’s attitudes toward prisoners to change through experiences with a prison choir. Many participants’ attitudes changed from a leery, “us vs. them” mentality to a viewpoint that celebrated their shared humanity with incarcerated people.

More specifically, quantitative data demonstrate that audience members can develop significantly more positive attitudes toward prisoners through their attendance of a prison choir concert. Remarkably, all but two first-time attendees (88.2%) who

completed the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) developed significantly more positive attitudes toward prisoners after attending a single prison choir concert. These results support the findings of Darrow, Johnson, Ollenberger, and Miller (2002) in suggesting that people's attitudes toward different groups can change quickly when they attend certain musical performances.

Furthermore, qualitative data indicate that non-incarcerated singers can also develop more positive attitudes toward prisoners through their experiences rehearsing and performing with a prison choir, lending support to Cohen's (2012a) findings. In their open-ended responses, 69.2% of the volunteer singers in my study described a positive change in their attitudes toward prisoners since they began singing in a prison choir.

However, the long-term effects of singing in a prison choir were not statistically significant. Interestingly, the subgroup of volunteers who had sung in the greatest number of prison choir concerts had the lowest mean ATPS score. The sample sizes of the subgroups, however, were small, and an outlier may have skewed the results.

Nonetheless, it would be interesting to replicate the study with larger samples, if possible. If, in a study with larger samples, the same trend were to emerge in a statistically significant way, it might suggest that people's attitudes toward prisoners begin to taper slightly with time. Perhaps a slight drop in attitudes would be reflective of Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rostad's (2012) argument that neither extremely negative nor extremely positive attitudes are helpful in terms of meeting the real needs of prisoners. Extremely high scores, they argued, could indicate "unjustified optimism" or an overly idealized view of prisoners. It could be possible, then, that positive attitudes toward prisoners rise

significantly after early exposure to a prison choir and then taper slightly as volunteers gain more experience singing with incarcerated people.

Qualitative data from both parts of the study suggest that people involved in musical activities (i.e., listening and singing) with incarcerated people explore their sense of ideal relationships in the process, just as Small (1998) suggested. Participants in the current study were either affirmed in their sense of ideal relationships, or they had them challenged. When challenged, it made it possible for their attitudes toward prisoners to change. Some initially saw incarcerated people as nothing more than criminals; some began with an “us vs. them” mentality; and some felt guarded or fearful around prisoners. However, many participants reported that they began to recognize the humanity of inmates through their experiences with a prison choir. Some developed strong social bonds with incarcerated people, and others even reported that they have become staunch advocates for inmate rights and criminal justice reform. For some, then, a change in attitude led to an important change in behavior, which Ajzen (2001) argued does not always happen.

In their open-ended responses, prison choir volunteers focused more on human relationships than did audience members. According to Small (1998) both singing and listening to a performance count as musicking experiences, but perhaps because the prison choir volunteers spent more time making music and directly interacting with incarcerated people, their comments showed a greater focus on relationships with inmates than did audience members’ responses.

Negative attitudes expressed in the open-ended responses also have important

implications. A few open-ended responses contained evidence of essentialist views about incarcerated people. One participant, for example, drew a sharp distinction between the incarcerated people he had met and the “bad people” in maximum security facilities. Furthermore, the outlier discussed earlier revealed his essentialist view of incarcerated people calling them all “scumbags” whom he dislikes and needs to monitor. This kind of essentialist thinking, which Rorty (1989) argued against, prevents people from distinguishing between people who have engaged in bad behavior and “bad people;” essentialist thinking can cause people to see prisoners as unchangeable, unredeemable, and therefore undeserving of humane treatment. The fact that the outlier could have such a negative, essentialist attitude toward prisoners while being a volunteer member of a prison choir underscores the importance of program directors getting to know their members and the reasons why they are involved with their ensembles. In contrast, the views of the other participants did not show evidence of essentialist thinking about incarcerated people.

Finally, the implication that people can develop more positive attitudes toward prisoners through experiences with prison choirs could prove important to supporters of criminal justice reform. Because prison wardens consider public attitudes when drafting their policies (Johnson, Bennett, & Flanagan, 1997), it is possible that people with positive attitudes toward incarcerated people could encourage wardens to be less punitive in their approach.

I argue along with James Forman Jr. (2017) that individuals can make a difference in the push for criminal justice reform. Despite the 2017 Republican administration’s

push for a stricter criminal justice system, Forman Jr. (2017) stated that the movement to reduce the prison population and make our system more humane is stronger than ever. The same election that brought Trump to the White House also saw a variety of criminal justice reforms enacted in states and smaller jurisdictions around the country. Furthermore, as Forman Jr. (2017) pointed out, most crime policy is set not by the federal government, but by state and local officials. Therefore, he argued that local efforts by committed individuals, including formerly incarcerated people, have the potential to make real changes in the criminal justice system. In addition, my research provides evidence that *currently* incarcerated people can also help push for change by positively influencing public perceptions of the prison population through their musical performances. The fact that attending a prison choir concert for the first time can have a significant impact on people's attitudes toward prisoners raises interesting possibilities for advocates of criminal justice reform trying to garner increased support for their cause.

The change in first-timers' attitudes toward incarcerated people also points to the importance of meaningful interactions in changing negative attitudes and increasing understanding between different groups. In recent years, there has been much discussion about the increased polarization of the U.S. political landscape. Bakshy, Messing, and Adamic (2015), for example, pointed out that individual choices in friends combined with filter algorithms can limit Facebook users' exposure to attitude-challenging content. Just as the internet "filter bubble" (Pariser, 2011) might contribute to increased political polarization, the geographical separation of incarcerated people from non-incarcerated people seems to reinforce negative stereotypes about those behind bars. Experiences with

prison choirs, on the other hand, can undermine those stereotypes and lead to positive attitude changes.

At the same time, the importance of my findings should not be overstated. Large-scale change will not come easily. Dreisinger (2016) cautioned:

Prison arts programs are certainly well-meaning efforts but they're also crumbs tossed at a system starved for radical overhaul. They're smoke screens, obstructing our view of the big picture, which is that when it comes to justice and safety and humane treatment, prisons simply don't make sense. Big-picture change is not about tinkering with or enhancing what is, but conjuring up bold imaginings of what could be. For all that I love and believe in it, art can be an obstacle to such imaginings because of the very thing it does so well: dazzle us, and then distract us, with beauty.”
(p. 138).

By including this quote, I do not mean to say that prison arts programs are incapable of serving incarcerated people and the wider community in important ways, but it is crucial for those involved with such programs to keep big picture, systemic issues in mind as they push for change.

The efforts of criminal justice reformers will likely be met with opposition from those who benefit from the prison-industrial complex. As Angela Davis (2003) pointed out, “as the U.S. prison system expanded, so did corporate involvement in construction, provision of goods and services, and use of prison labor (p. 12) As a result, “corporations associated with the punishment industry reap profits from the system that manages

prisoners and acquire a clear stake in the continued growth of prison populations” (Davis, 2003, p. 16). In private prison contracts, for example, pay is typically based on the number of beds utilized, and there is usually no incentive to push for desirable outcomes such as reduced recidivism (Mumford, Whitmore Schanzenbach, & Nunn, 2016). Lobbyists for private prisons have sought to protect their industry by donating large sums of money to major figures in both the Democratic and Republican parties (Hamilton, 2015), so it is clear that supporters of criminal justice reform need to consider the workings of the prison industrial complex as they strive for change.

In short, supporters of criminal justice reform will likely find my study encouraging, but the scope of my findings is limited. Changing people’s attitudes toward incarcerated people through experiences with a prison choir is only one part of what needs to be a large, multifaceted push for criminal justice reform.

Nonetheless, I argue that music educators can and should play unique roles in promoting the human rights of incarcerated people. Specifically, my findings point to ways that prison choir directors can help in the promotion of those rights. I suggest that Cohen’s (2007a) theory of interactional choral pedagogy could be broadened to include non-incarcerated people, since my results indicate that certain experiences with a prison choir can lead to changes in attitude and behavior for people living outside of prison walls. After all, as the participants of this study explored their sense of ideal relationships (Small, 1998) during experiences with a prison choir, many developed more positive attitudes toward incarcerated people, and some even showed increased advocacy for criminal justice reform.

Recommendations for Future Research

My findings raise a number of questions and point to new areas of inquiry. For example, the depth and duration of the changes in attitude observed in this study remain unclear, as does the extent to which these changes in attitude influence participants' behavior. Beyond work with prison choirs, researchers should also look for additional ways for people to interact meaningfully with incarcerated people and other stigmatized groups in an effort to determine if people's attitudes can change through such experiences.

My findings from part 2 raise questions about how long changes in attitudes toward prisoners might last following a prison choir concert. Given the timeline of my study, it remains unknown how long the significant rise in audience members' ATPS scores has lasted. In the future, researchers could replicate my study longitudinally in an effort to determine to what extent, if any, changes in audience members' attitudes toward prisoners would hold over time.

Questions also remain regarding a possible connection between the amount of time volunteer prison choristers have sung in a prison choir and their attitudes toward prisoners. The volunteer prison choristers who reported having participated in 7–10 or 11 or more prison choir concerts had lower ATPS scores on average than volunteers who had sung in fewer prison choir concerts. Some of the sample sizes were small, though, so it would be interesting to replicate the study with larger samples, if possible. If in the future, researchers find a correlation between participation in a high number of prison choir concerts and relatively lower ATPS scores, they might consider the argument of

Norwegian researchers Kjelsberg, Skoglund, and Rostad (2007), discussed above, that both extremely low and extremely high ATPS scores might be counterproductive when trying to meet the needs of incarcerated people. Perhaps attitudes toward prisoners can temper slightly or become more realistic with time as one gains more experience with them.

Regardless, it should also be noted that in the current study, the average scores for the 7–10 and 11+ groups were only low relative to the scores of the other groups in the study. At 109.40 and 111.76, respectively, their scores were still relatively high — much higher, in fact, than the correctional health care nurses' mean score of 70.6 in Shields and de Moya (1997) and the law enforcement officers' mean score of 67.0 in Melvin et al. (1985). Interestingly, the scores of 109.40 and 111.76 were close to the mean score of the prisoners themselves in Melvin et al. (1985). However, given the inherent problems with discussing ATPS scores from studies conducted in different prison contexts, researchers could compare the attitudes toward prisoners of prison choir volunteers with other groups (such as nurses, teachers, or prison guards) that work in the same facility.

Questions also remain regarding the types of interactions with incarcerated people that will lead to the most lasting and meaningful changes in attitudes. In part 2, participants who reported having known the greatest numbers of incarcerated people had the highest ATPS scores on average, whereas audience members who reported having known the second highest number of incarcerated people (4–6) had the lowest mean ATPS scores. Although the sample sizes were small, these findings might suggest that the number of incarcerated people known is less important than the types of interactions one

has with them. Perhaps the subgroup of audience members who reported having known the most incarcerated people had well-loved family members and/or friends in prison; perhaps their already close relationship to those people influenced their attitudes toward prisoners, keeping their attitudes positive even as they met more and more incarcerated people. On the other hand, perhaps the subgroup that reported having known 4–6 incarcerated people had had negative experiences with those people, possibly even experiencing crime victimization (Kjelsberg, Skoglund, & Rostad, 2007).

Bryan Stevenson (2014) discussed how his contact with people on death row impacted his outlook on criminal justice including his anti-death penalty stance. He stressed the importance of proximity to a group in order to understand them. However, my findings along with those of Melvin et al. (1985) and Shields and de Moya (1997) raise questions about exactly what type of contact involving prisoners is likely to foster the development of more positive attitudes toward them. After all, the correctional health care nurses in Shields and de Moya (1997) had one of the lowest ATPS scores in the literature, despite frequent interactions with incarcerated people. The issue warrants further investigation taking a variety of variables into consideration, including but not limited to the types of relationships participants have with incarcerated people, how long they have known them, and even whether or not they have been victims of crime. Furthermore, in studies involving prison choirs, I would like to see continued exploration of the ways that the unique aspects of choral singing (i.e., the “word factor” and the “somatic factor;” Cohen, 2007a) might influence relationships between volunteer singers and incarcerated choristers.

It would be useful to determine if experiences with other types of prison music programs could also change participants' attitudes toward incarcerated people. For example, would audience members' attitudes toward prisoners change following a prison orchestra concert, despite the lack of the "word factor" (Cohen 2007a) in instrumental music? How might attitudes change, if at all, following a pop/rock or hip-hop performance by incarcerated people? How would a gamelan performance compare? Researchers could also look at prison-based songwriting and composition programs. The knowledge that prisoners composed all or some of the music in a performance is another factor that could potentially influence audience members' attitudes toward incarcerated people.

Regardless of the type of music program being studied, it will be important to determine what kinds of ensemble practices are most likely to lead to positive attitude changes among both incarcerated and non-incarcerated participants. For example, researchers could check the practices of prison choirs against the scope conditions of Cohen's (2007a) interactional theory of choral pedagogy. Perhaps scholars working with non-choral ensembles could modify those scope conditions to examine the attitudes and behavior of participants involved with different kinds of music groups.

As researchers broaden the types of music programs studied, they could also expand the kinds of non-incarcerated participants involved. For example, it would be useful to explore the attitudes of correctional officers and inmates' family members as Cohen (2007a) suggested. Perhaps researchers could compare the ATPS (Melvin et al., 1985) scores of family members and correctional officers with and without exposure to a

prison choir or other prison-based ensemble. Or, if possible, they could measure those groups' attitudes toward prisoners before and after exposure to a prison ensemble. Exposure to the prison ensemble could take the form of attending or participating in rehearsals or concerts, or it could take the form of watching a documentary on a prison ensemble and/or viewing concert footage. In a manner similar to Bodner and Gilboa's (2009) study of the effects of different music genres on intergroup bias in Israeli society, researchers could also study people's attitudes toward prisoners by asking family members and/or correctional officers to listen to audio recordings of a prison ensemble.

In addition to Bodner and Gilboa (2009), other researchers have reported that different genres of music can affect people's behavior or attitudes. Fukui and Toyoshima (2014), for instance, reported that listening to pleasurable, "chill-inducing" music increased altruistic behavior among participants. However, listening to music does not always lead to desirable outcomes. For example, Ziv (2016) reported that participants who listened to pleasant, familiar music were more likely to comply with unethical requests from researchers than those who had listened to no music. It is important for researchers to gain a better understanding of the ways different kinds of music can affect people in different contexts. To that end, one could investigate how listening to a prison choir sing specific genres of music might affect people's attitudes toward prisoners.

Beyond the field of music education, researchers could also explore people's attitudes toward prisoners after exposure to other types of prison arts programs. Some, like Moller (2011), have begun to conduct research involving prison theater programs, but there is a dearth of studies on audience members' attitudes toward incarcerated

people following prison theatrical performances. Perhaps other researchers could also look at people's attitudes toward prisoners after exposure to literature or visual artwork created by incarcerated people.

Regardless of what types of interactions will lead to a change in attitudes, Ajzen (2001) argued that changes in attitudes do not necessarily lead to changes in behavior. Through my reading of participants' open-ended responses, however, I found that some volunteer singers reported that their attitudes *and* behavior had changed through their involvement with a prison choir. These individuals reported increased social, friendly interactions with incarcerated people, and some now advocate for criminal justice reform by signing petitions and calling or writing their elected officials. Based on this emergent theme, a mixed methods investigation to look for a possible relationship between attitudes toward prisoners and advocacy for criminal justice reform is warranted.

When exploring the possible connection between changes in attitudes and changes in behavior, a more robust qualitative section could help contextualize and clarify the quantitative ATPS data. In the current study, short, open-ended responses helped me confirm and clarify certain quantitative results, and I learned that some participants have begun advocating for criminal justice reform following their experiences with a prison choir. Perhaps more substantial in-person interviews could shed even greater light on the connection between attitudes and behavior.

Researchers could also look for changes in empathy following experiences with a prison choir. Empathy and attitudes are related, but distinct. Decety, Michalska, Akitsuki, and Lahey (2009) defined empathy as "a construct accounting for a sense of similarity in

feelings experienced by the self and the other, without confusion between the two individuals” (p. 1). The last part of the definition stressing the lack of confusion between the two individuals is important. Although many participants in the current study came to recognize that they experience similar feelings to inmates (e.g., “Prisoners are just like the rest of us”), some might not have sufficiently acknowledged important differences between their own experiences and those of the prison choristers (“We are all the same”). After all, incarceration is a unique kind of trauma (Deveaux, 2013). Research on empathy could give scholars a clearer picture of the depth of participants’ understanding of incarcerated people following experiences with prison ensembles.

Finally, researchers could look at ways music education activities could affect people’s attitudes towards other stigmatized groups. Some researchers have already begun to do this. De Avila (2015), for example, looked at the effects of a culturally relevant music education intervention on community choir members’ attitudes toward Mexican populations. Perhaps other researchers could compare the attitudes of student or community choristers toward refugees or other stigmatized groups before and after participating in a musical ensemble with them.

When designing the methodologies of studies involving *students’* attitudes toward stigmatized groups, however, researchers should keep in mind the findings of Elpus and Carter (2016) that American high school students involved with music ensembles and theater are significantly more likely to be the victims of in-person bullying than their non-arts peers. If researchers explore students’ attitudes toward a stigmatized group before and after seeing them perform in a concert, for example, their methodology would need

to control for the fact some high school students seem to have negative views of student musicians in general.

On the other hand, the question remains how many students who bully their musician peers have actually seen them perform. Perhaps seeing their musician peers perform would improve their attitudes toward music students. In a preliminary study, researchers could explore non-arts students' attitudes toward their musical peers before and after a performance. Once researchers have a clearer picture of the nature and extent of bias against student musicians, they could then control for that bias and begin to explore students' attitudes toward different groups of stigmatized students (e.g., ESL students, refugees, LGBTQ students, or students with disabilities).

In sum, researchers should look for ways, in music education and beyond, to get people to interact meaningfully with incarcerated people and other stigmatized groups. In future studies, it will be important to show that changes in attitudes are not merely superficial, but that they have a long-term effect on participants' behavior and their understanding of people in stigmatized groups.

Conclusion

In this study, I set out to examine the effects of (a) singing with incarcerated choir members and (b) listening to a live prison choir performance on non-incarcerated people, focusing particularly on the effects of such experiences on participants' attitudes toward prisoners. As such, this study is one of the first to answer Cohen's (2007a) call for research on the effects that direct or indirect experiences with a prison choir might have on non-incarcerated people.

Beyond filling a gap in the literature, the study's importance lies in its exploration of attitudes toward prisoners and the possible role activities with a prison choir could play in changing those attitudes. Because attitudes toward prisoners have the potential to influence criminal justice policy (Melvin et al., 1985; Johnson, Bennett, & Flanagan, 1997) and can also be an impediment to newly released prisoners' successful reintegration into society (Hirschfield & Piquero, 2010; Park, 2009), exploring people's attitudes toward prisoners is important for anyone interested in criminal justice policy, particularly for those seeking to change it.

My reading of both theoretical and empirical literature helped shape my idea that experiences with a prison choir might have an effect on non-incarcerated people's attitudes toward prisoners. Christopher Small (1998), for example, argued that while musicking, people explore their sense of ideal relationships, which can either be confirmed or challenged in the process (p. 140). Furthermore, because musicking happens over time, it is possible for people to change their sense of ideal relationships while making music with others. Building on Small's (1998) work, Cohen (2007a) developed the interactional theory of choral pedagogy, arguing that, under certain scope conditions, prison choristers can experience assessable growth in desirable personal and social behaviors. Because volunteer choristers and even audience members also take part in musicking experiences with prison choirs, I hypothesized that it might be possible for their behavior and attitudes to change in a similar way.

In the empirical literature, however, several related studies left questions unanswered regarding the potential for musicking experiences to affect people's attitudes.

For example, Darrow, Johnson, Ollenberger, and Miller (2002) and Bodner and Gilboa (2009) provided evidence that some, but not all listening experiences have the potential to change people's attitudes. Furthermore, although many studies have detailed the effects of prison choir participation on incarcerated people (Cohen, 2007a; Cohen, 2009; Richmiller, 1992; Roma, 2010; Silber, 2005), only Cohen (2012a) has explored how volunteering with a prison choir can affect non-incarcerated people. In fact, the attitudes of volunteer members of other prison choirs as well as those of audience members at a prison choir concert remained unexplored at the time I began my study.

My findings are an indication that experiences with a prison choir can lead to a positive change in non-incarcerated people's attitudes toward prisoners. Although I did not find a significant difference between the ATPS scores of the prison choir volunteers (experimental group) and the non-prison based community choristers (control group) in part 1, the mean scores of both groups were relatively high when compared with the scores reported in other studies (Chui & Cheng, 2012; Kjelsberg, Skoglund, & Rostad, 2007; Melvin et al., 1985; Ortet-Fabregat, Perez, & Lewis, 1993; Shields & de Moya, 1997). In addition, although the number of prison choir concerts volunteers had sung in was not significantly related to their ATPS scores, the majority of participants (69.23%) reported in their open-ended comments that their attitudes toward prisoners had become more positive since they began singing in a prison choir. While not every participant agreed about the way their experience had affected them, it became clear through my analysis of their open-ended data that singing in a prison choir was an opportunity for each of them to explore their sense of ideal relationships. Some participants even reported

that they now advocate for improved treatment of prisoners, which is an important finding, in light of Ajzen's (2001) indication that changes in attitudes do not necessarily lead to changes in behavior.

In part 2, I found a significant difference between audience members' pre- and post-test scores, with higher scores on the post-test. In other words, their attitudes toward prisoners as measured by the ATPS were significantly more positive after the concert than they had been beforehand. This trend was especially true for first-time prison choir concert attendees, 88.2% of whom had higher scores on the post-test. It is noteworthy that attitudes could change so quickly. In the future, however, it would be useful for researchers to replicate the study and check the results again several months after the initial post-test to see to what extent, if any, changes in attitudes toward prisoners remain over time.

Demographic variables were mostly irrelevant in my analysis of ATPS scores. There was only a significant relationship between familiarity with incarcerated people and ATPS scores in part 2 of the study. Participants in part 2 who reported knowing the highest number of incarcerated people had the highest scores, and the relationship was significant; however, the scores were not distributed linearly. Curiously, those who reported knowing the second highest number of incarcerated people had the lowest ATPS scores on average. Perhaps with larger samples and an investigation of more variables, a clearer picture would emerge regarding the relationship between the number of incarcerated people known and ATPS scores. However, it is also possible that the number of incarcerated people known matters less than the type of interactions people have with

them.

Although participants' open-ended responses in part 2 touched on a wide variety of topics, they all shared an explicit or implicit exploration of ideal relationships. Just as Christopher Small (1998) argued, the musicking experience afforded participants the opportunity to explore their sense of ideal relationships, either affirming or challenging their ideal view of the relationship among sounds, the relationship between sounds and the audience, the relationship between individuals, the relationship between groups (e.g., inmates and society), and/or even the relationship between individuals and their sense of the divine. Having experienced this exploration of ideal relationships, audience members had positive things to say about the musicking experience, and many of them either affirmed or developed a new sense of the humanity of prisoners through their attendance of the prison choir concert. My findings lend support to Christopher Small's (1998) understanding of what happens during musicking, and they also suggest that Cohen's (2007a) interactional theory of choral pedagogy could potentially be broadened to include non-incarcerated people.

Based on my findings, I recommend that researchers continue to examine the effects of musical experiences on people's attitudes toward incarcerated people and other stigmatized groups. Researchers should aim to gain a more precise understanding of the types of interactions that are most likely to lead to a change in attitudes. In addition, they should explore possible connections between changes in attitudes and/or empathy and changes in behavior, such as increased advocacy for criminal justice reform. Researchers should also determine to what extent, if any, changes in attitudes toward prisoners remain

over time following co-participation in or observation of a variety of musical or artistic activities.

The results of this study could prove important both for criminal justice and music education researchers, especially as the current Republican administration plans to push for more “law and order” in the American criminal justice system (Hulse, 2016). Understanding public attitudes toward prisoners and experiences that can affect them is an important goal, particularly for those interested in providing incarcerated people with greater educational and rehabilitative opportunities. Perhaps this study will be helpful in the process of understanding how music-making activities have the potential to broaden perspectives on inmates as well as encouraging the formation of more prison music programs across the United States. Mass incarceration is a human rights issue, and I would like to see more music educators and researchers participate in the push for large-scale criminal justice reform.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval

Boston University Charles River Campus Institutional Review Board

25 Buick Street
Room 157
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
T 617-358-6115
www.bu.edu/irb



Notification of IRB Approval: Initial Review

February 10, 2016

Edward Messerschmidt
Doctoral Student
College of Fine Arts
Department of Music Education

Protocol Title: Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir
Protocol #: 4004E
Funding Agency: Unfunded
IRB Review Type: Expedited (6) (7)

Dear Mr. Messerschmidt:

On February 10, 2016, after review of your initial application received on December 2, 2015 and your response to subsequent modification requests, the IRB has approved the above-referenced protocol in accordance with 45 CFR 46.111. Approval for this study is effective from February 10, 2016 to February 9, 2017.

This approval includes the following:

1. IRB Application - approval to enroll 148 subjects
2. Three One Informed Consent Forms
3. Two recruitment emails
4. The Attitudes toward Prisoner Scales (ATP)
5. Demographic Questions – three versions
6. Free Response questions – two versions

This approval is valid for one year, and will expire on **February 9, 2017**. Please submit a Continuing Review Application, which is located on our website (<http://www.bu.edu/irb/>), six weeks prior to the expiration of your study.

As the Principal Investigator, you are responsible for ensuring that studies are conducted in accordance with federal regulations, state laws, and institutional policies.

Please note:

- No subjects may be involved in study procedures prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated problems or serious adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately.

- All protocol modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation unless they are necessary to eliminate immediate hazard to subjects.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to the IRB.
- All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to use.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 617-358-6117.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Szkutak". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "E" and a long, sweeping tail.

Ed Szkutak
Senior IRB Analyst
Charles River Campus IRB

Enclosures

cc: Professor Mary Cohen, PhD

Appendix B: IRB Approval: Amendment 1

Boston University Charles River Campus Institutional Review Board

25 Buick Street
Room 157
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
T 617-358-6115
www.bu.edu/irb



Notification of IRB Approval: Amendment 1

April 8, 2016

Edward Messerschmidt
Doctoral Student
College of Fine Arts
Department of Music Education

Protocol Title:	Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir
Protocol #:	4004E
Funding Agency:	Unfunded
IRB Review Type:	Expedited

Dear Mr. Messerschmidt:

On April 8, 2016, the IRB approved the amendment for the above-referenced protocol.

This approval includes the following:

1. Increased the number of subjects from 148 to 698

Please note that the approval for this protocol will lapse on **February 9, 2017**. Please submit a Continuing Review Application, which is located on our website (<http://www.bu.edu/irb/>), six weeks prior to the expiration of your study.

As the Principal Investigator, you are responsible for ensuring that studies are conducted in accordance with federal regulations, state laws, and institutional policies.

Please note:

- No subjects may be involved in study procedures prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated problems or serious adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation unless they are necessary to eliminate immediate hazard to subjects.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to the IRB.
- All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to use.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 617-358-6117.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Szkutak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ed" and last name "Szkutak" clearly distinguishable.

Ed Szkutak
Senior IRB Analyst
Charles River Campus IRB

cc: Professor Mary Cohen, PhD

Appendix C: IRB Approval: Amendment 2

Boston University Charles River Campus Institutional Review Board

25 Buick Street
Room 157
Boston, Massachusetts 02215
T 617-358-6115
www.bu.edu/irb



Notification of IRB Approval: Amendment 2

January 13, 2017

Edward Messerschmidt
Doctoral Student
College of Fine Arts
Department of Music Education

Protocol Title:	Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir
Protocol #:	4004E
Funding Agency:	Unfunded
IRB Review Type:	Expedited

Dear Mr. Messerschmidt:

On January 13, 2017, after review of your Amendment and your subsequent response to modification requests, the IRB has approved the amendment for the above-referenced protocol.

This approval includes the following:

1. Added a question to two background questionnaires

Please note that the approval for this protocol will lapse on **February 9, 2017**. Please submit a Continuing Review Application, which is located on our website (<http://www.bu.edu/irb/>), six weeks prior to the expiration of your study.

As the Principal Investigator, you are responsible for ensuring that studies are conducted in accordance with federal regulations, state laws, and institutional policies.

Please note:

- No subjects may be involved in study procedures prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated problems or serious adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation unless they are necessary to eliminate immediate hazard to subjects.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to the IRB.
- All recruitment materials and methods must be approved by the IRB prior to use.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 617-358-6117.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Szkutak". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ed Szkutak
Senior IRB Analyst
Charles River Campus IRB

cc: Professor Mary Cohen, PhD

Appendix D: Background Questionnaire for Prison Choir Volunteers

Part 1 – Background Questionnaire for Prison Choir Volunteers

Please provide answers to the following items.

1. Gender (circle one or write in response):
Male/Female/Transgender/Other: _____

2. Age: (circle one): 18-29
 30-49
 50-64
 65 or over

3. In how many concerts have you participated as a volunteer singer with a prison choir? (Circle one):
 1. 1-2
 2. 3-4
 3. 5-6
 4. 7-10
 5. 11 or more

4. In which U.S. state do you live? _____

<p>Boston University - Charles River Campus Institutional Review Board Approved: 1/13/17 - 2/6/17</p>
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Appendix E: Background Questionnaire for Community Choir Members

Part 1 – Background Questionnaire for Community Choir Members

Please provide answers to the following items.

1. Gender (circle one or write in response):
Male/Female/Transgender/Other: _____

2. Age: (circle one):
18-29
30-49
50-64
65 or over

3. How many people have you known personally or professionally who have ever been incarcerated? (Note: By “incarcerated,” we mean held in a prison or jail for one month or more). (Circle one):
 1. None
 2. 1-3
 3. 4-6
 4. 7 or more

4. In which U.S. state do you live?

Appendix F: Background Questionnaire for Audience Members

Part 1 – Background Questionnaire for Audience Members

Please provide answers to the following items.

1. Gender (circle one or write in response):
Male/Female/Transgender/Other: _____

2. Age: (Circle one): 18-29
 30-49
 50-64
 65 or over

3. How many people have you known personally or professionally who have ever been incarcerated? (Note: By “incarcerated,” we mean held in a prison or jail for one month or more). (Circle one):
 1. None
 2. 1-3
 3. 4-6
 4. 7 or more

4. Is tonight’s performance your first time hearing a prison choir? Yes / No

If you answered “yes” for number 4, please also answer number 5. If you answered “no” for number 4, please move on to the next page marked “Part 2.”

5. How many times have you heard a prison choir? (Circle one):
 1. 1-2
 2. 3-4
 3. 4-5
 4. 5 or more

Appendix G: Email Invitation to Prison Choir Volunteers

Dear Mr. Carson, Dr. Cohen, Ms. Coffee, and Dr. Roma:

Thank you for agreeing to help me contact participants for my dissertation. Please forward the following email message to your non-incarcerated, volunteer prison choir members inviting them to participate in my study on attitudes toward prisoners.

Thank you,

Edward Messerschmidt

Hello,

My name is Edward Messerschmidt, and I am currently working on my dissertation in Music Education at Boston University. This email is your invitation to participate in a research study, which will help me complete my dissertation and earn my degree. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire, which should take around five minutes to complete.

I am conducting this study because I am interested in whether or not experiences with a prison choir will have an effect on people's attitudes toward prisoners. I am asking you to take part in this study because you are a volunteer singer in a prison choir.

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. All information provided by participants will remain confidential and will be deleted or destroyed after the seven-year period of time dictated by the BU Record Retention Policy. Email correspondence to and from members who choose not to participate will not be stored by the researcher. There will be no penalty for withdrawing from the study.

Please take a minute to read through the attached consent form. If you have any questions, please contact me at 845-462-4200, ext. 249 or via email at edm@bu.edu. Once you have read the form, you may either click on the link below to participate or opt out by not clicking on the link.

If you choose to participate, you may send an email to edm@bu.edu requesting entrance in a raffle for a \$100 amazon.com gift card. One randomly selected participant will be awarded the gift card. The rest of the participants will not receive any compensation for participation.

By clicking on the link below, you are certifying that you have read the information in this consent form including risks and possible benefits; you have been given the chance to ask questions; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you agree to participate in the study.

<link>

Boston University - Charles River Campus
Institutional Review Board
Approved: 2/10/16 - 2/9/17

Sincerely,

Edward Messerschmidt

<attachment>

Boston University - Charles River Campus
Institutional Review Board
Approved: 2/10/16 | 2/10/17

Appendix H: Email Invitation to Community Choir Members

Dear Ms. Coffee, Ms. Hart, Dr. Puderbaugh, and Ms. Stephens:

Thank you for agreeing to help me contact participants for my dissertation. Please forward the following email message to your choir members inviting them to participate in my study on attitudes toward prisoners.

Thank you,

Edward Messerschmidt

Hello,

My name is Edward Messerschmidt, and I am currently working on my dissertation in Music Education at Boston University. This email is your invitation to participate in a research study, which will help me complete my dissertation and earn my degree. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire, which should take around five minutes to complete.

I am conducting this study because I am interested in whether or not experiences with a prison choir will have an effect on people's attitudes toward prisoners. In order to complete the study, I will need both volunteer singers in a prison choir (the experimental group) and community choir members (the control group) to complete a questionnaire. I am asking you to take part in this study because you are a singer in a community choir.

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. All information provided by participants will remain confidential and will be deleted or destroyed after the seven-year period of time dictated by the BU Record Retention Policy. Email correspondence to and from members who choose not to participate will not be stored by the researcher. There will be no penalty for withdrawing from the study.

Please take a minute to read through the attached consent form. If you have any questions, please contact me at 703-357-3946 or via email at edm@bu.edu. Once you have read the form, you may either click on the link below to participate or opt out by not clicking on the link.

If you choose to participate, you may send an email to edm@bu.edu requesting entrance in a raffle for a \$100 amazon.com gift card. One randomly selected participant will be awarded the gift card. The rest of the participants will not receive any compensation for participation.

By clicking on the link below, you are certifying that you have read the information in this consent form including risks and possible benefits; you have been given the chance to ask questions; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you agree to participate in the study.

Boston University - Charles River Campus Institutional Review Board Approved: 2/10/16 2/9/17

<link>

Sincerely,

Edward Messerschmidt

<attachment>

Boston University - Charles River Campus
Institutional Review Board
Approved: 2/10/16 - 2/29/17

Appendix I: Online Consent Form for Prison Choir Volunteers

Protocol Title: Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners After Experiences with a Prison Choir
Principal Investigator: Edward Messerschmidt
Description of Subject Population: Volunteer singers in prison choirs
Version Date: 1/05/15

Introduction

Please read this form carefully. The purpose of this form is to provide you with important information about taking part in a research study. If any of the statements or words in this form are unclear, please let us know. We would be happy to answer any questions.

If you have any questions about the research or any portion of this form, please ask us. Taking part in this research study is up to you. If you decide to take part in this research study we will ask you to click on the link to an online questionnaire provided in the introductory email.

The people in charge of this study are Edward Messerschmidt and Dr. Mary Cohen. Edward Messerschmidt can be reached at edm@bu.edu or (845) 462-4200, ext. 249. Dr. Mary Cohen can be reached at mary-cohen@uiowa.edu. We will refer to these people as the "researchers" throughout this form.

Why is this study being done?

We are conducting this study because we are interested in whether or not experiences with a prison choir will have an effect on people's attitudes toward prisoners. We are asking you to take part in this study because you are a volunteer singer in a prison choir.

How long will I take part in this research study?

Your involvement with this research study will last approximately 5 minutes total.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

You will complete an online questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately five minutes, and you can complete it any time during the month of April 2016.

Boston University Charles River Campus (CRC) IRB

Page 1 of 3

Study Title: <u>Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir</u>
IRB Protocol Number: <u>4004E</u>
Consent Form Valid Date: <u>2/10/16</u>
Study Expiration Date: <u>2/9/17</u>

How Will You Keep My Study Records Confidential?

All data within this study will be kept confidential. All records will be saved on a password-protected external hard drive that will be stored in a locked room. In addition, qualtrics.com will ensure that no data from the online surveys will be tied to identifying information of the participants. Although we will make every effort to keep your records confidential, there may be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of your records.

The following people or groups may review the study records for purposes such as quality control or safety:

- The Researcher and any member of his research team
- The Institutional Review Board at Boston University. The Institutional Review Board is a group of people who review human research studies for safety and protection of people who take part in the studies.
- Federal and state agencies that oversee or review research

The results of this research study may be published or used in presentations. However, none of your identifying information will be included.

Study Participation and Early Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. In addition, email correspondence to and from members who choose not to participate will not be stored by the researcher. There will be no penalty for withdrawing from the study. If you decide to withdraw from this study, any information that you have already provided will be kept confidential. Finally, if you choose to participate in the study, you may refuse to answer any questions asked of you by the researcher.

What are the risks of taking part in this research study?

Loss of Confidentiality

One risk of participation in this study is a potential loss of privacy. Although qualtrics.com uses a secure server and will not tie your answers to your email address, there is always some risk that their site could be hacked and a third party could gain access to your name and email address.

Are there any benefits from being in this research study?

There will be no benefit to you personally. The primary benefit of this study will be to the fields of music education and criminal justice.

Boston University Charles River Campus (CRC) IRB

Page 2 of 3

Study Title: <u>Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir</u>
IRB Protocol Number: <u>4004E</u>
Consent Form Valid Date: <u>2/10/16</u>
Study Expiration Date: <u>2/9/17</u>

What alternatives are available?

You may choose not to take part in this research study with no repercussions.

Will I get paid for taking part in this research study?

We will not pay you for taking part in this study. However, if you choose to participate, you may send an email to edm@bu.edu requesting entrance in a raffle for a \$100 amazon.com gift card. One randomly selected participant will be awarded the gift card. The odds of winning will depend on how many people choose to enter the raffle; they will probably be approximately 1 in 100.

What will it cost me to take part in this research study?

There are no costs to you for taking part in this research study.

If I have any questions or concerns about this research study, who can I talk to?

You can call us with any concerns or questions. Our contact information is listed below: Edward Messerschmidt can be reached from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at (845) 462-4200, ext. 249. Dr. Mary Cohen can be via email at mary-cohen@uiowa.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or want to speak with someone independent of the research team, you may contact the Boston University IRB directly at 617-358-6115.

Study Title: <u>Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People’s Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir</u>
IRB Protocol Number: 4004E
Consent Form Valid Date: 2/10/16
Study Expiration Date: 2/9/17

Appendix J: Online Consent Form for Community Choir Members

Protocol Title: Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners After Experiences with a Prison Choir
Principal Investigator: Edward Messerschmidt
Description of Subject Population: Singers in community choirs.
Version Date: 7/29/15

Introduction

Please read this form carefully. The purpose of this form is to provide you with important information about taking part in a research study. If any of the statements or words in this form are unclear, please let us know. We would be happy to answer any questions.

If you have any questions about the research or any portion of this form, please ask us. Taking part in this research study is up to you. If you decide to take part in this research study we will ask you to click on the link to an online questionnaire provided in the introductory email.

The people in charge of this study are Edward Messerschmidt and Dr. Mary Cohen. Edward Messerschmidt can be reached at edm@bu.edu or (845) 462-4200, ext. 249. Dr. Mary Cohen can be reached at mary-cohen@uiowa.edu. We will refer to these people as the "researchers" throughout this form.

Why is this study being done?

We are conducting this study because we are interested in examining different groups' attitudes toward prisoners. We are asking you to take part in this study because you are a member of a community choir.

How long will I take part in this research study?

Your involvement with this research study will last approximately 5 minutes total.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

You will complete an online questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately five minutes, and you can complete it any time during the month of April 2016.

Boston University Charles River Campus (CRC) IRB

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IRB Protocol Number: <u>4004E</u>
Consent Form Valid Date: <u>2/10/16</u>
Study Expiration Date: <u>2/9/17</u>

How Will You Keep My Study Records Confidential?

All data within this study will be kept confidential. All records will be saved on a password-protected external hard drive that will be stored in a locked room. In addition, qualtrics.com will ensure that no data from the online surveys will be tied to identifying information of the participants. Although we will make every effort to keep your records confidential, there may be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of your records.

The following people or groups may review the study records for purposes such as quality control or safety:

- The Researcher and any member of his research team
- The Institutional Review Board at Boston University. The Institutional Review Board is a group of people who review human research studies for safety and protection of people who take part in the studies.
- Federal and state agencies that oversee or review research

The results of this research study may be published or used in presentations. However, none of your identifying information will be included.

Study Participation and Early Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. In addition, email correspondence to and from members who choose not to participate will not be stored by the researcher. There will be no penalty for withdrawing from the study. If you decide to withdraw from this study, any information that you have already provided will be kept confidential. Finally, if you choose to participate in the study, you may refuse to answer any questions asked of you by the researcher.

What are the risks of taking part in this research study?

Loss of Confidentiality

One risk of participation in this study is a potential loss of privacy. Although qualtrics.com uses a secure server and will not tie your answers to your email address, there is always some risk that their site could be hacked and a third party could gain access to your name and email address.

Are there any benefits from being in this research study?

There will be no benefit to you personally. The primary benefit of this study will be to the fields of music education and criminal justice.

Boston University Charles River Campus (CRC) IRB

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Study Title: <u>Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir</u>
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Consent Form Valid Date: <u>2/10/16</u>
Study Expiration Date: <u>2/9/17</u>

What alternatives are available?

You may choose not to take part in this research study with no repercussions.

Will I get paid for taking part in this research study?

We will not pay you for taking part in this study. However, if you choose to participate, you may send an email to edm@bu.edu requesting entrance in a raffle for a \$100 amazon.com gift card. One randomly selected participant will be awarded the gift card. The odds of winning will depend on how many people choose to enter the raffle; they will be approximately 1 in 100.

What will it cost me to take part in this research study?

There are no costs to you for taking part in this research study.

If I have any questions or concerns about this research study, who can I talk to?

You can call us with any concerns or questions. Our contact information is listed below: Edward Messerschmidt can be reached from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at (845) 462-4200, ext. 249. Dr. Mary Cohen can be via email at mary-cohen@uiowa.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or want to speak with someone independent of the research team, you may contact the Boston University IRB directly at 617-358-6115.

Study Title: <u>Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People’s Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir</u>
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Study Expiration Date: <u>2/9/17</u>

Appendix K: Consent Form for Audience Members

Protocol Title: Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners After Experiences with a Prison Choir
Principal Investigator: Edward Messerschmidt
Description of Subject Population: Audience members at a prison choir concert
Version Date: 1/05/15

Introduction

Please read this form carefully. The purpose of this form is to provide you with important information about taking part in a research study. If any of the statements or words in this form are unclear, please let us know. We would be happy to answer any questions.

If you have any questions about the research or any portion of this form, please ask us. Taking part in this research study is up to you. If you decide to take part in this research study we will ask you to sign this form. We will give you a copy of the signed form.

The people in charge of this study are Edward Messerschmidt and Dr. Mary Cohen. Edward Messerschmidt can be reached at edm@bu.edu or (845) 462-4200, ext. 249. Dr. Mary Cohen can be reached at mary-cohen@uiowa.edu. We will refer to these people as the "researchers" throughout this form.

Why is this study being done?

We are conducting this study because we are interested in whether or not experiences with a prison choir will have an effect on people's attitudes toward prisoners. We are asking you to take part in this study because you are an audience member at a prison choir concert.

How long will I take part in this research study?

Your involvement with this research study will last approximately 10 minutes total.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

You will complete a questionnaire before and after the prison choir performance. The questionnaire will take approximately five minutes to complete each time.

Study Title: <u>Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir</u>
IRB Protocol Number: <u>4004E</u>
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Study Expiration Date: <u>2/9/17</u>

How Will You Keep My Study Records Confidential?

All data within this study will be kept confidential. We will assign a number or pseudonym to your survey copy and keep it in a cabinet in a locked room. Please do not put your name or any identifying information on your copy of the survey.

The following people or groups may review the study records for purposes such as quality control or safety:

- The Researcher and any member of his research team
- The Institutional Review Board at Boston University. The Institutional Review Board is a group of people who review human research studies for safety and protection of people who take part in the studies.
- Federal and state agencies that oversee or review research

The results of this research study may be published or used in presentations. However, none of your identifying information will be included.

Study Participation and Early Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. There will be no penalty for withdrawing from the study. Finally, if you choose to participate in the study, you may refuse to answer any questions asked of you by the researcher.

What are the risks of taking part in this research study?

There are no risks involved with participating in this study.

Are there any benefits from being in this research study?

There will be no benefit to you personally. The primary benefit of this study will be to the fields of music education and criminal justice.

What alternatives are available?

You may choose not to take part in this research study with no repercussions.

Will I get paid for taking part in this research study?

We will not pay you for taking part in this study. However, if you choose to participate, you may send an email to edm@bu.edu requesting entrance in a raffle for a \$100 amazon.com gift card.

Boston University Charles River Campus (CRC) IRB

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Study Title: <u>Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir</u>
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Consent Form Valid Date: <u>2/10/16</u>
Study Expiration Date: <u>2/9/17</u>

One randomly selected participant will be awarded the gift card. The odds of winning will depend on how many people choose to enter the raffle; they will probably be approximately 1 in 100.

What will it cost me to take part in this research study?

There are no costs to you for taking part in this research study.

If I have any questions or concerns about this research study, who can I talk to?

You can call us with any concerns or questions. Our contact information is listed below: Edward Messerschmidt can be reached from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at (845) 462-4200, ext. 249. Dr. Mary Cohen can be via email at mary-cohen@uiowa.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or want to speak with someone independent of the research team, you may contact the Boston University IRB directly at 617-358-6115.

Statement of Consent

I have read the information in this consent form including risks and possible benefits. I have been given the chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in the study.

SIGNATURE

Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

Name of Researcher

Signature of Researcher

Date of Consent Obtained

Boston University Charles River Campus (CRC) IRB

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Study Title: Change is Gonna Come? A Mixed Methods Examination of People's Attitudes Toward Prisoners after Experiences with a Prison Choir

IRB Protocol Number: 4004E

Consent Form Valid Date: 2/10/16

Study Expiration Date: 2/9/17

Appendix L: Arts in Prisons Permission Letter

Arts in Prison
P.O. Box 23502
Overland Park, KS 66283
www.artsinprison.org

January 23, 2016

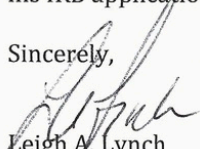
Boston University CRC IRB
25 Buick Ave.
Room 157
Boston, MA 02215

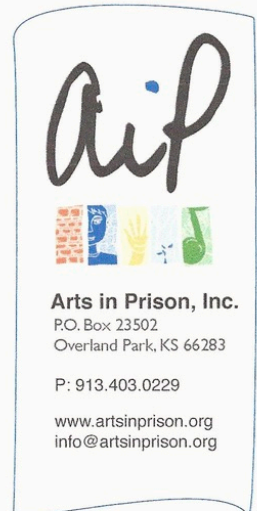
To Whom It May Concern:

Edward Messerschmidt has made us aware of his interest in conducting research involving both non-incarcerated volunteer singers of the East Hill Singers (EHS), program of Arts in Prison, and audience members at a public EHS concert. We are happy to have him conduct research on the attitudes toward prisoners of these two groups. His research will bring attention to the work being done by the staff of Arts in Prison, and it will also raise awareness of music education programs in correctional facilities in general.

Arts in Prison offers conditional consent to Mr. Messerschmidt to conduct his study as part of his application to the Boston University Institutional Review Board. Full and final consent will be given once his IRB application is approved and submitted to Arts in Prison.

Sincerely,


Leigh A. Lynch
Executive Director



Appendix M: The Attitudes Toward Prisoners Scale

Part 2 – The Attitudes toward Prisoners Scale (Melvin, Gramling, and Gardner, 1985)

The statements listed below describe different attitudes toward prisoners in jails and prisons in the United States. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express *your* feelings about each statement by indicating whether you (1) Disagree Strongly, (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree, or (5) Agree Strongly. For each item, indicate your opinion by circling the number that best describes your personal attitude. Please answer every item.

1. Prisoners are different from most people.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

2. Only a few prisoners are really dangerous.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

3. Prisoners never change.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

4. Most prisoners are victims of circumstance and deserve to be helped.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

5. Prisoners have feelings like the rest of us.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

6. It is not wise to trust a prisoner too far.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

7. I think I would like a lot of prisoners.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

8. Bad prison conditions just make a prisoner more bitter.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

9. Give a prisoner an inch and he'll take a mile.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

10. Most prisoners are stupid.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

11. Prisoners need affection and praise just like anybody else.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

12. You should not expect too much from a prisoner.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

13. Trying to rehabilitate prisoners is a waste of time and money.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

14. You never know when a prisoner is telling the truth.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

15. Prisoners are no better or worse than other people.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

16. You have to be constantly on your guard with prisoners.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

17. In general, prisoners think and act alike.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

18. If you give a prisoner your respect, he'll give you the same.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

19. Prisoners only think about themselves.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

20. There are some prisoners I would trust with my life.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

21. Prisoners will listen to reason.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

22. Most prisoners are too lazy to earn an honest living.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

23. I wouldn't mind living next door to an ex-prisoner.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

24. Prisoners are just plain mean at heart.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

25. Prisoners are always trying to get something out of somebody.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

26. The values of most prisoners are about the same as the rest of us.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

27. I would never want one of my children dating an ex-prisoner.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

28. Most prisoners have the capacity for love.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

29. Prisoners are just plain immoral.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

30. Prisoners should be under strict, harsh discipline.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

31. In general, prisoners are basically bad people.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

32. Most prisoners can be rehabilitated.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

33. Some prisoners are pretty nice people.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

34. I would like associating with some prisoners.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

35. Prisoners respect only brute force.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

36. If a person does well in prison, he should be let out on parole.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5

Appendix O: Open-ended Items for Audience Members

Part 3 – Free Response Question for Audience Members

1) Tell me about your experience at the prison choir concert tonight. What stands out in your mind? Any surprises?

Boston University - Charles River Campus
Institutional Review Board
Approved: 2/10/16 - 2/9/17

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