

# ***INCARCERATION NATIONS: A GLOBAL DOCUSERIES***

## **EDUCATION GUIDE**



**INCARCERATION NATIONS NETWORK  
[INCARCERATIONNATIONSNETWORK.ORG](http://INCARCERATIONNATIONSNETWORK.ORG)**





**DR. BAZ DREISINGER**

## **ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS**

**Dr. Baz Dreisinger** is the Founder and Executive Director of the global Incarceration Nations Network; Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York; and the author of the critically acclaimed book *Incarceration Nations: A Journey to Justice in Prisons Around the World*. Dr. Dreisinger founded John Jay's groundbreaking Prison-to-College Pipeline program, which has expanded globally through her work as a 2018 Global Fulbright Scholar and current Fulbright Scholar Specialist. Dr. Dreisinger speaks regularly about justice issues on international media and in myriad settings around the world. Learn more and contact information: <https://www.jjay.cuny.edu/faculty/baz-dreisinger>

**Chemistry Creative** is a full-service creative production house based in Brooklyn, New York focusing on mission-driven projects, offering audio, visual, multimedia, and custom-set-build capabilities. Learn more: <https://www.chemcreative.com/>

## **ABOUT THE FILM**

*Incarceration Nations: A Global Docuseries* is a mixed-media series about global mass incarceration narrated entirely by those who have lived incarceration around the world, from England to El Salvador, Argentina to the United States, Brazil, and Lebanon to South Africa and Sierra Leone. The ten episodes of *Incarceration Nations* expose an international crisis while also spotlighting solutions and showcasing the work of justice partners from one continent to another. Ideal for classrooms, panel discussions, film screenings, and more, *Incarceration Nations* is a powerful education about one of the greatest human—and civil—rights catastrophes of our time.

**Incarceration Nations Network (INN)** is a global network that supports, instigates, and popularizes innovative prison reform efforts around the world. The organizations profiled in the ten films are at the forefront of criminal justice reform. Each episode highlights a different aspect of the problem, and the organizations that offer solutions to address the issues raised in distinct regions around the globe. See the Appendix for a complete list of global partner organizations in the Incarceration Nations Network. Learn more: <https://incarcerationnationsnetwork.org/>



# EPISODE OUTLINE

*These episodes focus on societal systems that produce incarceration, told from the perspectives of those who have been incarcerated. Their personal experiences humanize the global scale of the problem.*

## Episode Link and Synopsis

## Countries Profiled

## #Hashtags

### **The Nefarious Plot: An Introduction to Mass Incarceration**

Mass incarceration is a global calamity that looks strikingly similar across the globe. Review the historical roots.  
Link to episode:  
<https://vimeo.com/570541542/f6b3bef50d>  
Run Time: 10:49

### **Waiting... and Waiting... for Trial**

Of the 11 million people in prison worldwide, 3 million of them are legally innocent: awaiting trial for months, years, sometimes decades behind bars. In this episode, discover the nightmare of pretrial detention.  
Link to episode:  
<https://vimeo.com/563993854/65e0264660>  
Run Time: 16:44

### **(In) Justice for Women**

Women are most often guilty of drug crimes and/or crimes of poverty and familial roles, such as property-related crime. There is increasing evidence about the link between female imprisonment and poverty, homelessness, mental health, substance use. Women who are mothers, including those who give birth while in prison, experience unique hardships while attempting to raise their children. In this episode, women discuss the complexity of relationships, family, and upbringing.  
Link to episode:  
<https://vimeo.com/451917385/d8f073782a>  
Run Time: 28:44

Ghana  
Nepal  
South Africa  
Trinidad & Tobago  
United States

Argentina  
Chile  
Sierra Leone  
Taiwan  
United States

#incarcerationnations  
#endmassincarceration  
#defundtheprisons

#incarcerationnations  
#endmassincarceration  
#pretrialdetention

#incarcerationnations  
#familiesbehindbars  
#childrenofincarcerated  
parents

# EPISODE OUTLINE

## Episode Link and Synopsis

## Countries Profiled

## #Hashtags

### Families Behind Bars

When you incarcerate one person, you incarcerate an entire family-especially when that one person you lock up is a parent. In this episode, learn about the global epidemic of parental incarceration-and the critical work that organizations worldwide are doing to counter it--by hearing from those directly impacted.

Link to episode:

<https://vimeo.com/471690413/81e9433fba>

Run Time:21:58

Argentina  
Scotland  
United Kingdom  
United States

#incarcerationnations  
#familiesbehindbars  
#childrenofincarceratedparents

### Education Not Incarceration

Why not education instead of incarceration? In this episode, those who've pursued education behind bars share how education changed their lives in dramatic ways.

Link to episode:

<https://vimeo.com/438014843/aba7fc2b55>

Run Time: 30:56

Chile  
El Salvador  
Ghana  
Italy  
Philippines  
South Africa  
United States

#incarcerationnations  
#educationnotinccarce  
ration  
#endmassincarceratio

***These episodes focus on the organizations attempting to reimagine solutions to mass incarceration by providing programs, support services, and personalized short and long-term planning needed to promote independence.***

### Smart On Drugs, Not War on Drugs

The global war on drugs is a colossal failure, incarcerating millions and decimating targeted communities: people of color and women worldwide. In this episode, learn what the world would look like to be Smart on Drugs instead of waging a War on Drugs.

Link to episode:

<https://vimeo.com/523035114/e5ed8e32eb>

Run Time: 31:19

Australia  
Bolivia  
Brazil  
Canada  
Czech Republic  
Ghana  
Lebanon  
Portugal  
Switzerland  
Taiwan  
United States

#incarcerationnations  
#notwarondrugs  
#smartondrugs

# EPISODE OUTLINE

## Episode Link and Synopsis

## Countries Profiled

## #Hashtags

### "Home"coming

Around the world, coming home from prison means facing an obstacle course of challenges--undergirded by legal discrimination against formerly incarcerated people. In this episode, we learn about the challenges of the reentry process.

Link to episode:

<https://vimeo.com/425607424>

Run Time: 18:53

**Australia**  
**Northern Ireland**  
**South Africa**  
**United States**

#incarcerationnations  
#endmassincarceration  
#reentry  
#rebuildingreentry

### Those Closest to the Problem...

Around the world, directly impacted justice leaders--many of whom have spent years in prison--are driving change in powerful ways. In this episode formerly incarcerated activists demonstrate that those closest to the problem are closest to the solution.

Link to episode:

<https://vimeo.com/499479096/2a194f581a>

Run Time: 18:14

**Malawi**  
**Mexico**  
**South Africa**  
**United States**

#incarcerationnations  
#justicereform  
#endmassincarceration

***These episodes include incarcerated people, experts in justice reform and survivors of criminal harm to share paradigms for re-imagining incarceration.***

### Correcting Corrections Centers

What would a prison that is so unlike prison as to be worthy of another name look like? This episode answers this question by taking you on a virtual journey to radically innovative correctional centers that actually correct.

Link to episode:

<https://vimeo.com/502224137/ada190e20d>

Run Time: 23:49

**Czech Republic**  
**Finland**  
**Netherlands**  
**Uruguay**  
**Europe**

#incarcerationnations  
#endmassincarceration  
#harmreduction



# EPISODE OUTLINE

## Episode Link and Synopsis

## Countries Profiled

## #Hashtags

### Heal Not Harm

"Hurt people hurt people," goes the saying. What would it look like for global justice systems to stop cycles of hurt and harm in their tracks instead of perpetuating them with prisons and punishment? And what do those who experience harm really need, anyway? Link to episode:

<https://vimeo.com/469920520/059a7d54de>

Run Time: 38:53

**Democratic  
Republic of  
Congo  
Rwanda  
United States**

**#incarcerationsnations  
#justicereform  
#endmassincarceration**



**Contact: [helene@inationsnetwork.com](mailto:helene@inationsnetwork.com) for docuseries subtitles**

# OVERVIEW

***Incarceration Nations: A Global Docuseries*** is a 10-episode series of documentary films to educate viewers about global mass incarceration. The films profile over 27 individuals who have been incarcerated and more than 50 organizations around the world that are working to raise awareness about the harms created by outdated and ineffective prison systems. Each film highlights a unique consequence of unjust judicial systems and practices by addressing the complexity surrounding incarceration, humanizing the experiences of those affected and spotlighting alternative solutions.

**The series is unique in two distinct ways.**

Media about mass incarceration exists throughout the US, but not many portrayals globalize the historical and contemporary issues that define the problem of prison reform. The films emphasize that the experiences and constraints are shared. Overcrowded prison conditions, inhumane policies, lack of funding, and even the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on prison populations and staff are common challenges that many nations face. The global scale and interconnectedness of issues that play out from one country to another allow us to recognize the universality of the struggle, and therefore focus on solutions in one part of the globe that might be adapted to other locations.



The films also primarily rely on interviews of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, as well as their loved ones – using their own words to illuminate the human conditions that surround their experiences. The goal in doing so is to reduce the stigma about those who currently live within and survive incarceration in order to support a meaningful shift in public attitudes about the people affected by this system.

This comprehensive educational guide gathers information featured in the film, such as country-based statistics about mass incarceration and links to global organizations that have been profiled, to support discussion about these issues.

# CURRICULUM GOALS

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**The primary goal of this curriculum guide is to raise awareness about the massive scale of incarceration internationally. Viewers will learn about the ill effects of prison systems on individuals and society despite common beliefs about their necessity. With this knowledge, students are encouraged to help others think differently about the aims of incarceration, complicate mainstream representations of the issues, and foster activism to offer human alternatives to punishment.**

**The following principles should guide your approach to teaching with these films.**

## **Reframe How We Think About Crime and Punishment**

A theme across the films is the goal of recognizing the societal structures that produce crime, such as poverty, unsafe communities, and the fractured family structures that result. The narrative across these films reveals that context matters and therefore it is essential to understand the political, economic, and social conditions that foster acts of crime. This leads to more humane approaches that seek to understand the complex reasons that people commit crimes, while maintaining the goal of supporting everyone's potential contribution to society, whether they remain incarcerated or return home.

## **Terms Matter**

The curriculum intentionally uses terms like "detained" and "incarcerated people" rather than words like "inmates" and "criminals" in order to humanize the men, women, and children whose experiences are complex. When individuals are detained or imprisoned for committing crimes, they are often given an institutional identification number and uniform clothing that supports the smooth functioning of institutional systems. Yet these terms and practices ignore the real human beings with families, personal histories, and unique needs and desires. The films and the activities in this curriculum encourage the use of terms that define people by more than their engagement with the criminal justice system.



# KEY TEACHING STRATEGIES

**Teaching with each episode in the docuseries will rely on the repeating strategies of reflection and discussion, critical media analysis, and social action. These strategies foster the skills needed to advocate for change.**

## Reflection & Discussion

In this curriculum, the goal of discussion is to create opportunities to develop open-mindedness about the themes shared in the films. Very often, topics like incarceration elicit strong beliefs about who is to blame and a belief that the appropriate response to crime is retribution or punishment. Yet the films reveal a tension between the desire to punish and the deplorable conditions found in prisons.

Discussion questions and key excerpts will be provided for each episode to prompt deepened conversation that reveal our assumptions and beliefs about what people deserve and what they owe to society. Very rarely are responses clear cut, so dialogue will require some personal reflection, judicious sharing of experience, and considered debate about perspectives. Overarching questions that overlap across each episode challenge viewers to interrogate their own ideas about the following topics:

### About crime and justice:

- What's the difference between crime and harm?
  - What are examples of crimes that are not harms?
  - Are there harms that are not crimes?
- What does guilt mean? What does innocence mean?
  - Are guilt and innocence always so clear cut?
  - What conditions might influence your belief about guilt or innocence?

### About people:

- What similarities and differences do you see across the stories?
- Where do you see overlaps? What questions might you ask about those overlaps?
- How do the experiences of people impact your beliefs about criminal justice?
- Given the experience shared, does it matter what the crime is?
- Given the experience shared, does it matter if the person is innocent or guilty?
- What stigmas do the people profiled face and how do they respond to them?

# KEY TEACHING STRATEGIES

## About countries:

- How does a country's history and politics influence the experience portrayed?
- How does a country's relationship to gender, sexuality, race, and class influence the experience portrayed?

## About incarceration systems:

- What injustices in the criminal justice system are revealed through these films?
- What supports (assistance, material resources, care) are or should be available to incarcerated people?
- Should the legal system ever be questioned?
- Just because something is a law, does that mean it is moral? Is being legal the same as being moral? Are there examples where being legal is immoral? What is more important - morality or legality?

## Critical Media Analysis

The average media viewer rarely critiques the intention of a media text and typically assumes the role of a passive audience member there to simply enjoy the entertainment.

Critical Media Literacy is the ability to:

- Identify how media representations shape our ideas about society and culture.
- Analyze how those media messages influence our thoughts, feelings, and actions in the world so that we consume, create, and circulate media thoughtfully, ethically, and purposefully.
- This understanding of media as a tool for both communication and control empowers viewers and users to unpack the values, beliefs and politics that are reflected in media products.



## **Critiquing Films about Incarceration**

When watching portrayals of prisons, incarcerated people, violence, and crime, it is important to ask questions to understand the intent of the filmmaker and the way their choices are supposed to make viewers feel or think.

Television, film, and social media all have a role in shaping our conceptions about crime and violence: what constitutes a criminal act, who perpetrates it and who is at risk, how crime should be addressed in society, and what punishment should look like. Critical media analysis asks that we examine the perspective and goals of film producers. For example, a commentator or narrator that provides information might create a feeling of "expertise." Someone sharing a first-person account of their own experiences might connect the viewer with the human or emotional side of events. Data, graphs, and other didactic content might suggest authority and facts that cannot be questioned. Each of these choices may influence the audience's reaction to/or beliefs about the accuracy of content shared.

### **While watching the ten episodes in this docuseries, engage in critical media analysis by asking:**

- How does it make you feel to hear from people who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated?
- How does this feeling compare to hearing from a narrator or "expert" about the situation?
- Why is there no single narrator or "expert" in these films?
- Whose perspectives are easier or more difficult for you to connect with, and why?
- How are the placement of statistics used to punctuate or emphasize points?
- What information do you trust? What information do you question?
- Which episodes do you like better, and why?
- How does the film match your expectations? When you saw the title, what did you expect to see?
- What popular media (TV shows, films) come to mind that portray similar themes or circumstances? How do these portrayals differ?



# SOCIAL ACTION

If you are moved to do more, create an Action Plan to get more involved in the justice reform movements in your community. The following guidelines will help you become a responsible ally.

1

## **Change your language**

Change your language to humanize people and systems. Use appropriate terms and commit to correcting others when they are unaware of the power of their language.

2

## **Educate others**

Challenge others when they are uninformed or disagree with the project of prison reform. Share information about the themes in these films and discuss how they apply in your local community. Awareness building can occur across all members of society and can help change public attitudes that lead to policy change.

3

## **Do your research**

Build your knowledge about the issues raised across these episodes. Refer to the suggested resources to learn more about prison reform and prison abolition movements in your local and national context.

4

## **Engage with organizational partners**

Know that many others are already engaged in effective justice work in your community and beyond. INN created these films to profile the vast network of individuals and organizations doing long-standing work to support these issues. Find the reputable partners in your community to learn who they are and how they might need help.

5

## **Fundraise or volunteer**

Donate your time and money to support advocacy organizations doing this difficult work. This is especially critical outside of the US, where funding and resources are often minimal. Public attitude plays a large role in making an organization sustainable, so simply getting the word out about their mission can help increase financial support.

6

## **Engage politically**

Know how your local governmental system develops policies around incarceration and reform and which local officials can influence change. For example, in some locations in the United States, prosecutors and judges may be elected officials whose record on harsh mandatory sentencing launches many more people into the prisons, affecting great numbers of lives. Organize and vote to elect those candidates that support prison reform.

## IDEAS FOR CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

**College and university students may have additional resources and opportunities to plan wider campus engagement. Consider these activities:**

- **Student Issue Groups.** Start a student group to engage your school or campus around these issues. When possible, link these to existing community organizations so that you can work toward common goals established by knowledgeable allies.
- **Events.** Design an event to raise awareness. Be sure these events center the voices of those impacted, rather than self-appointed leaders who lack personal connection to issues.
- **Support Services.** Recognize the deep hardship that fellow classmates who were incarcerated or are family members of incarcerated people may have experienced. Advocate for the creation of support groups, safe spaces, and wraparound services (mental health care, employment and housing support, mentoring, etc.) for these students.
- **College Education Programs.** Demand that your college share its resources with the strapped prison system by providing access to education for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students. Check out the Appendix for resources to share.



# GLOSSARY

## About Terms for Incarcerated People

Many of the organizations and people involved in the Incarceration Nations Network **intentionally use the term "incarcerated person"** to define confinement as a condition of one's freedom. Terms like "prisoners," "convicts" and "criminals" are dehumanizing and limiting because they only represent individuals according to this one aspect of their lives. Incarcerated people are mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts and grandparents, and members of society in a host of other ways. This curriculum and the films in the docuseries use the term "incarcerated" as an adjective to serve as a reminder of each person's complex humanity far beyond the circumstances that may have led to his or her imprisonment. The lessons throughout this curriculum ask that students and teachers attempt to identify people by the characteristics that make them human – primarily their names, but also their cultural identities, occupations, or family relationships.

### Vocabulary

**Listed below are key terms used in the docuseries to discuss incarceration. Terms vary across global contexts so engage in dialogue about the meanings and intentions behind preferred terms in your community.**

**colonialism** – the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically

**correction** – the treatment and rehabilitation of people in custody through programs involving penal custody, parole, and probation

**crime** – illegal activities; an action that constitutes an offense that may be prosecuted by the state and is punishable by law

**detention | detainee** – the act of holding someone or preventing them from leaving; a person held in custody

**harm** – an injury or damage to the physical, mental, or emotional well-being of a person or group. Harm may have a cumulative affect if it is ongoing and unaddressed

**harm reduction** – a public health approach to reduce the negative consequences of use of illegal substances, including programs and strategies. Ex. syringe exchange programs to promote safe drug use

**incarceration** – the state of being confined or imprisoned



# GLOSSARY

**jail** – a place for the confinement of people accused or convicted of a crime

**nefarious** – wicked

**offense** – a breach of law or an illegal activity

**open prison** – a prison or jail where there are fewer restrictions, less supervision, and more opportunities for social integration

**parole** – conditional release of a person in prison serving an indeterminate or unexpired sentence

**penal** – related to punishment or confinement

**plea bargaining** – a negotiation between a prosecutor and defendant in which the defendant pleads guilty to a lesser charge in exchange for a more lenient sentence or an agreement to drop other charges

**penitentiary** – a prison for people convicted of serious offenses

**prison** – any building or compound in which people are legally held as a punishment for a crime they have committed

**probation** – suspending the sentence of a convicted person and giving this person freedom under the supervision of a probation officer

**punishment (n.) | punitive (adj.)** – imposing a penalty as retribution for an offense

**re-entry or reintegration** – the act of re-entering mainstream society after a period of incarceration

**remand** – awaiting trial (Much of the world outside of the US uses this term instead of pretrial detention.)

**restorative justice** – a response to crime or misconduct that focuses on restoration rather than punishment

**retribution** – punishment as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act

**social return** – a benefit to society when investments of finances and resources are made

**victim** – one that is injured, destroyed, sacrificed, subjected to oppression, hardship, or mistreatment under various conditions

**victim-less** – term used to describe crimes, such as drug offenses, where no one is directly injured

**violence** – the use of physical force to harm someone, to damage property, etc.

**Terms common in our everyday vocabulary take on a new meaning when applied to the criminal justice system. These terms are crucial for understanding the human cost of these issues.**

**forgiveness** – to stop feeling anger toward or blaming someone who has done something wrong

**humane** – having or showing compassion or benevolence

**humanize** – to address or portray someone in a way that emphasizes their humanity or individuality

**immoral** – conflicting with generally or traditionally held moral principles

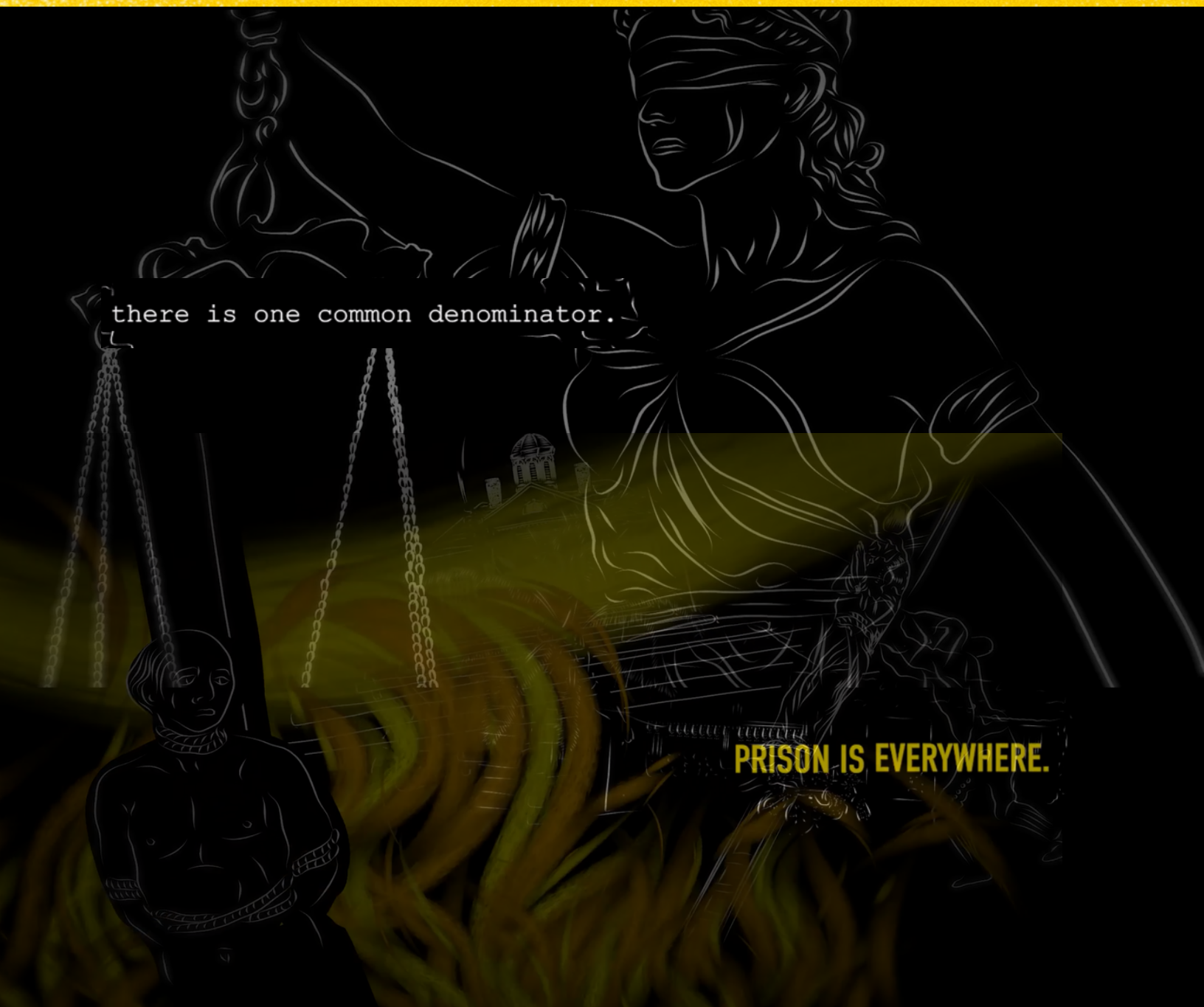
**moral** – relating to principles about right and wrong human behavior

# ***INCARCERATION NATIONS: A GLOBAL DOCUSERIES***

## **EPISODE GUIDE**

there is one common denominator.

**PRISON IS EVERYWHERE.**



1



# EPISODE 1: THE NEFARIOUS PLOT: INTRODUCTION TO GLOBAL MASS INCARCERATION

***"Slavery, prison, capitalism, and race have long been a deadly global cocktail." -Dr. Baz Dreisinger***

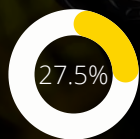


**[Download Here](#)**

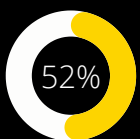
## **Summary of Themes:**

- Prisons as the dominant approach to punishment was spurred by colonialism, industrialization and capitalism.
- The modern prison was born in the United States in the 1820's and exported to European countries and then globally via colonization.
- Incarceration is a continuation of slavery and other racist systems of oppression that disproportionately affects Indigenous people and people of African descent.

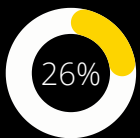
## **Basic Facts:**



In Australia: Indigenous people make up some 2% of the national population, yet they are 27.5% of its prison population. An Indigenous young person is fifty times more likely to be in sentenced detention.



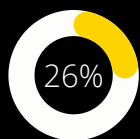
In New Zealand: Maori people constitute 16.5 percent of the national population, yet 52 percent of people in prison identify as Maori.




In Canada: Indigenous adults represent 3% of the adult population, but 26% of prison admissions.



In Europe: Roma people are overincarcerated. In Hungary, for instance, Roma people make up around 40% of the prison population, despite representing 6% of the national population.



In England and Wales: People from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds constitute 14% of the general population, but 25% of its prison population.

A historical photograph showing a line of men in light blue prison uniforms with orange stripes on the trousers, working in a field with long-handled tools like pickaxes and shovels. They are bent over, digging or clearing the ground. The background shows a line of trees and a fence.

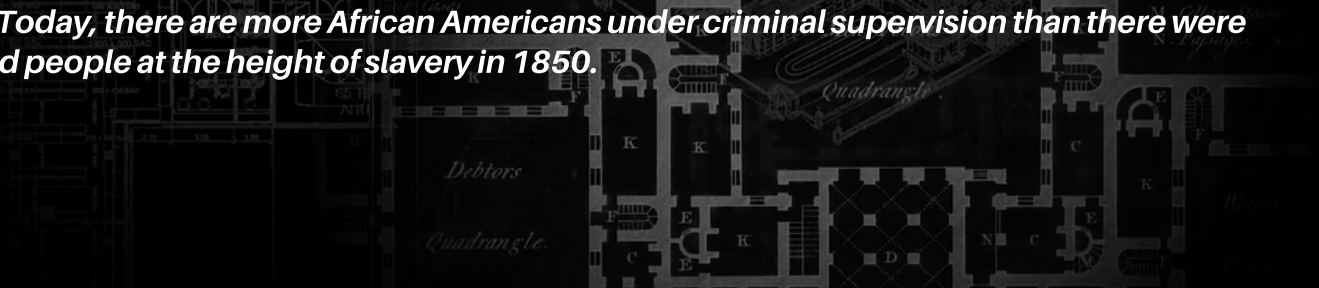
Like capitalism, The prison system hinged on regulation of the body and the strict ordering of time.

### **Excerpt from the Episode:**

*Prison as the exclusive response to crime is only about 200 years old. Before that, there were other methods for dealing with crime—some of them more humane than others: the stocks, the guillotine, banishment to penal colonies, systems of restitution. Then what happened? During the late eighteenth century, capitalism was born. Industrialization meant urbanization, which meant poverty and thus more crime. Thanks to the American Revolution, England lost a penal colony. Lawyers, writers, and freethinkers, filled with faith in humanity's capacity for engineering change, envisioned a radically different form of punishment, one that was neater, more contained, more rational—more in line with the so-called Age of Reason. They used the language of hospital reform, also popular at the time, speaking of crime as a contagion that could be methodically, scientifically cured. As French philosopher Michel Foucault concludes, the world changed spectacularly when it was suddenly "civilized" for those who committed crimes to pay in time and isolation, not physical pain.*

*Prisons became the perfect way to continue systems of oppression after the demise of slavery and colonialism—here was an ideal way to oppress and contain those "others," stigmatized by race, class, gender, sexual orientation and/or nationality. Prison was a nefarious plot to subjugate natives or formerly enslaved people while serving the white economy's best interests. In other words, slavery, prison, capitalism, and race have long been a deadly global cocktail.*

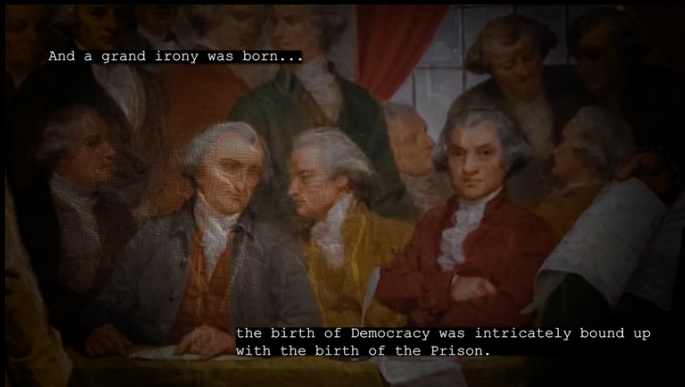
*Here's how the nefarious process worked similarly around the world: Criminalize "others" by tilting the law against them, then incarcerate them and put them to work. In the United States—which now has five percent of the world's population yet 25 percent of its prison population—after the end of slavery so-called "black codes" criminalized such things as loitering and joblessness, which meant that by 1870 in the South, black incarceration rates tripled those of whites. Today, there are more African Americans under criminal supervision than there were enslaved people at the height of slavery in 1850.*





## Reflection & Discussion:

- How do the facts portrayed across countries unify your understanding of mass incarceration? What are the similarities across global contexts?
- Discuss how colonialism, histories of enslavement and/or systemic oppression exist in your context. How has this particular history shaped attitudes about crime and punishment in your context?



## Social Action Steps:

Who are the overincarcerated? Conduct research to find statistics on imprisonment in your country. Are the demographic groups representative of the larger population or are minority groups more highly represented? Conduct additional research to understand the social, cultural, political, and economic conditions of your context that may lead to imprisonment of the most highly incarcerated populations.

## Critical Media Analysis Activity:

### Rewriting Popular Films and TV

Select and analyze a popular culture portrayal of incarceration (film or television series) in your country.

- How does it portray the reasons for incarceration?
- How does it portray the conditions of prison life?
- Does it accurately reflect the information provided in this episode?

Rewrite plot lines or propose new ones, using the information provided in this episode about the reasons for mass incarceration.

## Suggested Reading:

- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press, 2012.
- Blackmon, Douglas A. *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*. Knopf DoubleDay Publishing Group, 2009.
- Davis, Angela Y. *The Prison Industrial Complex*. AK Press, 2001.
- Davis, Angela Y. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Seven Stories Press, 2003.
- Davis, Angela Y. *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, and Torture*. Seven Stories Press, 2011.
- Dreisinger, Baz. *Incarceration Nations: A Journey to Justice in Prisons Around the World*. Other Press, 2017.
- Gilmore, Ruth. *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. University of California Press, 2007.
- Law, Victoria. *"Prisons Make us Safer": And 20 Other Myths about Mass Incarceration (Myths Made in America)*. Beacon Press, 2021.
- Schenwar, Maya. *Locked Down, Locked Out: Why Prison Doesn't Work and How We Can Do Better*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2014.



## EPIISODE 2: WAITING...

## AND WAITING... FOR TRIAL

***"They asked for bail that I didn't have so now I was like a hostage. I felt like they put me in a box and shipped me away and nobody knew." -Ramel, US***



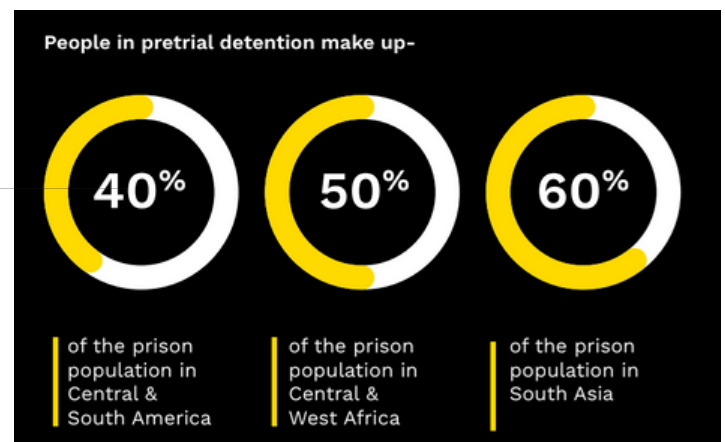
**[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)**

### **Summary of Themes:**

- People are harmed by the inefficiencies of the criminal justice system if they are unable to pay for bail or legal representation, leaving them stranded in detention.
- Pleading guilty to a crime allows one to suspend a sentence and be released from detention; however, the guilty plea limits future employment and housing options.
- Children and young adults detained for crimes are particularly vulnerable in adult prisons, so many are forced to spend time in solitary confinement.
- Pre-trial detention creates disconnection from family, stigma, and exposure to violence that equates to the criminalization of poverty.
- The added burden of people in pre-trial detention has led to chronic overcrowding in prisons globally. This has contributed to staff shortages, increased staff to incarcerated person ratios, and increased infection and death rates during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Basic Facts:**

- 11 million people worldwide are currently serving time behind bars. 3.2 million of those have not been convicted of a crime.



- People in pretrial detention make up –
  - 40% of the prison population in Central & South America
  - 50% of the prison population in Central & West Africa
  - 60% of the prison population in South Asia

**At any given moment, 450,000 people in the US are languishing in local jails, not convicted of any crime.**

- In 118 countries, prisons operate at 100% capacity; in 11 countries, prisons operate at 250% capacity.



### **Excerpt from the Episode:**

#### **Kojo, GHANA [5:37 - 6:15]**

Kojo was arrested for causing bodily harm to someone breaking into his home—but he says he was not there at the time. At 64 years old, he was taken to Ghana’s Tamale Prison. Like the bulk of people accused of crime and sent to jail worldwide, Kojo had no money to pay a lawyer. He sat in prison... and waited. Until he met members of the Justice for All program, run by the POS Foundation.

The program scours the country’s list of people awaiting trial and offers legal assistance. Then, instead of delaying justice by shuttling people back and forth to court, the program brings a mobile court to the prison to hear dozens of cases at a time. Kojo’s case was heard by the mobile court. After 8 years and 5 months, he was finally freed.

### **Reflection & Discussion:**

- What does the criminalization of poverty mean?
- People who are unjustly accused or unlawfully arrested endure the same experiences as those who are convicted of/ or plead guilty to crimes. How do you view the inefficiencies in the system for each group? Do the circumstances of their arrest matter?
- Many teenagers are sent to adult prisons while awaiting trial. Should age matter when considering pre-trial treatment?
- How are the conditions of prisons described, and how do these conditions shape your thinking about how arrests are handled?

### **Social Action Steps:**

#### **Letter to the Editor**

Look for newspaper articles or headlines that portray court-involved youth in your community. Analyze the language used to describe the individuals involved and redact and rewrite words to consider the impact of humanizing vs. dehumanizing language on how you think about their circumstances. Write a letter to the editor with your suggestions and demand more humanizing portrayals of all youth.

### **Critical Media Analysis Activity:**

#### **Radical Edits**

Review the work of Alexandra Bell, an artist who creates “radical edits” of newspaper articles to draw attention to the dehumanizing language used to portray Black and Brown youth. She adds humanizing descriptions, redacts (crosses out) or rewrites degrading details, and adds pictures to create more sensitive portrayals of people like Michael Brown, an unarmed Black teenager who was shot and killed by a police officer in Ferguson, MO. A description of her work is available here:

<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/alexandra-bell-public-artwork-965666>

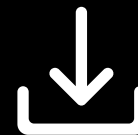
### **Suggested Reading:**

- Penal Reform International: <https://www.penalreform.org/issues/pre-trial-justice/issue/>
- Rabinowitz, Mikaela. *Incarceration without Conviction: Pretrial Detention and the Erosion of Innocence in American Criminal Justice*, Routledge, 2021. *Draws on extensive legal data to highlight the ways in which pretrial detention drives guilty pleas and thus fuels mass incarceration, and the disproportionate impact on Black Americans.*
- St. Felix, Doreen, *The “Radical Edits” of Alexandra Bell*, The New Yorker, 2017. Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-radical-edits-of-alexandra-bell>





# EPISODE 3: (IN)JUSTICE FOR WOMEN



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***"What does a person look like who has spent time in prison? We're not monsters. We look just like you." -Donna, US***

## Summary of Themes:

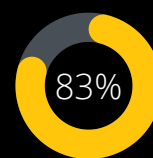
- Women are the fastest-growing prison population in the world. Relationships, particularly those marred by abuse and violence, and the constraints of poverty and caring for others are often at the root of choices that lead to criminal actions.
- The overwhelming majority of women in prison are survivors of domestic violence.
- The needs of mothers are often ignored and inhumanely addressed in prison settings.



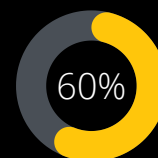
## Drug-Related Offenses



In Indonesia and the Philippines



In Thailand



In Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Peru

## BASIC FACTS:

- **There are 740,000 women in prison worldwide.** The number of women in prison increased by 587 percent between 1980 and 2011.
- **Worldwide: 35% of women versus 19% of men are in prison for drug-related offenses.** This is particularly true in the Americas and Asia, where women in prison for drug-related offenses are:
  - In Indonesia and the Philippines: over 90%
  - In Thailand: over 83%
  - In Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica and Peru: over 60 %





- **In the US:** 75% of women in prisons have histories of severe physical abuse by an intimate partner during adulthood; 82% suffered serious physical or sexual abuse as children.
  - More than 40% of women in New York prisons have been diagnosed with serious mental illness and nearly 9 in 10 report struggling with a substance abuse problem.
  - 70% of women in prisons are mothers. In 33 states in the US, it is legal to shackle an incarcerated woman while she is giving birth.
  - 50% of women in New York prisons do not have a high school diploma.
  - Over a five-year period, the incarceration rate of African American women increased by 828%. An African American woman is eight times more likely than a white American woman to be imprisoned.

### **Excerpt from the Episode:**

Nora, ARGENTINA

**[00:57 - 01:42]**

*I was born in a 'hood in the outskirts of Buenos Aires on the west side of the city, in Merlo. As kids we were left alone a lot of the time. Me and my five teenage brothers. We first had a pretty nice family and all. Mom and Dad. But they later separated, and each went their own way. I started school and tried to stay as much as I could at first, but then I chose to spend more time in the streets. So, you know, gatherings, gangs, that's where I was raised. On the corner, with drugs.*



**05:10 - 05:58]**

*I became a mother very young. At sixteen I had my first child. I was a single mother. And I tried to start working and leave all those bad choices I had made behind and be better. I tried out a few jobs until I could no longer keep up with rent and sustain my daughter at the same time. And later, well, I also had some bad relationships along the way.... I had some close family members that were delinquents. So, I became close to them to try and find some help. I stayed with them for a few years until I ended up in jail.*

**[22:18 - 23:33]**

*When they finally gave me the paper telling me I was free it was an immense feeling of freedom. When I arrived home, the next day I wasn't able to enjoy my freedom. I wasn't able to speak to my children. After the first night we spent together, my 16-year-old daughter told me she was two months pregnant. And my other daughter, who was already 21, told me that some time ago she had gone to live with a boy who beat her up, so once again the guilt came back. And I couldn't find myself present. It's almost like I missed prison. I missed that I had weight to me, and I belonged. I thought my family wasn't going to survive without me, but they were able to. They moved on, however they could.*



## **Reflection & Discussion:**

- How does trauma and vulnerability coupled with the desire for love and support connect to the choices that these people made?
- How do personal histories like sexual abuse, parental neglect, and the absence of direction impact the lives of incarcerated women?
- How do social conditions like drug trafficking, domestic violence, and the constraints of poverty impact the lives of incarcerated women?
- Should women in prison who are mothers be allowed the opportunity to give birth and raise their children in comfortable conditions?
- What does belonging look like for women in prison?

## **Critical Media Analysis Activity:**

### **Portrayals of Incarcerated Women**

Select a popular culture portrayal (film or television series) that depicts incarcerated women. Consider whether the portrayal includes any indication of the person's lived experience before incarceration, or the context surrounding her imprisonment. Use the information provided in this episode to rewrite characters that consider possible circumstances that contribute to the incarceration of women.

## **Suggested Reading:**

- Enos, Sandra. *Mothering from the Inside: Parenting in a Women's Prison*. SUNY Press, 2000.
- Sudbury, Julia, ed. *Global Lockdown: Race, Gender, and the Prison-Industrial Complex*. Routledge, 2005.
- Waldman, Ayelet. *Inside This Place, Not of It: Narratives from Women's Prisons*. Verso, 2017.

## **Social Action Steps:**

### **Share Their Stories**

Formerly incarcerated women often serve as advocates for and supporters of other women who remain incarcerated. A major goal is to tell others about the prison system and the inhumane treatment that is normalized and silenced, such as the lack of food and healthcare. Find the social media pages for the organizations listed in this episode (See Appendix) and promote their posts to your followers to help raise awareness.





# EPISODE 4: FAMILIES BEHIND BARS



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## Summary of Themes:

- The **trauma and suffering endured by children** and families of incarcerated people extends the harm of harsh sentencing to innocent others.
- Parental incarceration is associated with psychiatric, legal, financial, and social outcomes during young adulthood, perpetuating disadvantage from generation to generation.
- **Parental incarceration is now recognized as an “adverse childhood experience” (ACE)** in mental health diagnoses. It is distinguished from other ACEs, such as child abuse or domestic violence, because of the unique combination of trauma, shame, and stigma.

***“When you are a child struggling, to be able to talk about these things should be the first and most important thing for people.” -Lucas, Argentina***

- **Children of incarcerated parents benefit from spaces to talk with others who understand and to express emotion through hobbies and other outlets.**
- **Children and families benefit when they can maintain bonds and relationships with their incarcerated loved ones, making closer proximity to family members a priority.**







## BASIC FACTS



**In the USA:** 45 percent of Americans have had an immediate family member incarcerated



More than 2.7 million children have an incarcerated parent:  
**1 in 28 children**

- In Latin America: 2.3 million children have at least one parent in prison, nearly half a million with parents incarcerated for drug crimes.
- In the UK: 310,000 children have parents in prison
- In Scotland: 27,000 children are separated from an imprisoned parent each year. Children are twice as likely to experience a parent's imprisonment than a parent's divorce.



Of children who have witnessed an arrest of a household member, 57% are more likely to have elevated posttraumatic stress symptoms.

**IN THE US: 10 MILLION CHILDREN HAVE EXPERIENCED PARENTAL INCARCERATION AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIVES**



**1 in 57 white children (1.8%) have an incarcerated parent**



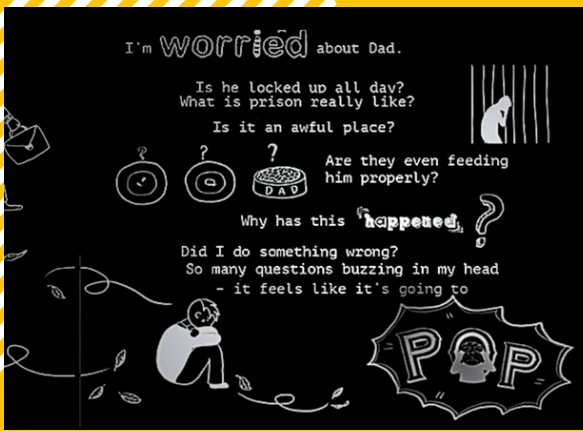
**1 in 28 Latino/a children (3.5%)**



**One in 9 African American children (11.4%)**

**6X  
LESS  
LIKELY**

**People are 6 times less likely to return to prison if they maintain family contact during imprisonment.**



## Reflection & Discussion:

- What are some of the worries, concerns, and emotions expressed by children about their parents?
- What are the lingering effects of witnessing the arrest and/or incarceration of a parent? Ex. phobia of the police.
- What are ways to support children and families?

## Critical Media Analysis Activity:

### Childhood that Matters

Watch and discuss this 9-minute short film, *Niñez que cuenta: Childhood that matters*, from Church World Service and Gurises Unidos. The video focuses on the toll that having a parent in prison has on children and youth: <http://www.cwslac.org/nnapes-pdd/ctm.html>

### Analysis Questions:

- Describe the type of imagery used in this film. How are children depicted? What effect does this have on how you view these children, and the issues discussed?
- Besides the transcription, what information is written on the screen and what information is narrated by a child? What is the effect of reading certain information versus hearing it spoken? Do you pay more or less attention to one or the other? Does it influence how you feel about the information?
- What is the argument asserted by this film? What does it want you to think or do about the issue?

## Excerpt from the Episode:

A variety of children voices, SCOTLAND [05:24-07:11]

*I miss her. I am glad he's away. I want to see him. It takes ages to get there. I don't like the dogs. The dogs are really friendly. I don't want to visit. It's an adventure. The noises are scary. Visits are fun. Visits are boring. There are toys and games. There's nothing to do. I just want to cuddle him. I don't want to see her. The officers are nice. They look scary in their uniforms. No one is telling me anything. They explained what had happened. They're all talking about me in school. No one is talking to me in school. I want to be like everyone else. I want my teacher to know. I don't want the school to know. I wish I could call him when I wanted. I like it when he calls me. I've got so much to tell her. I want to see my friends instead. I want to talk about it. I don't want to talk about it. I am embarrassed. I'm proud of him. I'm sad. Glad. Afraid. Relieved. Shocked. Angry. Lonely. Children affected by imprisonment don't just have one voice. Each year there are 27,000 of us in Scotland alone. It's time to start listening.*

## Social Action Steps:

**Collection Drive:** Many children who lose a parent to incarceration lack basic resources or miss the attention of their parent during holiday times. Hold a collection drive to support children of incarcerated people. Ensure that your support is gender sensitive and trauma informed by seeking out assistance from local organizations like the advocates profiled in this episode.

### Suggested Reading:

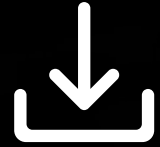
- Comfort, Megan. *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison*. University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Niñez que cuenta: *Childhood That Matters*, <http://www.cwslac.org/nnapes-pdd/en>  
This study examines drug policy, incarceration and the rights of children and youth.
- The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research, *Impact of Punishment: Families of People in Prison*. Available at: <http://www.sccjr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/SCCJR-Impact-of-crime-prisoners-families.pdf>





"He who opens a school door closes a prison."

- Victor Hugo



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*"Even if you're incarcerated you still have your right to education"*

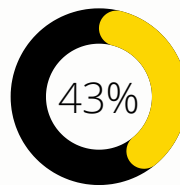
- John, Ghana

*"University gives you the possibility to get back in the game, rebuild yourself, and give back what you have taken..."*

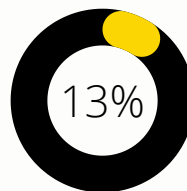
- Ivan, Italy

## EPISODE 5: EDUCATION NOT INCARCERATION

### BASIC FACTS IN THE US



Those who participate in correctional education are 43% less likely to return to prison after release than those who do not.



Those who participate in academic or vocational programs obtain employment at a rate 13% higher than those who do not.

**The American public saves \$5 in re-imprisonment costs for every \$1 it spends on prison education, adding up to \$365.8 million saved per year.**

### Summary of Themes:

- Trauma and crisis, such as the loss of parental or authority figures, breaks in schooling, and a lack of limits and structure, can have detrimental effects on young people, which typically precedes turn to crime
- Education impacts a person's sense of self, agency, communication skills, as well as relationships with family and community.
- Programs that teach the ability to express hardships can facilitate new perspectives and a desire to improve and give back to society.
- Studies have shown that children are more likely to attend college if their parents have. This means that children, families, and communities also benefit when incarcerated people attend college.

## Excerpt from the Episode:



*Gerardo, EL SALVADOR: [14:26 – 15:13]*

*I want to finish my career then get a master's in social work. But I want to study other things, too. I want to improve the programs that young people have in the detention center because I love this environment. Because I was involved and now I want to help. I can improve myself through writing. I can [share] out my feelings, my experience. I will be able to write it and other people can read it. They can get inspired, they can write their stories, and they can make a change in their lives and the lives of other people.*



*John, GHANA [11:25 – 12:50]*

*When I reached the prison and saw the conditions, saw the youth whose time was being wasted, they were not doing anything, I thought, that shouldn't be the case. There should be a way whereby these people can get educated right there in the prison. Nobody believed me that such a thing could happen. Even the corrections officers said it couldn't happen. I told them even if you're incarcerated you still have your right to education. ... I started gradually. Anybody who calls himself or herself a student, you let him know that that their lives would be different from other prisoners in the yard. These are supposed to be criminals and you are trying to educate them and then they know that when they get an education when they go outside, they will be useful citizens for themselves, for their families and for society at large. We managed to put this into their head, so they know that they are not just there to learn, but they are there to transform their lives when they get out. No single past student ever came back to prison.*

## Reflection & Discussion:

- What traumas or crises were experienced by the men profiled in this episode and how did these experiences impact their lives?
- How did the lack of childhood or secondary education impact the trajectories of the men profiled in this episode?
- Craig says, "education breaks gaps." What does this mean to him? How did educational programs impact his time in prison? What shifts occurred in his thinking?
- How did education in prison provide hope, purpose, or an incentive to transform the lives of other men profiled?

## **Critical Media Analysis Activity:**

### College Programs in Prisons

Watch this 6-minute 2015 news report by John Merrow for PBS News Hour that profiles a college program for incarcerated men.

Available at:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/can-higher-ed-keep-inmates-returning-prison-release>

### **Analysis Questions:**

- The news report begins with interviews of four men telling how long they have been imprisoned and the crimes they committed. Why do you think this was stated at the beginning? How does this information affect your views on the men? Do your views of them change by the end of the segment?
- Pay attention to how the report is structured. What information is provided by the incarcerated men? What information is provided by the newscaster? Others? How do the various narrators build your understanding of the program?

## **Social Action Steps:**

Prisons Programs in Your College.

Demand that your college shares its resources with the strapped prison system by providing access to education for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students.

See the Appendix for resources.



## **Suggested Reading:**

Parmar, Priya et al. *From Education to Incarceration: Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline*.

Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524013/education-review-report.pdf)





# EPISODE 6: SMART ON DRUGS, NOT WAR ON DRUGS



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*"We don't ban sex, cars or guns, which all have the potential to cause death or harm. Instead, we rely on education to promote safe use of these things. Isn't it time we do the same with illegal substances?" -Dr. Baz Dreisinger, Incarceration Nations Network*



**The War on Drugs refers to a US-led global campaign to combat the illegal drug trade by criminalizing drug use and dramatically increasing prison sentences for distribution.**

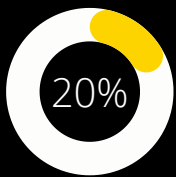
## Summary of Themes:

- Despite the global War on Drugs the global drug trade is a thriving **\$500 billion-dollar industry**.
- A recent UK study of 14 countries concluded that there was no relationship between a country's tough enforcement against drug possession and the levels of drug use in that country.
- The War on Drugs disproportionately targets and impacts communities of color or members of marginalized groups.
- Drug use is criminalized in many parts of the world, often resulting in sentences without treatment or support.
- Countries that have decriminalized drug use respond to drug arrests with a combination of legal services, health professionals and social workers. The goal is to understand family conditions, substance abuse issues, personal history, and work status as part of the response.

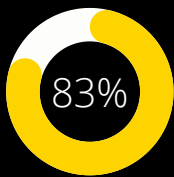
### Smart drug policy involves

- decriminalization of drug possession and use
- rehabilitative services including harm reduction
- substance use and mental health support
- housing advocacy.

## BASIC FACTS:



- Of the 11 million people in prison worldwide, 20 percent are behind bars for drug offenses—83 percent for personal possession.



- In at least 33 countries, drug-related offenses can mean the death penalty.
- In the US:
  - Two-thirds of all people in prison for drug offenses are people of color
  - African Americans are 3.7 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than white people
  - 70% of cocaine and heroin users do not meet the scientific criteria for addiction.
- In Brazil: A 2006 change in drug legislation contributed to an 85% growth in Brazil's prison population, making Brazil the world's third largest incarcerator, behind the US and China.
- In Portugal: Prison populations declined by 23% since decriminalizing all drugs in 2001.
- In Switzerland: Between 1991 and 2004, drug-related deaths fell by more than 50%; the country also witnessed a 90% reduction in property crime.
- In Uruguay: In 2013, became the first country to fully legalize marijuana.

## Excerpt from the Episode:

Narrator [04:14 – 06:07]

### WHAT IF AHMAD LIVED IN PORTUGAL?

*While living on the street, even before using drugs, he would have been targeted as an at-risk group with messaging about getting help—maybe on a billboard advertising services and care.*

*Or one of the harm reduction NGOs funded by the state might have found him and gotten him to a methadone clinic. If he were caught using by the police, he would not be detained but his information would be taken, and he'd be given a ticket to appear before one of the country's 18 Commissions for the Dissuasion of Drug Abuse. He would go to the Commission, which consists of three people nominated by the Ministries of Health and Justice: a legal expert, a health professional, and a social worker. There his reasons for using drugs, his drug use history, addiction issues, family background, and work status are discussed. Members might attempt to make him aware of the harmfulness of drug use, including the consequences of further offenses, and explain, recommend, and refer him to various treatment options. From there, he might get appointed a social worker, or have to regularly report to the commission, or go to group therapy. Or he might be treated in medical centers specializing in drug-related care, like TAIPAS, in Lisbon, which provides consultation, treatment, psychotherapy, and methadone via three teams of psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. Meanwhile, the commission would report his case in a central register of drug users, which tracks primary reasons for drug use in the country, drugs currently in use, in what proportions, and in what regions. This all makes it possible to diagnose the market situation of drugs and users and to adapt prevention methods.*



Ahmad,  
Lebanon





## Reflection & Discussion:

- Is there such a thing as a victim-less crime? Should drug use or drug selling be punished at the same level as crimes against people?
- Is there a difference between "violent" and "non-violent" crime? Should they be punished differently? Why or why not?
- Consider these scenarios and discuss what gets categorized as violent in your locale:
  - Selling drugs near schools may be classified as violent in some places.
  - Stealing can be considered violent if it involves an aggressive act like threatening with a weapon while doing it.

## Critical Media Analysis Activity:

### Who is the Expert?

This episode relies more heavily on narration by introducing an individual's story and then moving to a narrator to propose alternatives to punishment. Reflect on how this style feels different or influences your opinion about the issue of drug-related offenses. Whose expertise do you trust more? Why?

## Suggested Reading and Resources:

- Crandall, Russell C. *Drugs and Thugs: The History and Future of America's War on Drugs*. Yale University Press, 2020.
- Farber, David. *The War on Drugs: A History*. NYU Press, 2021.
- Hager, Eli. *When 'Violent Offenders' Commit Nonviolent Crimes*. Available at: <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2019/04/03/when-violent-offenders-commit-nonviolent-crimes>. *Analyzes the consequences when states categorize various crimes as violent or non-violent.*

## Social Action Steps:

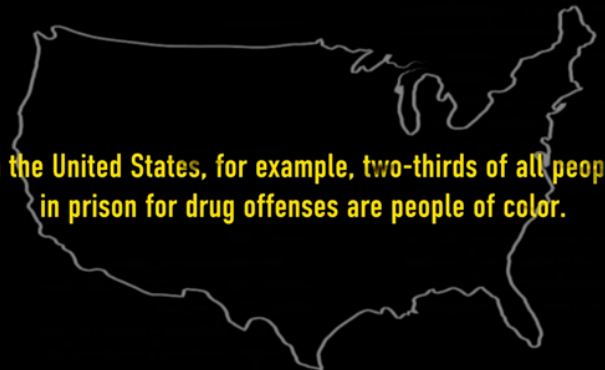
#50YearsOfFailure

Listen to the stories of people speaking out against the UK's 50-year-old drug law: <https://transformdrugs.org/mda-at-50/50-voices>

Use this hashtag to add your voice: For 50 years, The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) has failed to reduce drug consumption. Instead, it has increased harm, damaged public health, and exacerbated social inequalities.

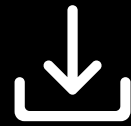
Change cannot be delayed any longer. We need reform and new legislation to ensure that future drug policy protects human rights, promotes public health, and ensures social justice.

In the United States, for example, two-thirds of all people in prison for drug offenses are people of color.





# EPISODE 7: "HOME" COMING



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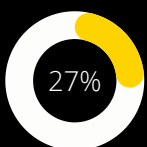
*"Once you've been out of prison, society doesn't give you a second chance. It's better to go back to prison." -Nwabisa, South Africa*

## Summary of Themes:

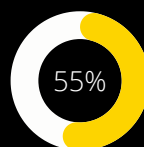
- Reintegrating back into families, communities, and society after incarceration is difficult because of a lack of support and discrimination.
- Re-entry services such as legal help, mental health treatment, parenting and life skills instruction, substance misuse training, employment and housing assistance, leadership and advocacy skills, and mentors improve the chance that formerly incarcerated people can reintegrate successfully.
- A global movement known as **"ban the box"** fights to end employment discrimination against formerly incarcerated people.

## Basic Facts in the US:

- Formerly incarcerated people are 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public; and people experiencing homelessness are 11 times more likely to face incarceration compared to the general population.
- The median annual earnings for an employed justice-involved person is \$10,090, which is \$2,500 less than the federal poverty level for individuals.



Formerly incarcerated people experience unemployment at a rate of over 27% – higher than the unemployment rate during the Great Depression



During the first year following their release, 55% of individuals report not having any income at all.



## Excerpt from the Episode:



Nwabisa, SOUTH AFRICA  
[01:26 - 01:38]

Most people, once they've been arrested and they are out of prison, it's very difficult to get a job. The society doesn't look at you the same way. So [we] don't know if it's better to go back to prison.



Susan, USA [06:05 - 06:52]

My own personal experience of cycling in and out of the prison system for over 15 years, being sentenced to prison, not being offered any reentry services or services for my substance abuse problem. Once I found services that helped me to address my substance abuse, grief, and trauma, I healed and was on my way. I thought back about how long I had been tied to the criminal justice system and how effective and humane treatment and therapy had been for me and wondered why it hadn't been offered years, even decades, before.



Dylan, AUSTRALIA  
[09:41 - 10:35]

Like everyone else, I didn't think it was going to be true, but I gave them the benefit of the doubt and I came out and it was everything and more. I have safe and accommodating housing. I've got a lift to work every day. I've got employment. They help me go to my programs. They want me to succeed. And it's an added support along with parole and everyone else who don't really care that much. But the people in the Worldview Program, they actually care. It's good to say that people actually care about us. Just because we're criminals it doesn't mean we don't matter. I feel like I actually have a chance of finishing my parole and succeeding. It's a lot different. I feel a lot more stable.



Formerly incarcerated individuals experience unemployment at a rate of 27% - a rate higher than the rate experienced during the Great Depression.

## Reflection & Discussion:

- Why would someone previously imprisoned want to return to prison? What pressures do formerly incarcerated men and women face going “home”?
- Reentry programs provide the kind of support that many in society would benefit from.
  - Should these services be offered to formerly incarcerated people? Why or why not?
  - What stories in this episode support your view?

## Social Action Steps:

### **Ban the Box Campaign**

This campaign asks employers to remove questions regarding conviction histories from employment applications and to adopt hiring practices that give all applicants a fair chance. Considering signing the pledge as an individual or employer and share on social media: <http://bantheboxcampaign.org/>

#### ★ **As an individual, I pledge...**

To always welcome formerly incarcerated people into my community

To support changes in policies that discriminate against the formerly incarcerated

#### ★ **As an employer, I pledge...**

To hire and support the formerly incarcerated

To support the elimination of any restrictions on participation that may exclude the formerly incarcerated

To encourage others to also institute fair hiring practices

## Suggested Reading:

- Leverentz, Andrea; Elsa Y. Chen; Johnna Christian (Eds.). *Beyond Recidivism: New Approaches to Research on Prisoner Reentry and Reintegration*. NYU Press, 2020.
- Middlemass, Keesha. *Convicted and Condemned: The Politics and Policies of Prisoner Reentry*. NYU Press, 2017.
- Western, Bruce. *Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison*. Russell Sage Foundation, 2018. *In-depth interviews with over 100 formerly incarcerated individuals examine the tumultuous first year after release from prison, demonstrating how poverty, racial inequality, and failures of social support trap many in a cycle of vulnerability despite their efforts to rejoin society.*

## Critical Media Analysis Activity:

**The Power of Personal Interviews**  
In this episode, we hear directly from people who have experienced coming home from prison. Interviews are often used in documentaries to bring authenticity to a story.

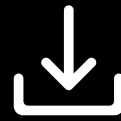
Do these personal testimonies influence your understanding and interest in this issue? If so, how?

- Focus on the interviewees. Who are they talking to as they tell their stories? Where are they looking? Is someone else in the room with them? Does the interviewer ever speak? How do these decisions influence what you think about their experiences?
- Compare the beginning of the episode to the end. During the first 14 minutes, five people describe their struggles coming home and their eventual successes with the help of reentry programs. The last 3 minutes of the episode describe other innovative programs through just images and written description. How does hearing directly from people influence your engagement with this issue?





# EPISODE 8: THOSE CLOSEST TO THE PROBLEM...



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***Those closest to the problem are closest to the solution - but furthest from money and resources.” -JustLeadership USA***

## Excerpt from the Episode:



**Ronald, Vice President, JustLeadership USA**

[03:55 - 05:20]

*My role as an advocate is to bring awareness to the criminal justice reform movement, bring attention and bring resources that we may have at JustLeadership to help build coalitions among people in the field, and nationally.*

*Right now, everything is kind of siloed. People get into these silos and they toil along and they don't collaborate or combine resources. My job as an alumni associate is to bring people*

*together to work collaboratively on this national problem. People always say, well I didn't know you were in prison. ... People see my character and they think I'm a lawyer or something else. My interest in criminal justice comes from my 27 years of being incarcerated. I was incarcerated ...on an assault with intent to commit murder conviction. My conviction was subsequently overturned.*

## Summary of Themes:

- Those who have experienced the challenges of the justice system can offer insight and creative solutions to address the problem of mass incarceration.
- There are global examples of programs that put those impacted by the justice system into leadership roles to support themselves and others who are incarcerated.
- Formerly incarcerated people know the conditions inside prisons, can navigate the criminal justice system, and know the value of freedom. They are thus ideal advocates for reform.
- Solidarity between those inside and outside can yield stronger outcomes for society.

**Mandla, Horticulture Teacher, Hlumelilisa,  
SOUTH AFRICA**

[01:30 – 02:38]

*This [work] gives the inmate the skill to be able to live outside. Jobs are a scarcity, but with this skill you can grow your own vegetables, you can sell those vegetables, or you can sell flowers. So, it's a skill to earn a living.*

*But there's more to it because it's also about attitude or life orientation. It connects you to the world and to earth. Once you work with nature it brings you to nature and once you come close to nature than that's when you find yourself coming back to earthly ethics, which are natural. If you care for Mother Earth than Mother Earth will give back to you. I've learned something else - if you learn to give then you will receive.*



[10:15 – 10:56]

*I like to relate horticulture to life: when you plant something or sow a seed, you have to be patient enough to wait for it to germinate. With your life you have to be patient. You have to nurture yourself through quality things. By being patient, nurturing your plant and yourself, then you will have good results. Something will happen.*

[15:05 – 16:12]

*Most people think when they are in prison it's the end of the world, so they do many things in prison, like use drugs. Someone who is in prison thinks their life is now useless; then they see me as an example. I am very proud to tell them that I have been incarcerated and I have served ten years in prison, but because I was positive and empowered myself, I was able to find a job. They won't believe that I have been able to marry, I have a two-year old kid, I have my own car. Again, it's not about money...but it's about vision and focus and patience.*

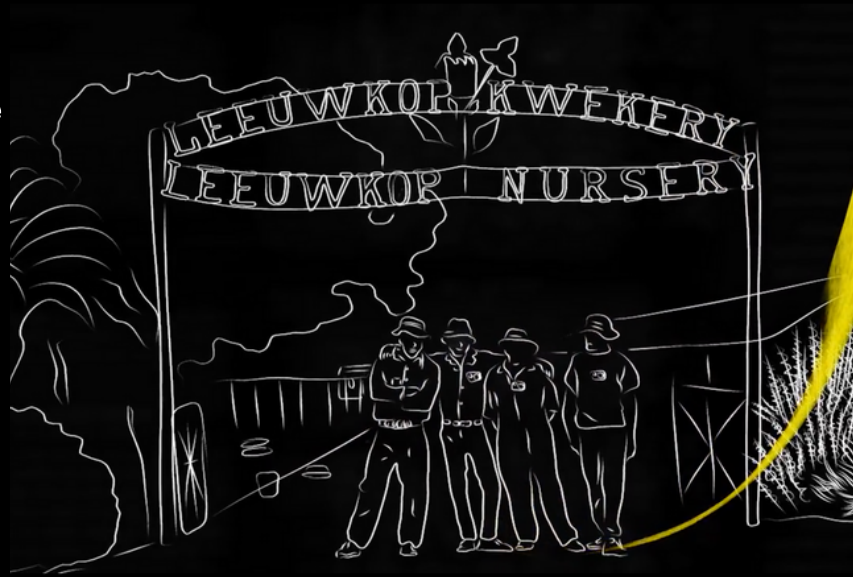


**Natacha, EQUIS Justice for Women,  
MEXICO** [16:15 – 16:56]

*My story, my voice is different because I have experienced something different, which is incarceration. It's true - I'm different now and I feel different. I have something more than you because I've been incarcerated. And I know the power and the value of freedom. You don't. I do. It's like an experience close to death ... So, when you come back from there you watch life in a different way.*

## Reflection & Discussion:

- What does this episode suggest should be the aim of incarceration? Do you agree or disagree?
- What is the difference between punishment and contribution to society?
- Which is more important to support the aims that you have for society?
- Do you feel that the people profiled have become productive contributors to society? Does this matter? Why or why not?



## Critical Media Analysis Activity:

### Aims of Incarceration

Identify a recent trial that has been publicized in your community, state, or country. Locate a variety of news media perspectives that have reported on the verdict. Analyze these to detect the variety of aims and desires for the purpose of incarceration where you live.

- What do these sources suggest are
  - ... the aims of incarceration for society?
  - ... the aims of incarceration for those who commit offenses?
- Do these differ depending on who is on trial (gender, race, ethnicity, etc.)?
- How do the experiences shared in this episode support or contradict mainstream/dominant views on the aims of incarceration?

### WHAT DO ALL THESE JUSTICE LEADERS HAVE IN COMMON?



## Suggested Reading:

- Betts, Dwayne. *A Question of Freedom: A Memoir of Learning, Survival, and Coming of Age in Prison*. Avery, 2010.
- Peterson, Marlon. *Bird Uncaged: An Abolitionist's Freedom Song*. Bold Type Books, 2021. *Memoir about coming of age in Brooklyn, New York, surviving incarceration, and becoming a prison abolitionist.*
- Senghor, Shaka. *Writing My Wrongs: Life, Death, and Redemption in an American Prison*. Convergent Books, 2017. *During his nineteen-year incarceration, literature, meditation, self-examination, and the kindness of others became Senghor's tools for redemption.*

## Social Action Steps:

### Join the Movement

Advocate for individuals and organizations working to end mass incarceration and find humane responses to crime that encourage people to become contributors to society. Follow any of the organizations mentioned in this docuseries on social media:

- Use the hashtags listed in the Episode Outline Page to share the key ideas in each episode
- JustLeadershipUSA aims to cut the US prison population in half by 2030. Help lead the change we want to see in the world #Halfby2030







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*Not everyone in the system needs all the security measures. In fact, it costs a lot of money, and this money could be spent to organize guidance for these people."*

*- Hans Claus, Rescaled*

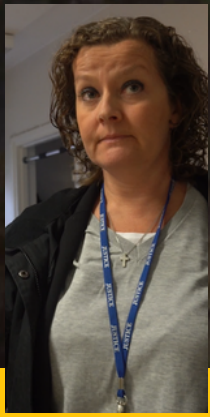
## EPISODE 9: CORRECTING CORRECTIONAL CENTERS

### Summary of Themes:

- Open prisons do not have barbed wire, walls, armed guards, or cells. Instead, they allow people to hold jobs on the outside and/or go to school in the community, and create humane living conditions that promote independence.
- Open prisons offer fewer restrictions, less supervision, and more opportunities for social integration, work, education, and family visits.
- Family bonds and consistent employment are key factors in "rehabilitation."
- Small-scale facilities allow detention officials to pay more attention to individuals rather than maintenance of the system, allowing for differentiation of security measures depending on need.
- Professional training for prison staff at open prisons includes courses to support the reintegration of people in prison back into society, such as social work, ethics, law, and criminology.



# Excerpt from the Episode: Vanaja Prison, FINLAND



Kaisa Tammi-Moilanen,  
Head of Vanaja Prison

[02:28 - 03:50]



*Now we have changed our system so that there's no food at all. There's no breakfast. The prison serves absolutely nothing. So we are not working as an institution, we are working like normal people.*

*I asked the inmates this year how they feel that we don't have meals and we don't have the lunchroom for everyone. Everyone eats in their own rooms and kitchens. They say 'well this is normal. This is great. It makes me feel like a normal person.'*

*Our officers never look down on inmates. We are always on the same level, and we respect that these people are the best people to know what they should be doing with their lives. We just ask questions. We raise some worries. Maybe ask if this is really the road they want to go down.*

*And sometimes they take a road that we don't want them to take, but still, we have to respect them as adults and human beings.*

Former Resident at Vanaja Prison

[03:51- 04:02]

*It was a complete transformation for me.*

*It's changed my criminal mind to a humanitarian one.*

*Helped me to connect with nature and myself, as well.*

*I began to see other people - not just look at them but actually see them.*

*I found my inner peace.*

## Reflection & Discussion:

Consider the movement to close institutionalized prisons and create more community-integrated correction centers and open prisons.

- How does this make you feel?
- What are your anxieties about open prisons?
- What are your reactions to those who commit crimes living and working and going to school in your neighborhood?



## Excerpt from the Episode: Jirice Open Prison, CZECH REPUBLIC



Petr Suk, Prison Governor  
[06:35 – 07:25]

... A new model really needs to be tested and that's what we're doing here. And it's built on the fact that if a [person in prison] chooses to and meets the conditions to be a part of this [open prison] project, then he has to work on himself.

Above all, that responsibility is passed on to him. That means he is responsible for his behavior, for his action, and must prove that he can spend his time here.

And in the case he doesn't prove that, he's out. So far, a small percentage of people have been eliminated. And I think that's the main difference from a closed prison – the way you transfer responsibility to the incarcerated person.



*We were given the opportunity to actually go out and do our shopping outside the prison. And at that point, you realize that the freedom, even though it's prison, is really great.*

*Once a man gets [to the open prison], he's afraid to do anything stupid. You're afraid to do something that sends you back to the closed prison. Because when you get back, you don't get this kind of freedom in your life. ... [Home visits are] based on hours worked and good behavior.*

*You make the hours and let's say in a year you can use up to 20 days to go home for a so-called suspension of sentence.*

*You might even go home for a week, right? It's beautiful. Really, you let it all out, you have completely different thoughts, and it makes the person feel better.*



Jason, Resident [07:35 – 08:48]

## Reflection & Discussion:

- What is the moral argument for/against open prisons?
- Is depriving incarcerated people from social integration moral?
- Is providing support and assistance to those who have committed crimes moral?

This episode includes people who work to support alternatives to traditional prisons alongside residents in alternative settings.

- How do their perspectives compliment or contradict each other?

## Excerpt from the Episode:

### KV Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS

Saskia de Klerk, **Officer of Justice** [12:40 - 13:17]

*The good thing about the small-scale facility is that youngsters retain a lot more responsibility. They have to decide for themselves, Do I go to school? Will I do my best? Do I get back on time? Do I live by the rules here?*

*In a juvenile prison, everything is taken care of for a boy. The personal responsibility is, in fact, gone. So that's a wonderful aspect of the small-scale facility.*

*From day one of their placement, the boys are working on getting their life back on track.*

Juvenile Resident [15:58 - 16:22]

*You have to learn to take responsibility.*

*If you want to leave here, leave. It's not that hard. Tomorrow, I have to work, and I can stay away after. But is that what I want? Will this help me?*

*No. If I get caught, I do have to go to a juvenile prison. I think everyone here realizes that. You test yourself. Is it worth it?*

### Punte de Reales, URUGUAY

Luis Parodi,  
[10:26 - 11:04]

*I would say [our goal is] the absolute respect for rights, and the possibility that [incarcerated people] can defend their rights, that we not only give them rights, but also give them the possibility of organizing themselves.*

*We believe that the people that are in prison are ours. They are our people as well.*

*We have an ethical obligation to try to the bitter end to give these people a chance at a better social place than they've had.*

*This is an obligation of the state. And for that, we have to put everything we can on the table.*

## Reflection & Discussion:

Liberty is defined as being free from oppressive restrictions on one's way of life, behavior, or political views. Creators of open prisons would argue that education, work, and the ability to contribute to society is a basic liberty that even people in prison should be afforded.

- Do you agree or disagree?
- Do incarcerated people have a right to liberty?

Studies show that most people coming home from open prisons do not return to prison again.

- What evidence do these interviews provide to explain this pattern?



## **Critical Media Analysis Activity:**

### **Dramatizing Work Release**

An internet search for “work release” often leads to sensationalized news stories about escaped “criminals” who take advantage of the lighter restrictions to evade their full sentence.

Amidst these “escaped convict” stories there are also profiles of work release success stories: incarcerated people who have found positive ways to improve their lives or give back to society.

Find examples of these two types of stories from your country

What are the goals of each portrayal?  
What emotions are they attempting to elicit?

How do they want viewers to feel about the issue, about incarcerated people, and about society?

Clarify your emotional response and how the media piece contributes to your beliefs about the success or flaws of these kinds of programs.

Which perspective seems most useful to you?



**Educate yourself about the real problems and potential by researching the laws and policies for work and educational release programs in your region and the facilities that participate.**

## **Social Action Steps:**

Engage Politicians

Rescaled <https://www.rescaled.org/> is a European movement to replace all prisons with small-scale detention houses.

Raise awareness about alternatives to prisons in your country.

Contact your local government officials to learn about their position on mass incarceration.

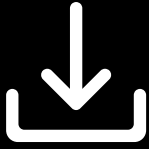
Urge government leaders to support small-scale and community-integrated correction centers that will ensure human rights, normalize living conditions, and support successful reintegration into society.

## **Suggested Reading:**

Larsen, Doran. "Why Scandinavian Prisons Are Superior." The Atlantic, September 24, 2013.  
Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/09/why-scandinavian-prisons-are-superior/279949/>

Scharff Smith, Peter and Thomas Ugelvik (Eds). *Scandinavian Penal History, Culture and Prison Practice: Embraced By the Welfare State?* Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.  
*Draws on historical and cross-disciplinary studies to critically examine penal practices in Scandinavia.*

10



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## **EPISODE 10: HEAL NOT HARM**

*When harm is committed in our society,  
the criminal justice system asks:*

*What laws have been broken?  
Who did it?  
And how do we punish them?*

*Usually that means prison...*



*Restorative justice asks different questions:*

*Who has been hurt?  
What are their needs?  
Whose obligations are these?  
What is the appropriate process to address  
underlying causes and put things right?*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- People who have experienced harm are generally offered one option: punishment via the Western legal and prison systems. But studies have shown the success of restorative justice program over traditional criminal justice options, especially in terms of the impact on survivors.
- Restorative justice has been practiced by Indigenous groups worldwide for centuries. Restorative justice is a Western term for a survivor-centered paradigm of accountability and repair after harm has been committed.
- Restorative practices center the needs of survivors and may include information, truth-telling, empowerment, restitution, and assurance that harms won't happen to anyone else.
- Many Indigenous languages have no word for "offender" and avoid terms like "victim," which identify people according to actions or experiences at one point in time. Restorative justice considers the potential to transcend harm as an aspect of humanity for the benefit of society.

## BASIC FACTS

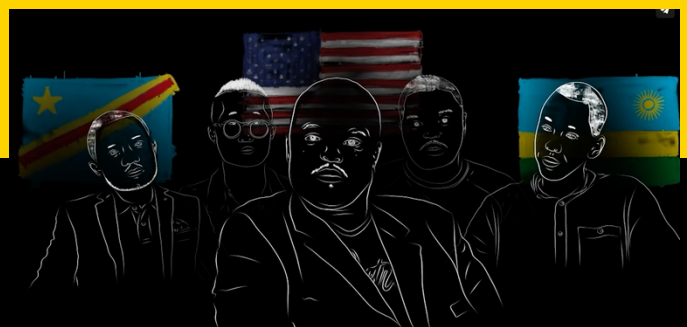


In the US: When given the choice, 90 % of 100+ survivors chose to have the person who harmed them attend a restorative justice program rather than go to prison.



A 2016 study found that of 800 people who had experienced violent crime, 73% preferred investments in education, mental health care, drug treatment and job creation over investment in prisons and jails.

- In Rwanda: Over 1 million people were murdered in the Rwandan genocide in 1994. 80% of Rwanda's prison population is serving time for committing acts of genocide.
  - The national response was a restorative approach - Gacaca Courts that allowed survivors and perpetrators to confront each other in community settings and devise avenues of reparation.



## Reflection & Discussion:

- What is the difference between using the term harm instead of crime?
  - How does that change the way you view the ideas of restoration vs. punishment?
- What is the difference between using the term survivor instead of victim?
  - How does that change the way you view people who have been harmed?



## Excerpt from the Episode: USA



Hyunye, Survivor of sexual assault

[06:35 - 07:25]

*I think I wanted a hug. ... In the immediate aftermath, I wanted somebody I trusted and loved to tell me that it was okay and that it was not my fault.*

*That would have been the most helpful. Then after that, a system of care that centered me and asked me what I needed, rather than assuming what was best for me.*

*They assume that what a survivor wants is prison for the person that harmed them? ... An equitable system is one that takes everybody's story into account.*

*Our criminal justice system would look differently if we actually talked to the victims to find out what they wanted.*

*What often happens is that prosecutors decide what they want and then drag the victim along with them to make sure it happens. And the victims don't usually get heard or considered very much and it's a lopsided system.*

*That's why I love the restorative justice model because it takes into consideration everybody.*

*Usually, the person who committed the crime, they were a victim at some point in their lives. We have this saying, hurt people hurt people. So, the people who usually commit the crimes and do the harm have been harmed at some point in their lives themselves and no one ever gave any attention to the harms they suffered.*



Ronald, Lost his son to violence  
[25:30- 26:13]

# Excerpt from the Episode: RWANDA



**Santos**

*Lost his father in the Rwandan genocide*

[11:23 - 12:30]

*For me, justice isn't just punishment.*

*Of course, if someone has caused harm, they can be punished, but we can't just solely have punishment....*

*I think governments here in Rwanda and in the rest of the world should focus on how to rehabilitate people.*

*Justice must be the work of correcting people....*

[27:58 - 29:40]

In our project, we have used two different approaches when working with prisoners.

The first is to go to the prisons and have conversations there, with one group of non-prisoners and a group of prisoners. We debate different subjects. This is an effort to try building lasting peace in society.

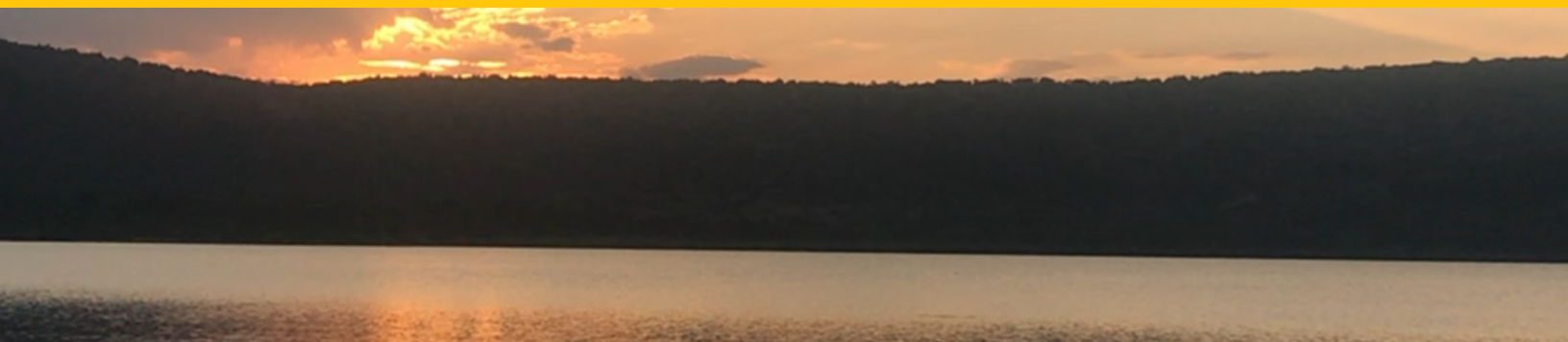
The second method is we help to integrate former prisoners into society after leaving prison. We communicate to prisoners that even if they have served time, and faced repercussions, they are human beings and need to feel comfortable in society.

They need to be able to feel equal to others and not as if they are still criminals.

[30:52-31:25]

If you've never been inside a prison, you think that prisoners are bad people who cannot positively contribute to building peace.

However, after sitting down with the prisoners, having discussions with them, and listening to their thoughts and their desires to rebuild, to repent, I felt like I was healing.



## **Critical Media Analysis Activity:**

### **Rewriting the Scene**

Crimes are portrayed in an abundance of TV shows and films, but usually only criminal punishment is offered as a solution.

Select a criminal scenario and determine what a restorative justice response, rather than a punitive response, would look like.

Where would the scene take place?  
Who would be there?  
What would be said?

What feelings or emotions would be expressed?

Rewrite the scene to include the revised setting, characters, and dialogue.

Then consider how more portrayals like this might impact societal views about responding to crime.

## **Social Action Steps:**

### **Restorative Justice at School**

Research the use of restorative justice practices in schools.

Ask your school leaders to implement community circles or peer grievance mediation as an alternative to punitive disciplinary policies.

## **Suggested Reading:**

*Beyond Conviction*. Dir. Rachel Libert. Film, 2006.  
Available at: <http://www.beyondconviction.com/>

Columbia University Justice Lab, Square One Project. *Protecting and Serving Victims - Their way, Not Ours*, 2021. Available at: <https://squareonejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CJLJ8445-Victims-Square-One-Report-210622-WEB.pdf>

Kaba, Miriam. *We Do This Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice*. Haymarket Books, 2021.

Tutu, Desmond. *No Future Without Forgiveness*. Doubleday Random House, Inc, 1999.

Wiesenthal, Simon. *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness*. Knopf, 2008.

Zehr, Howard. *Changing Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice*. Herald Press, 1990.

## **Reflection & Discussion:**

- How might restorative justice be experienced differently in community contexts (like in Rwanda) and in individual cases (like the Kim Family)?
- See the transcript of the Kim Family interview that follows. Reflect on the reasons why the Kims found the restorative justice approach more fulfilling than the legal path.
- Why did Jinsoo Kim experience emotions ranging from anger to sorrow to grief at different points in the process?





## **A CASE OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR THE KIM FAMILY**

**Jinsoo Kim's father was violently attacked and killed at an ATM.**

**The man who attacked him was located- and for the first time in its history, the Manhattan district attorney's office offered Jinsoo and his wife Julia the option of a restorative justice approach for a homicide case.**

**This would mean meeting the man who killed Jinsoo's father, who would in turn face a seriously reduced sentence.**

**In the end, the Kims were more fulfilled by the restorative approach to justice than a traditional legal one.**



*Jinsoo:*

*When I started learning more things about him...I turned from anger towards sorrow.*

*He had a very tough life, working different jobs since he was 13. He did not have money. His mother and father passed away and they were his main caretakers. He had trouble taking care of himself and even though he was working a full-time job he had...cancer and had trouble paying his medical bills.*

*And one thing led to another, he was late on rent a few times, and ended up with something like 51 cents in the bank.*

*Julia:*

*He couldn't keep his job because he was out of work for his medical treatments, so he had to go to a part-time position. Once we got all these details it became very clear that the context in which this crime took place....it seemed like he was a victim of society, and it wasn't a pre-meditated thing.*

*It made me feel a lot of empathy towards him and his situation. It just became more difficult to see him as a one-sided monster.*

*It was more like, this is a human being. We didn't want to make another victim in this case, sending him to prison for 25 years or longer.*

*So, he had a reduced sentence as part of the restorative justice process...as a result of participating in the meeting. That was also important to us.*



*Jinsoo:*

*Going back to the whole idea of a senseless crime - I don't think there's ever such a thing.*

*Like it made sense in a way because Matthew, he had to choose between feeding himself and paying for his cancer treatments and paying rent.*

*That's why it happened and that's a whole other conversation for why this is still a problem in one of the wealthiest countries in the world.*



*Julia:*

*I think that the current way that the court system operates actually also dehumanizes the victim...*

*If we had followed the traditional route and not had the opportunity to meet him, we would not have had any voice.*

*The only time we would have seen him was sitting in the courtroom on the day of his sentencing; and we might not have even seen his face because the lawyers did all the talking ...*

*After we had gone through the restorative justice process, we still had that experience in court, but we realized that if that had been our only experience, we would have had no resolution in our hearts about what had happened.*

*The act of meeting him was extremely powerful in allowing us to heal and move forward from this event.*

*What he did to us was extremely personal. It changed our entire lives forever, and the history of our family...*

*The power of hearing him say,  
"I'm sorry. Seeing you all here crying, this is going to stay with me the rest of my life."*

*He understood that what he had done affected us forever and he felt the weight of that. To be in the same room with him coming to understand that - it helped a lot with healing.*



*Jinsoo:*

*One way to frame it is that anger and grief are entirely different things. They overlap a lot.*

*At first, I was equally angry and grief stricken, but I had a choice to let go of the anger.*

*Anger is a part of hate and grief is a part of love.*

*The grief is not necessarily something you want to let go immediately. It's not something you want to get rid of. I eventually said I forgave Matthew during the sentencing, and even saying to him that I forgave him helped me finally release that anger. ...*

*What does it even mean to forgive someone?*

*It means that you are no longer angry at somebody for a mistake that they made. It's not saying it's not important what happened. It's not saying let's just forget about what happened.*

*Just specifically you decide to let go of the anger you have towards the person and that's what we did.*

*It did not take away the grief at all. It just took away this anger that was hovering over us...*



# ***INCARCERATION NATIONS: A GLOBAL DOCUSERIES***

## **APPENDIX TO THE TEACHING GUIDE**





## GLOBAL ORGANIZATIONS FEATURED

The following organizations were profiled in the film and work to advocate for incarcerated, formerly incarcerated people and justice reform. The people who do this work serve as living witnesses to the harms caused by ineffective and inhumane prison systems, and advocates for meaningful change. By no means are the organizations listed the only representatives of the issues portrayed. However, their experiences and narratives reveal a commonality of themes.



### Episode 1: The Nefarious Plot: An Introduction to Mass Incarceration

- Incarceration Nations Network - This spreadsheet lists the entire network of global organizations in the Incarceration Nations Network: <https://incarcerationnationsnetwork.org/platform/>

### Episode 2: Waiting...and Waiting... for Trial

#### Organizations Profiled:

- The Bail Project in the US pays bail for people who cannot afford it and advocates for radical bail reform, so that people are assessed by their likelihood of returning to court. <https://bailproject.org/>
- International Legal Foundation (ILF) fights to guarantee high-quality legal representation for everyone arrested or detained focusing on the most marginalized. They also build sustainable legal aid institutions in countries like Palestine and Myanmar. <https://www.theilf.org/>
- POS Foundation in Ghana creates mobile courts to speed up the legal system and has trained incarcerated men and prison officers in paralegal work to reduce the backlog of cases. <http://posfoundation.org/>
- Justice Defenders in Kenya and Uganda trains incarcerated people in law or paralegal work, to clear cases themselves. <https://www.justice-defenders.org/>
- PASI in Malawi <https://pasimalawi.org/> and Madaripur Legal Aid Association <https://mlaabd.org/> in Bangladesh build community mediation programs that prevent cases from getting entangled in legal systems to begin with.
- Red Hook Community Justice Centers, Red Hook Peacemaking Program in New York uses a traditional Native American approach to justice that focuses on healing and restoration rather than punishment. <https://www.courtinnovation.org/programs/peace-making-program>

### Episode 3: (In) Justice for Women

#### Organizations Profiled:

- **Advocaid** - provides access to holistic support to women and girls in Sierra Leone. <https://advocaidsl.org/>
- **A Little Piece of Light** - provides a safe space for system and trauma impacted women and girls. <https://www.facebook.com/alittlepieceoflight/>
- **EQUIS Justicia para las Mujeres** - defends women's human rights in Mexico. <https://equis.org.mx/> More information available at: <https://idpc.net/profile/equis>
- **Essie Justice Group** - women impacted by incarceration advocate for race and gender justice. <https://essiejusticegroup.org/>
- **Fundación San Carlos Maipo** - supports women discharged from prison in Chile. <https://www.fsancarlos.cl/>



### Episode 4: Families Behind Bars

#### Organizations Profiled:

- **Families Outside** - works on behalf of families in Scotland affected by imprisonment. <https://www.familiesoutside.org.uk/>
- **NNAPES** - an alliance of Latin American and Caribbean organizations that support and advocate for children of incarcerated people. <http://nnapes.org/news>
- **We Got Us Now** - supports US children and families impacted by parental incarceration. <https://www.wegotusnow.org/>
- **Children of Prisoners Europe** - a pan-European network working with and on behalf of children with imprisoned parents. <https://childrenofprisoners.eu/>



## **Episode 5: Education Not Incarceration**

### Organizations Profiled:

- Articolo3 - helps incarcerated people take courses at the University of Milan, Italy. <http://articolo3.org/>
- Contextos - uses the power of education and personal narrative to promote healing and reflection, and to foster critical thinking and dialogue. <https://contextos.org/>
- John Jay Prison-to-College Pipeline (P2CP) - brings higher education to men incarcerated in an upstate New York prison and guarantees university admission when released. <https://justiceandopportunity.org/educational-pathways/prison-to-college-pipeline/>
- Ubuntu Learning Community - a university-prison collaboration at Stellenbosch University in South Africa <https://www.facebook.com/stellenboschuniversity/photos/the-ubuntu-learning-community-ulc-is-creating-an-opportunity-for-incarcerated-in/10157829649937421/>

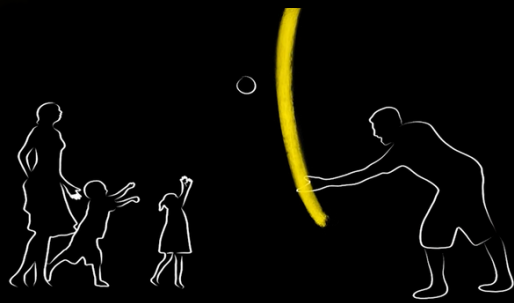


## **Episode 6: Smart on Drugs, Not War on Drugs**

### Organizations Profiled:

- Aboriginal Legal Service's Community Council Program - a criminal diversion program for Aboriginal people in Toronto, Canada. <https://aboriginallegal.ca/>
- Acción Andina - platform of researchers in the Andean region of Bolivia promoting changes in drug and security policies to comply with human rights principles. <https://accionandina.org/>
- Drugreporter - international hub for English and Russian language news articles, blogs and films about harm reduction and drug policy reform. <https://drogriporter.hu/>
- Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) - a community-based diversion approach to drug use in the USA. <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/community-human-services/mental-health-substance-abuse/diversion-reentry-services/lead.aspx>
- Release - UK based national center of expertise on drugs, drug use, and drug laws. Comprehensive website provides legal advice, harm reduction strategies, and policy papers to the public and professionals. <https://www.release.org.uk/>
- TAPAS in Portugal provides comprehensive care through teams of psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers at different stages and levels of treatment.

## **Episode 7: "Home"coming**



### **Organizations Profiled:**

- A New Way of Life Reentry Project offers wraparound, gender-responsive support to women coming home from prison. <https://anewwayoflife.org/>
- Beyond Bars Akademia trains formerly incarcerated women in the hospitality industry and places them in jobs in Cape Town and Johannesburg.
- NIACRO - A Northern Ireland reintegration program that offers 12-16 weeks of support to people coming home from prison. <https://www.niacro.co.uk/>
- Worldview Foundation Breakthrough Program offers holistic reentry support including job assistance and housing. <https://www.worldview.org.au/>

### **Innovative Reentry Programs**

- Coope Esquina Libertad in Argentina runs a graphic design business that is cooperatively owned and run by people coming home from prison—who were recruited and trained during their incarceration. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPiaY3LaBj4>
- Exodus operates small-scale, fully staffed, community-integrated, highly personalized reentry homes across the Netherlands. <https://www.exodus.nl/diensten>
- Impact /Justice
  - California Justice Leaders-Americorps - Justice-involved young adults receive training and salaries to become peer mentors for other youth and young adults coming home from prison. <https://impactjustice.org/impact/california-justice-leaders/>
  - The Homecoming Project pairs people coming home from prison with hosts with rooms to rent in their homes. Hosts are paid monthly and receive support from project staff. Returning residents receive a free, safe place to live for up to six months, along with reentry support from Homecoming navigators. <https://impactjustice.org/impact/homecoming-project/>
- Second Chances Farm is an urban vertical farm run entirely by formerly incarcerated people in Delaware. By growing and supplying fresh produce in underserved communities, it's also a solution to another worldwide crisis: urban food deserts. <https://secondchancesfarm.com/video>





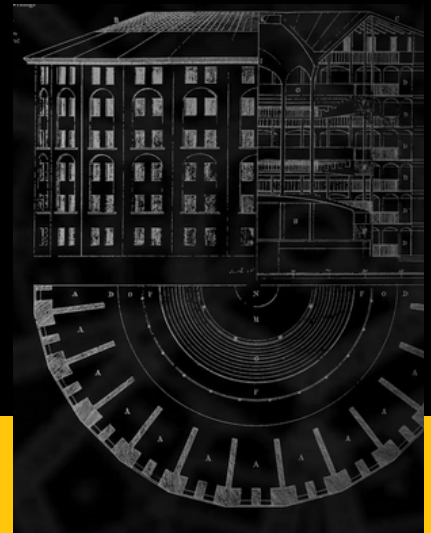
## **Episode 8: Those Closest to the Problem...**

### **Organizations Profiled:**

- CHREAA's Bail Education Project in Malawi uses creative methods like radio and theater to educate those in detention and the general public about their rights. <https://chreaa.org/>
- EQUIS Justice for Women is a feminist organization that seeks to transform institutions, laws, and public policies to improve access to justice for all women. <https://equis.org.mx/>
- Hlumelilisa in South Africa schools incarcerated men in horticulture - beautifying culture, flowers, shrubs, trees and small gardening - as life skills and job training. <https://www.hlumelelisa.org/>
- JustLeadership USA amplifies the people most impacted by the justice system, providing education, tools, and resources to self-organize and advocate for policy reform. <https://jlusa.org/>



### **WHAT DO ALL THESE JUSTICE LEADERS HAVE IN COMMON?**



## **Episode 9: Correcting Correctional Centers**

### **Organizations Profiled:**

- Jirice Open Prison in Czech Republic was opened in 2017 and modeled after an open prison in Norway.
- KV Amsterdam, operated by the Department of Justice and city of Amsterdam, are small-scale facilities for boys under the age of 18 offering an alternative to juvenile detention centers that aim to mimic normal life.
- Punte de Reales in Montevideo, Uruguay, assists 600 residents with entrepreneurship classes, unions, and resident-owned businesses. A portion of all profits goes back into the facility for programming. Cell phones allow incarcerated men to stay connected to family and community.
- Rescaled is a European movement to replace all prisons with small-scale detention houses. <https://www.rescaled.org/>
- Vanaja Prison is an open prison for women in Finland.

### **Alternative Prison Models**

Pension Skejby is an open prison in Denmark housing incarcerated people in the last part of their sentence, along with individuals who have never been convicted of a criminal offense. All residents participate in work, education, and programs to find a home, help with debt and monthly budgeting, and resume contact with family.

## Episode 10: Heal Not Harm

### Organizations Profiled:

- Ahimsa Collective offers restorative justice programs to promote healing in communities, in prisons, between people harmed and those responsible for harm, survivor support, and reentry programs. <https://www.ahimsacollective.net/>
- Common Justice is a New York-based restorative justice program that operates the first alternative-to-incarceration and victim-service program in the US focusing on violent felonies in the adult courts. <https://www.commonjustice.org/>
- Impact Justice is a national technical assistance and training project that partners with communities across the nation to address harm using restorative justice diversion programs. <https://impactjustice.org/impact/restorative-justice/>
- My Ever After is a project of Common Justice to produce stories about violence and its aftermath to promote accountability and healing. <https://www.myeverafter.org/>



**Prison Visiting Project** – a Rwandan project to engage incarcerated people and civilians in dialogues, with the goal of building lasting peace within society.

## Additional Resources About Criminal Justice Reform

**Brennan Center for Justice** – This series of essays written by renowned experts across multiple fields, addresses a range of issues, from policing to prosecution to incarceration to life after prison. The writers highlight how excess punishment has been prioritized over more supportive ways of dealing with social harm and explores alternatives. Available at: <https://www.brennancenter.org/series/punitive-excess>

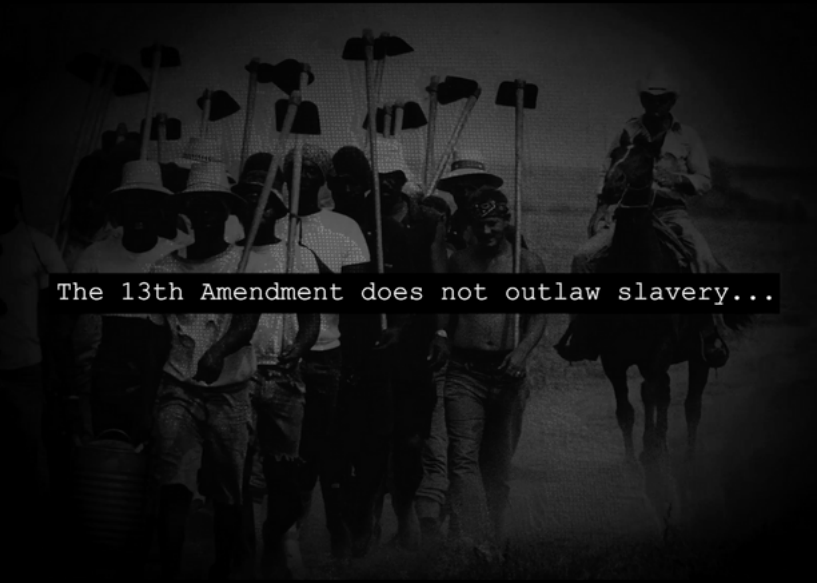
**Global Prison Trends 2021: Prisons in Crisis** - Global Prison Trends is published annually by Penal Reform International (PRI). This report documents key trends over the past year, especially the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on prison populations and staff, and how prisons worldwide have responded to these challenges. Available at: <https://cdn.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Global-prison-trends-2021.pdf>

**Prison Policy Initiative** – This policy library has curated research and timely and actionable data about

- the intersection of the criminal justice system and **education**:  
<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/education/>
- analysis of **drug policy** and its effects on the prison system  
[https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/drug\\_policy/](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/drug_policy/)
- the impact of the criminal justice system on **families**:  
<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/families/>
- the impact of the criminal justice system on **women**:  
<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/women/>



**The Restorative Justice Project at Impact/Justice** – A Diversion Toolkit for Communities is a comprehensive toolkit for establishing a restorative justice program for youth. The toolkit also provides a history for restorative justice practices, youth criminalization practices, and data on racial and ethnic disparities. Available at: <https://rjdtoolkit.impactjustice.org/>



The 13th Amendment does not outlaw slavery...

**Visualizing Abolition** – This online resource provides study guides created for Barring Freedom, a group exhibition of contemporary art collaboratively organized by UC Santa Cruz Institute of the Arts and Sciences (IAS) and San José Museum of Art. The artwork aims to challenge the dominant ways people see and understand the complex nexus of policing, surveillance, detention, and imprisonment that makes up the nation's prison industrial complex. These study guides organize artworks from the exhibition to support understanding of the terms, history, and issues related to the struggle for prison abolition. Available at: <https://visualizingabolition.ucsc.edu/study-guides/>

## **Education Programs | Curriculum and Teaching Materials**

**Defying Legal Gravity** – Defying Legal Gravity provides educational programming that mirrors a first-year law school curriculum for students with current or formerly incarcerated loved ones to empower students and increase civic engagement within their communities. Beginning in the summer before sixth grade and continuing through high school, students obtain a legal foundation from engagement with case law, research, and theoretical work through the lens of Critical Race Theory. The DLG curriculum improves students' critical thinking, reasoning, writing, and advocacy skills as they participate in student-led social action projects, mock trial, and the publication of scholarly journals. Learn more here: <https://www.defyinglegalgravity.org/>