MARKING TIME: PRISON ARTS AND ACTIVISM RESOURCE GUIDE

Compiled and edited by The Institute for Research on Women
INTRODUCTION

This resource guide was inspired by "Marking Time: Prison Arts and Activism," a multi-component project whose goal was to bring together scholars, writers, artists, and activists from across the nation and from overseas to explore the cultural aspects of imprisonment through a focus on art produced by prisoners and in response to mass incarceration. Organized by the Institute for Research on Women at Rutgers University (IRW), the project included a conference on prison art and activism—the first of its kind—which was held on October 8-10, 2014, and involved three days of panels, workshops, lectures, film screenings, poetry readings, performances, and presentations by more than 130 artists, activists, scholars, and community groups. Reginald Dwayne Betts, poet and author of A Question of Freedom: A Memoir of Learning, Survived, and Coming of Age in Prison and Shahid Reads His Own Palm, gave the keynote address.

In addition to the conference, "Marking Time" incorporated an art exhibit held on six sites throughout the city of New Brunswick, NJ, showcasing the work of a wide range of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated artists. A third component of the "Marking Time" project involved prison-based public education. In collaboration with NJ STEP, IRW supported a 3-day art workshop at Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility in Annandale, New Jersey. We include a description of this workshop along with a selection of the artwork created by prisoners at Mountainview in this publication.

Finally, as part of our commitment to encourage the development of networks and support for prisoners, artists, scholars, and organizations working in the field of prison arts, we have created this resource guide.

"Marking Time" was convened by IRW Director Nicole R. Fleetwood and IRW Associate Director Sarah Tobias, and made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations in this program do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. "Marking Time" was also made possible by generous support from the Puffin Foundation Ltd.

The "Marking Time" conference and exhibition would not have taken place without the support of our many co-sponsors: Afa Art Gallery; American Friends Service Committee’s Prison Watch Program; Art Library- Rutgers New Brunswick; Associate Campus Dean of Douglass Residential College; Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities; Department of American Studies, Rutgers-New Brunswick; Department of History, Rutgers-New Brunswick; Heldrich Hotel; Institute for Women and Art; Mountainview Program; New Brunswick Public Library; Office of the Chancellor of Rutgers-New Brunswick; Office of the Executive Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers-New Brunswick; Prison Creative Arts Project at the University of Michigan; PUEG Center at UNAM (National University of Mexico); Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts; School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers-Newark; and Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers-New Brunswick. We are grateful to J.D. McGuire for leading our art workshop at Mountainview, and to Donald Roden and Chris Agans from the Rutgers Mountainview Program, and to Margaret Quem Akins and Jerri Flippen from NJ STEP for making it possible.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who submitted materials for this resource guide. This publication was edited by Sarah Tobias. Special thanks are due to IRW intern Katherine Ritter, whose meticulous and extensive work on this document has enabled its publication.

The Institute for Research on Women (IRW) advances innovative feminist scholarship on women, gender, and sexuality, and its programming is supported by the School of Arts and Sciences and the Office of the Chancellor at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. For more information, email: irw@rci.rutgers.edu

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Carceral Optics

THE WORLD IN A PRISON CELL
Treacy Ziegler

The first art class that I volunteer to teach in this prison is held in an older 1920s vintage building on the far side of the prison yard. The light is harsh in this building, but I like the building. It reminds me of a Northern European sanatorium. I’ve never been in a sanatorium and can’t even say that I’ve ever seen one. However, when I imagine a sanatorium, this prison is how it looks.

In this prison building there is very little on the walls and only minimum furniture. The building is pure space, as if emptiness is the cue.

I like empty buildings. Perhaps the emptiness reminds me of an unmarked canvas that in its blankness offers a hope of movement to the artist—movement, because hope in general is too vague and therefore potentially stagnant.

When I first built my art studio, there was nothing in it; the studio existed as a cement floor, white walls and a ceiling. I spent hours drawing the expanse of the studio, knowing that soon objects would compromise the space.

The same was true of my house when it was first built. The first floor of the house is one large room with a center height of 20 feet. At first the house contained few objects to detract from this pure space, other than a piano, a table, and two plastic chairs. The house did not consist of objects; it consisted of space.

Unfortunately now, the space is a collection of things: books, a sofa, oversized comfortable chair, the same piano, two tables, and chairs inherited from my mother-in-law. The expansive center ceiling 20 feet above the floor of this large room has collected 15 years of cobwebs. My house lost its initial pure space but gained the patina of time.

Why artists like prisons

So when I visit this prison I’m drawn to its empty space. Of course, I don’t live there. I did tell the superintendent on my initial tour that when he has freed all the prisoners, the artists could move into the prison, occupying the cells as studios. I have seen installations at old prisons, so I assume that the fascination with prison space is common to artists.

Living in prison is theoretical to me. But before falling asleep one night, I imagined the horrid, daumorphobic sensation of being in a small cell, never to be allowed out, and never to move around. What does one do for hours, living alone in solitary confinement? In this split second jolt I felt why Billy, a student participating in my through-the-mail art curriculum, hung himself after six years in solitary confinement with only one daily hour outside his cell.

What you think you see

As a mental representation, the artist doesn’t experience the world through drawing; the artist makes a representation of the world through what he/she expects theoretically. This is a point that I need to make over and over again: the difference between the world as a representation and the world of experience.

If the prisoner-student sits on the far side looking into the light, he cannot possibly draw form unless he mentally represents the animal as he thinks it should be represented. He might remember that the horse has an elbow, but he doesn’t see that elbow in this darkness of the silhouette. I want him to draw what he sees, not what he thinks.

Repitition of daylight with more, less, or similar intensity than today’s harsh light.

Light returns not as a reminder but as a challenge to see the world differently. If we did sit at this table for days, each day’s assignment would be to draw something new as the light and shadow are cast upon the animals. Or we might include the entire room into the discovery process.

Transcending boredom

At some point, memory may be, and usually is, wanted and in art. But for now, the drawing focuses on the immediate experience of light and shadow.

In another prison, a student draws the prison yard poles that he can see from his rec pen, that kennel-like structure off a prison cell that permits the prisoner to walk three feet out of his cell. For weeks, this prisoner sits in his rec pen, drawing the light upon the poles and...)
Bonnie Kerness

**Fighting for Justice**

**ON THE “WAR AT HOME”**

Bonnie Kerness

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My early observations of oppression in this country began when I was 12 watching television and seeing children of African descent my age in the South being hosed by police and bitten by dogs for trying to go to school. I spent ten years in the civil rights movement, then moved north and began working with the American Friends Service Committee, the social action arm of the Religious Society of Friends, the Quakers, who have a 300-year history of commitment in dealing with human rights issues with prisoners. I serve as a human rights advocate on behalf of men, women, and children in prison throughout the US, coordinating Prison Watch for the AFSC in Newark. Many of the men, women and children that I take testimony from call their imprisonment the “war at home.”

In the criminal justice system, the politics of the police, the politics of the courts, the politics of the prison system and the politics of the death penalty are a manifestation of the racism and classism which governs the lives of all of us. Every part of the US criminal justice system falls most heavily on the poor and people of color, including the fact that slavery is mandated and institutionalized in prisons by the 13th Amendment of the US Constitution, which reads: “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States.” While most of us don’t give this amendment a second thought, it is at the core of how the labor of slaves was transformed into what people in prison call neo-slavery. The use of prison labor occurs throughout the country and is an integral part of what we have come to know as the “Prison Industrial Complex.”

If you call the NJ Bureau of Tourism you are likely talking to a prisoner at the Edna Mahon Correctional Institution for Women who is earning 23 cents an hour. Voluntary forced labor in prisons is every day real for more than 2 million men and women.

African descended, Latino and Aboriginal young people tell us that the police feel like an occupation army in their communities. They speak about school systems being used to feed young people of color into youth detention, jails, and prisons where those bodies are suddenly worth a fortune. People have said to me that the criminal justice system doesn’t work. I’ve come to believe exactly the opposite—that it works perfectly, just as slavery did, as a matter of economic and political policy. How is it that a 15-year old in Newark who the country labels worthless to the economy, who has no hope of getting a job or affording college—can suddenly generate 20 to 30 thousand dollars a year once trapped in the criminal justice system? The expansion of prisons, parole, probation, the court and police systems has resulted in an enormous bureaucracy which has been a boon to everyone from architects to food vendors—all with one thing in common—a pay check earned by keeping human beings in cages. The criminalization of poverty is a lucrative business and we have replaced the social safety net with a dragnet.

There is no contradiction that prisons are both hugely expensive and very profitable. Just like with military spending, the cost is public and the profits are private.

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Privatization in the Prison Industrial Complex includes companies which run prisons for profit while at the same time reaping profits from forced labor. In the State of New Jersey, food and medical services are provided by corporations with a profit motive. One recent explosion of private industry is the partnering of Corrections Corporation of America with the federal government to detain close to 1 million undocumented people. Using public monies to enrich private citizens is the history of capitalism at its most exploitative.

I want to share the voice of one young woman who said, “I was 12 so they put me in isolation. I heard children screaming. I saw boys get strung out on meds. They make you take sleeping stuff in needles. They used pepper spray on this girl who was fighting directly in her mouth and she couldn’t breathe. They kept hitting her. We told them that she had asthma, but they wouldn’t listen.”

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**The Naked Truth**

Ojore Lutalo

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The Naked Truth

**AMERICA’S PRISON STORE**

**Ojore Lutalo**

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**Prison Arts & Activism Resource Guide**

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**MARKING TIME**

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The US spends less than any other industrialized nation on nurturing its children. In spite of dismal poverty rates, violent juvenile crime has been declining for years. Yet at least 43 states have passed laws making it easier for children to be tried as adults. We can’t escape the similarities with chattel slavery here as well. Not only are these mostly black and brown children taken from their families, they lose any chance for a future of their own choosing.

The voices of adult prisoners are haunting: a social worker at Utah State Prison wrote, “John was directed to leave the strip cell and a urine soaked pillow case was placed over his head like a hood. He was walked, shackled and hooded to a different cell where he was placed in a device called ‘the chair’…he was kept in the chair for over 30 hours, being forced to urinate and defecate on his own hands which were tucked under him.”

Women who contact the AFSC describe conditions of confinement which include enduring sexual abuse by staff with one woman saying, “That was not part of my sentence to perform oral sex with officers.” Some of the most poignant letters I get are from prisoners writing on behalf of the mentally ill—like the man in California who spread feces over his body. The guards’ response to this was to put him in a bath so hot it boiled 30% of the skin off him.

These past years have been full of complaints from prisoners and their families, describing inhumane conditions including cold, filthy, callous medical care, extended isolation often lasting years, use of devices of torture, harassment, brutality, and racism. I have received vivid descriptions and drawings of four and five point restraints, restraint hoods, restraint belts, restraint beds, stun grenades, stun guns, stun belts, spit hoods, tethers, and wrist and leg chains. Often the worst torment people testify to is the psychological assault of “no touch torture” which can include humiliation, sleep deprivation, sensory disorientation, extreme light or dark, extreme cold or heat, extended solitary confinement including other forms of intentional placement situations. This is a systematic attack on all human stimuli.

In the mid-1980s the American Friends Service Committee received a letter from Ojore Lutalo who had been placed in the Management Control Unit at Trenton State Prison. He asked what a control unit was, why he was in there and how long he would have to stay. Some of the answers to those questions would unfold over the next quarter of a century that we monitored and advocated on behalf of Ojore.

“How do you describe desperation to someone who is not desperate?” began one letter to me from Ojore, who went on to depict everyone in the Control Unit being awakened by guards dressed in riot gear holding barking dogs at 1 a.m. every other morning. Once awakened, the prisoners were forced to strip, gather their belongings while feeling the dogs straining at their leashes snapping at their private parts. He described being terrorized, intimidated, and the humiliation of being naked not knowing whether the masked guards were male or female. If we think back to slavery and to images of the civil rights movement we know that dogs have been used as a device of torture for hundreds of years in the US.

Ojore spent 22 years, day after day, week after week, and year after year in NJ State Prison’s Management Control Unit, without being charged with any infraction. I challenge my intern students to spend four hours in their bathroom, and they don’t make it. Ojore not only made it, he managed to create, mentor and teach through what he called “propaganda,” which he would send out to me to share. His social and political commentary on prisons, what was happening to him, and his refusal to be silenced by the horror of his circumstances taught us all.

Prolonged solitary confinement in the form of control units, security threat group management units, special needs units, and communications management units, etc. has been a long time concern for many prison activists, on both sides of the walls. Control units surfaced during the 70s when many in my generation genuinely believed we were free to dissent politically. It was during these tumultuous years of the civil rights era when large numbers of activists found themselves in US prisons. Sensory deprivation was used with imprisoned members of the Black Panther Party, Puerto Rican Independentistas, members of the American Indian Movement, the Chicano movement, white anti-imperialists, civil rights activists, and members of the Black Liberation Army.

Current efforts to expand the solitary confinement population involve the alleged spread of gang problems in the US. The AFSC began receiving letters from
young people of color experience daily. The progression to those of us who monitor the torment that these physical and chemical abuse in gang units is infamous. Security Threat Group Management Units, complaining people in street organizations placed in units called “Communications Management Units,” which are specifically designed to restrict the communications of imprisoned Muslims with their families, the media and the outside world. This treatment of Islamic prisoners is replicated in US secret prisons throughout the world where almost all of those kept in such places are people of color.

The transition from slavery to Black Codes to convict leasing to the Jim Crow laws to the wars on poverty and political activism has been a seamless evolution of political and social incapacitation of the poor and people of color. The sophisticated fascism of the practices of stop and frisk, charging people in inner cities with “wandering,” driving and walking while black, zip code racism—these and many other de facto practices all serve to keep our prisons full. In a system where over 60% of those who are imprisoned are people of color, where 58% of African youth are sent to adult prisons, where black and brown women are 69% more likely to be imprisoned, the concept of color blindness doesn’t exist.

In a system where 95% of prisoners return to our communities, the impact of these practices is felt far beyond prisons. For more than 25 years, I have counseled people re-entering society from prisons, jails, and youth detention facilities. The prognosis for staying out of prison is poor with over 60% of people returning. Prisons are often traumatizing places in the lack of feeling, concern and opportunities for self-improvement. Complex issues of reunification of families at the same time as learning how to build a life make re-entry an incredibly difficult period. How do you teach someone to rid themselves of degradation? How long does it take to teach people to feel safe, a sense of empowerment in a world where they often come home emotionally and physically damaged and unemployable? There are many reasons that ex-prisoners do not make it—paramount among them is that they are not supposed to succeed.

The conditions and practices that imprisoned testify to are in violation of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the UN Convention Against Torture, and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination—all international treaties which the US has signed. US prison practices also fit the United Nations definition of genocide, which with this country has a long history. If we dig deeper into US criminal justice practices, the political function they serve is inescapable. Police, the courts, the prison system, and the death penalty all serve as social control mechanisms. The economic function they serve is equally chilling. Just as in the era of chattel slavery, there is a class of people dependent on bodies of color as a source for income. The Department of Corrections is more than a set of institutions. It is also a state of mind. That state of mind led to Abu Ghraib, Bagram, Guantanamo, and what is going on in US prisons right this moment. You cannot give me a reason for the testimonies of the men, women, and children that come into my life every single day. You cannot give me a reason for what happened to Ojore.

A version of this essay was first published in Acting in Faith: Connecting friends to the work of AFSC on April 18, 2014, http://www.afsc.org/friends/prebund-spiritual-crisis-prison-victims-call-change

**LOVING THOSE WE FEAR**

**Eleanor Novek**

I have been alive today, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would certainly see the national epidemic of hyper-incarceration as a civil rights issue. Not only does the United States imprison more of its citizens per capita than any other nation in the world, but it does so in a racially discriminatory manner: its prison population is more than half Black and Hispanic. Young African American men in particular are targeted for arrest, investigation, and incarceration. The cycle of marginalization imposed on these communities creates succeeding generations of urban poor.

Analysts, such as Marc Mauer of The Sentencing Project and many others, attribute these trends largely to the War on Drugs and other “tough on crime” policies. As public opinion shifted during the 1970s and 80s from faith in rehabilitation to a desire for punishment, US policy makers found a ready audience for their narratives of black crime and white fear, as citizens embraced the growth of the prison-industrial complex in the mistaken belief that it would make their communities safer. And thus, over the last three decades, American society has cast out millions of its sons and daughters.

Dr. King, who was jailed 30 times for his activism, would recognize the tragic folly of this position. His speeches and writings often focused on the divine commandment to love one’s neighbor as the “invisible, inner law which etches on [our] hearts the conviction that all men are brothers and that love is mankind’s most potent weapon for personal and social transformation.” (Strength to Love) Selfless love, also called agape, includes a deep-seated spirit of non-reciprocal giving that embraces all human beings, particularly those who are suffering. King insisted that all people could sense this deep connection among human beings and be governed by “something in the universe that unifies for justice.”

If we were to view the nation’s prisoners with agape, we would experience them not as monsters, but as complicated and valuable people. We would acknowledge the profound human suffering that takes place in our overcrowded penal systems: the humiliations, outrages, and brutalities that make up daily life behind bars. We would acknowledge the racism inherent in our criminal justice system and grieve for the damage it has done in our communities. As conflict Islamic, who felt called to “bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound,” (Isaiah 51:1) we would not rest until we embraced, in full economic and social equality, those whom we now fear, marginalize, and condemn.

The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is a contemporary organization that operates under King’s concept of agape. AVP is an international volunteer network that uses experience-based workshops to develop people’s natural abilities to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence. It introduces methods for reaching consensus and compromise, resolving conflicts rather than simply reacting to them, and developing communication skills to de-escalate potentially violent confrontations. AVP workshops are held in some 30 states and 50 nations around the world, not only in prisons, but also in schools, churches, community centers, shelters, displaced persons camps, and other locations. See www.avpusa.org for more details.

When Dr. King spoke at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in 1957, he encouraged his audience to build “the beloved community” by forgiving and loving its enemies, transforming them into friends. The guiding philosophy of AVP is based on this same transforming power, defined by Larry Aspey and Karen Eppler as an attitude in which a person identifies deeply with all of humanity. When approaching a stranger, no matter how antagonistic, “If we revere their potential, we can break down the barriers which prevent us and them from influencing each other. Are we willing to learn ... to relate ourselves sympathetically to those of whose actions we disapprove? Until we do, the souls of our enemies are closed to us.” (Transforming Power for Peace)

Today’s AVP workshops keep Dr. King’s philosophy alive, offering a blueprint for a wider transformation. If incarcerated men and women can learn to see one another as valued members of a community, then so can those who condemn them. As Dr. King knew, people who have feared and harmed each other can learn to forgive and trust one another; it was his dream and his conviction. For this to happen today, the spiritual movements of agape and reconciliation must be accompanied by a material movement of equity, social inclusion, and justice. The nation will move a step closer to that when it repudiates the destructive racism of the prison-industrial complex.


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**Prison Arts & Activism Resource Guide**

**Eleanor Novek**

**LOVING THOSE WE FEAR**

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From Inside Looking Out

CELLBLOCK VISIONS
Images from a collection of artwork by prisoners, organized and directed by Phyllis Kornfeld.

Prison Art Class, Charles Mosby

Vase, Yolanda Rivera
In 2002, Family Crisis Services (Cumberland County Maine’s domestic violence agency) conducted a study which showed that approximately 95% of incarcerated women were currently or previously in an abusive intimate relationship. Recognizing the connection between female incarceration and domestic violence, Family Crisis Services began offering support groups for incarcerated women at the Cumberland County Jail and Maine Correctional Center and continues to do so now in 2015. Family Crisis Services is one of only a handful of domestic violence agencies in the country to offer such programs.

MORE THAN A RAP SHEET

The truth about me is... I carry guilt. I carry pride. I carry anger and hurt. I carry love. I carry devotion. Most of the time I will want to carry you.

more than a rap sheet
[ the real stories of incarcerated women ]
Since 2007, Family Crisis Services has offered creative writing groups in addition to existing educational groups through our incarcerated women’s program. During the writing groups, participants read a variety of genres including poetry, short stories, and excerpts from novels, and write creative and autobiographical pieces. One poem they read, *The Truth About U* by Terri Haven, a social worker who researches prisons, resonated with many of the participants. After reading the poem, the women wrote their own *The Truth About Me* pieces, and those poems are featured in our *More Than a Rap Sheet* exhibit, which was displayed at the 2014 “Marking Time: Prison Arts & Activism Conference” at Rutgers University. The project is a moving exhibit that consists of twenty-seven poems and twenty-one portraits (photographed by Christine Heinz of the SALT Institute of Portland, Maine) of incarcerated women in Maine. From the exhibit, we created a brief slide show that can be shown to classes and consciousness-raising groups to foster discussion amongst participants.

Family Crisis Services’ Incarcerated Women’s program is rooted in creating opportunities for women to use their voices in a system that so often makes them feel like they have none. This basic tenet manifests in every aspect of the program from how it started, to our use of group work, to our community training content. Using the keynote example of our exhibit *More Than a Rap Sheet: The Real Stories of Incarcerated Women*, when we present in the community, we discuss how over the years, FCS has not only created opportunities for women to speak out, but empowered women to use their voices for community and cultural change.

Family Crisis Services staff brings over a decade of experience of implementing trauma informed services within jails and prisons. Our workshops detail how our exhibit *More Than a Rap Sheet* was developed and how we use it as a training tool in the community; any participants have the opportunity to read about the inspiration that started the project as well as see the video presentation we have created from the exhibit. While *More Than a Rap Sheet* is our main example of how we create opportunities for women to use their voices, we also discuss other cultural campaigns that have been implemented using women’s voices and how women’s voices impact the construction and implementation of our own programs from evaluations to actual content of programs. Family Crisis Services presenters bring their expertise in delivering domestic violence services with incarcerated women to assist participants in gaining insights into how they can use women’s voices to further their own programming and campaigns.

Find "More Than a Rap Sheet" on Twitter @TruthAboutUs_ME

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**THE TRUTH ABOUT ME**

By Sarah

The truth about me is I believe I am a good person, there is something magnificent in me that is craving to be harnessed. I have worth regardless of what has happened in my life.

The truth about me is I’ve come to this juncture in my life by circumstances which were seemingly out of my control, driven by drug addiction.

The truth about me is I am much more than a rap-sheet, I am a friend, I am an enemy, I am sadness, I am happiness, I’m sometimes right, I’m sometimes wrong. I draw from these opposing elements, they flow through me like an uncooked stew mixing and stirring these paradoxes.

The truth about me is I’m a great mom, just because I have a record doesn’t take away from the undying love I have for my two beautiful girls.

The truth about me is there is a fire burning within my soul, I have worth outside these prison walls, outside these labels society has imposed on me, branding me like livestock.

**THE TRUTH ABOUT ME IS…**

By Joleen

I’ve been molested, raped, beaten and starved
I’ve been homeless, hungry and scared
I’ve walked away from my kids
I’ve been an addict for about 28 years
I’ve been in an out of mental institutes and jail since the age of 15
I’ve been dead 4 times
I have a grandson
I am deeply disturbed and hopelessly depressed
I recently lost my mom
I’ve attempted suicide
I’ve lied, stolen, cheated and hurt

The truth about me is I am human and I have many regrets and mistakes have been made. I have failed at most everything, succeeded, then failed some more. Now at 32 I’ve begun to reclaim my life and take control over my destructive impulses. I don’t want to leave my girls motherless by losing myself to the slow suicide of drugs. I crave to become someone that people can learn from and possibly respect.

The truth about me is no one can dance my dance. No one can sing my song and no one but me can fill the pages in my book of life. These words represent the truth about me.

Used with permission of Family Crisis Services’ Incarcerated Women’s Program
The truth about me is... I am a good person; I care about others; I hope that no other woman ever feels the way I used to feel about myself; I am more than an embezzler; I am a good mother, although not always the best mother I can be; Sometimes I am too tired to go on.

The truth about me is... I believe in God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit; I like being involved in my church and my community; I believe I have stuff to offer the world; I want to help other women and children; I love with my whole heart; Sometimes I love too much.

The truth about me is... I am not perfect, but I want to be; I value family, home and relationships; I have always been a good citizen and want to be again; I am a good neighbor; I love and appreciate my husband, although I don’t always show it; Most of the time I believe your needs are way more important than my own.

The truth about me is... I carry guilt; I carry pride; I carry anger and hurt; I carry love; I carry devotion; Most of the time I will want to carry you.

THE TRUTH ABOUT ME IS...

By Becky

RESTORATIVE ARTS AND AGING IN PRISON

Anne Katz, Ron Levine, and Aileen Hongo

Introduction

The correctional environment is often opaque and difficult to understand outside of commercial reality shows. As part of the "Marking Time, Prison Arts and Activism Conference," this article will present a unique collaboration of creative art therapy and compelling imagery of aging inmates depicting the toll of decades of incarceration through photographs, artwork, and narratives.

Photographic imagery brings to life an aging population that is often forgotten and neglected. Art projects aim to provide inmates with coping skills to decrease depression, dissociation, and aggression and at the same time instill hope, self-esteem and ultimately better overall health. All projects involve individual creativity and lively interaction to promote social skills, confidence, and self-esteem. The overall goal is to decrease distress, improve the quality of life, and educate others about aging in prison utilizing restorative art.

In an environment beset with tension, stress, and volatility, prisoners develop intuitive mistrust and defenses as a means of survival. Opposition, dependency, and illiteracy are major obstacles to effective therapy in prison. There has been extensive use of art therapy for repressed populations such as victims of domestic violence and abused children in the outside world. However, little has been done to offer art therapy in the older prison population, a group prone to depression and despair. Yet this vulnerable population is the most costly in terms of chronic care.

The "Healing Squad," is a group of volunteer student interns led by Aileen Hongo (MSW/MSG) from the University of Southern California and supervised by Dr. Anne Katz from the USC School of Social Work. It provides multiple art workshops that create a safe, non-judgmental environment for older adult prisoners at the California Institution for Women, California Medical Facility, Central California Women’s Facility, San Quentin State Prison, California Institution for Men and California Men’s Colony. The Healing Squad goals are: to build interpersonal skills and develop trust; take responsibility for behavior; decrease isolation, stress, and depression; build social skills, self-esteem, and confidence; encourage prisoners to be role models for one another; develop peer leadership skills; decrease the need for medication; be more compliant in the general population and increase productivity in daily life activities. The Healing Squad provides a unique opportunity for personal growth among a group of peers. Peer support amongst older prisoners serves as a healing and coping tool in a difficult environment often not suited for the needs of the aging.
ART AND THE AGING PRISONER

Aging issues, such as slowdown of mobility, poor vision, and loss of hearing acuity are just a few of the natural processes of aging that can handicap the daily activities of living for aging female prisoners. Isolation, loneliness, and despair can result in depression and exposure of these feelings can add to the risk of predation. Despite all intentions of the criminal justice system to conform prisoners to uniformity, they are still humans with a need for identity and self-actualization. Recidivism rates show few prisoners overcome the many obstacles in their lives (Santos, 2007). Though technology continues to advance at lightning speed in the outside world, efforts to respond to the correctional system remain stagnant. Warehousing offenders and extinguishing hope while they wait for calendar pages to turn can only create more visits to the mental health unit.

The lack of support and rehabilitation renders the aging prisoner as the forgotten minority. Once in the penal system, the vulnerabilities of aging become exacerbated by inadequate facilities unable to meet the needs of an aging population. Studies have indicated that older adults benefit from wellness programs and health initiatives (Wahidin, 2004). Though isolation may be the initial punishment, chronic warehousing diminishes functionality, increased recidivism, and ultimately costs everyone regardless of the stakes. Programs, such as art therapy, can perhaps reduce the number of visits to the mental health unit and costly medication.

The Healing Squad’s work corroborates the findings of Gussak, who delineates the benefits that art therapy may have in prison: a) art is helpful in the prison environment, given the disabilities extant in this population such as low educational levels, illiteracy, and other obstacles to verbal communication and cognitive development; b) art allows the expression of complex materials in a simpler manner; c) art does not require that the prisoner know, admit, or discuss what they have disclosed in an environment that is dangerous, and any unintended disclosure can be threatening; d) art promotes disclosure, even while the inmate and/or client is not compelled to discuss feelings and ideas that might leave him vulnerable; e) art has the advantage of bypassing unconscious and conscious defenses, including pervasive dishonesty; f) art can diminish pathological symptoms without verbal interpretation; g) art supports creative activity in prison and provides necessary diversion and emotional escape; h) art permits the inmate and/or client to express himself in a manner acceptable to the inside and outside culture (Gussak, 2007).

ART THERAPY INTERVENTIONS – A PILOT STUDY

As part of an internship program, a small six-session pilot project was conducted by Dr. Anne Katz and Aileen Hongo in the summer of 2012 with the Golden Girls, inmates aged 55+ at the California Institution for Women, on the value of art in the correctional setting. The pilot study used a quasi-experimental, single group pre- test/ post- test design on two separate occasions. We hypothesized that if older female prison inmates received art therapy services, then they would exhibit marked change in their behavior and attitude, and an improvement in their mood within the correctional environment.

Group A consisted of 12 women over the age of 55 in a one-time art therapy project. Group B consisted of 11 women over the age of 55 participating in a six-session art therapy project. None of the women were suicidal and all functioned normally in terms of activities of daily living and cognitive skills. However, many were concerned that their feelings of depression and isolation escalated during down time. Almost unanimously, they did not want to go to the mental health unit for fear that it would mark their record when called for parole hearings. The hope was that the art therapy sessions would provide a safe and harmonious environment to be creative and relieve stress even for a few hours. Each member was asked to complete a pre- and post- survey designed by the authors. The pre- test results of the surveys and assessments were compared to the post test results to ascertain change. A CES-D test for depression was given prior (pre-test) to the program and then after (post-test) to measure effectiveness of the art therapy program. A survey was also implemented at the last session.

The hope was that the art therapy sessions would provide a safe and harmonious environment to be creative and relieve stress even for a few hours. Each member was asked to complete a pre- and post- survey designed by the authors. The pre- test results of the surveys and assessments were compared to the post test results to ascertain change. A CES-D test for depression was given prior (pre-test) to the program and then after (post-test) to measure effectiveness of the art therapy program. A survey was also implemented at the last session.
THE PROJECTS

"Thank you for bringing some sunshine into our lives…"

Both groups, A and B began with an introductory project; the six-session program is described below. Based on Dr. Gussak’s work, we started with individual projects and progressed to a group project. Prisoner comments are provided at the end of each session description.

INTRODUCTION PROJECT

Participants were given the opportunity to think about and then design on paper something connected to themselves to share with the group. This could be a favorite hobby, pet, experience, etc. Each participant stood up and told their story.

“I learned so much about my friends here that I didn’t even know and many of us have been together over twenty years!”

“This was scary but fun.”

NAME EMBELLISHMENT

The second project provided a creative opportunity for prisoners to design a personal name embellishment. One of the most traumatic experiences of incarceration is the loss of identity. Identification numbers, often combined with unit numbers, are used in place of names. This particular art therapy exercise offered prisoners the opportunity to embrace their given name.

“I hated my name until I came to prison…”

“I used my nickname today — something I haven’t thought about in years and only my close friends and family know.”

“Celebrate your name! (Not your number!)”

THE LEFT HANDED DAY

This project involved the creation of art work with the non-dominant hand to utilize the ‘unused’ side of the brain and explore different feelings of comfort and creativity. Some prisoners kept a journal of left and right handed dialogue.

“Wow, different things came out of my non-dominant hand — it was really cool and I could do it in the safety of my room.”

“I thought it was crazy at first — my left hand ‘talking’ to my right? But it worked! It was weird but I was able to express a lot of feelings.”

MY FIRST HOME

This project involved asking prisoners to draw their first home or school, providing an avenue of self-exploration and reflection into the past. Artwork ranged from a happy home with a big back yard to hillsides where one escaped the turmoil and violence at home.

“Thank you for taking us back to a time of fond memories…”

“I didn’t have a happy home but I used to escape to the hills behind my house — it gave me peace.”

“Thanksgiving used to be my favorite holiday — now the Holidays are difficult and I’m always happy when January rolls around…”

“Sure, different things came out of my non-dominant hand — it was really cool and I could do it in the safety of my room.”

“I thought it was crazy at first — my left hand ‘talking’ to my right? But it worked! It was weird but I was able to express a lot of feelings.”
RESULTS

Quantitative results were not available due to inconsistent group attendance. However, surveys were positive with overwhelming requests to continue the program. Prisoners experienced an improvement in their mood and decreased depression. Qualitative results were therefore overwhelmingly positive.

More research is needed but art therapy clearly has an advantage in the often violent and tense environment of prison. Older adults are particularly vulnerable and art therapy may provide an effective means of bypassing unconscious and conscious defenses, promoting disclosure and diminishing symptoms without verbal interpretation (Gussak, 2007). It is inspirational to see that even after thirty to forty years of oppressive incarceration, the resiliency of the human spirit prevails through the creative power of art.

REFERENCES


MEMORY BOX

The idea of the memory box was to provide a safe place for keepsake items externally and internally. Privacy and ownership are minimal in an oppressive environment and the memory box can bring a sense of comfort to the inmate during difficult moments.

“I’m going to keep it for myself as a safe place”
“I’m going to give it to my kids, I want them to remember me”
“A special place for keepsakes and thoughts”

WHITE PAPER SCULPTURE

Prison is rigid, redundant and mundane. This project involved creating a white paper sculpture to provide a free, creative experience using only paper and glue. Prisoners had to tear and shape paper with their fingers.

“It’s amazing what we could do with just paper and glue – cool 3-dimensional stuff! And what’s more amazing is that there is not one same theme from any of us!”
“I can do this in my cell – thank you!”
“Please come back – I feel at peace today because of you!”

“I like coming to this class, I can be me 4 a time…”

“Thank you for the opportunity to escape my mind-chains of prison… God bless this program.”

“Thank you for bringing us something that will stay with us long after lockdown…”

“Art helps me unwind and think beyond this life here…”

“Thank you for bringing us something that will stay with us long after lockdown…”

“This workshop is like a breath of fresh air in an otherwise stifling environment.”

“Please come back – I feel at peace today because of you!”

“Thank you for the opportunity to escape my mind-chains of prison… God bless this program.”

“Art helps me unwind and think beyond this life here…”

“I like coming to this class, I can be me 4 a time…”

“Thank you for the opportunity to escape my mind-chains of prison… God bless this program.”

“Art helps me unwind and think beyond this life here…”

“I like coming to this class, I can be me 4 a time…”
I have been teaching a college level Art Appreciation class at Mountainview Youth Correctional facility through the NJ STEP program. Given the limitations of a correctional institute I felt like we were missing the ability to learn from the power of making. Professor Nicole Fleetwood and Professor Sarah Tobias from the Institute for Research on Women generously reached out to me with the idea to do an art workshop in conjunction with their “Marking Time: Prison Art and Activism Conference.” The workshop was held on March 11-13, 2015.

During three days at Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility, my Art Appreciation class of twenty eight students and I made state issued shoes and boots entirely out of cardboard. The concept behind this project was: “Walk a Mile in My Shoes,” with the idea being to transform a throwaway material into a powerful learning tool for others.

The first day I introduced my guys to examples of other artworks made within correctional institutions. We traced the key components and parts of our shoes, the sole, the heel, etc. Because no scissors or cutting devices were allowed into the facility, I took home the tracings and gladly spent about 10 hours cutting out cardboard shoe parts.

At the beginning of class on day two my guys were panicking a bit and unsure if this project would work out. At this point we had the pieces to a puzzle and each individual had to resolve it in their own way. I spoke to all of them and reassured them that with faith and perseverance we would together transform this throwaway material into something amazing.

By day three it was obvious that we had shoes. We started collaging the surface and the shoes began to be real. I had my guys thinking about their own personal narrative and asked them to think about how they could incorporate parts of their story into the final design.

Before we left on the final day I told my guys how proud of them I was and that they had pulled off the impossible. If you can make a shoe out of cardboard within the limitations of this place, then anything is possible... you see transformation... you made it happen.
Notes on Contributors

Aileen Hongo is a geriatric social worker who has facilitated creative therapy and healthy aging workshops for older adults in California prisons since 2006. Creative arts provide a therapeutic means of coping with the despair, depression, and trauma of incarceration for the most vulnerable population behind bars.

Anne D. Katz, Ph.D., is a Professor of Clinical Gerontology and the Co-Director of the Tingstad Older Adult Counseling Center (TOACC). She is also part of the USC Geriatric Assessment Program (GAP) interdisciplinary team that performs complete geriatric assessments for people 60+ at TOACC. Her research interests include: HIV/AIDS and older adults, women's issues and aging, women aging in prison, caregiver stress, and counseling older adults.

Bonnie Kerness earned a Masters in Social Work and has served as a human rights advocate on behalf of men, women, and children in US prisons since 1975, as Director of AFSC's Prison Watch Program. She has served as Associate Director and Acting Director of the AFSC Criminal Justice Program in Newark, the National Coordinator of the Campaign to Stop Control Unit Prisons and served on the board of directors of the World Organization for Human Rights, USA. Bonnie serves on the advisory board of California Prison Focus; Critical Resistance; Women Who Never Give Up, and Solitary Watch. She has helped publish, "Our Children's House," the pamphlet from which a play by the same name was written and has been performed. She has also helped publish "Torture in US Prisons—Evidence of US Human Rights Violations,; "The Prison Inside the Prison: Control Units, Supermax Prisons and Devices of Torture," "The Survivor’s Manual," and "Inalienable Rights: An AFSC Resource Guide." Ms. Kerness speaks widely at universities, community spaces, and religious institutions on behalf of people in prison about US human rights violations of the UN Convention Against Torture, and on the history and current state of mass imprisonment in the US. She has written and been quoted in articles, books, and other publications on prison related subjects.

Phyllis Kornfeld has been teaching creative art to incarcerated people for over thirty years. Her programs are ongoing and some participants have been in her art workshops continuously for as long as 10 years. At present, she conducts weekly workshops at two Connecticut men’s prisons and one Massachusetts county jail. Kornfeld is the author of Cellblock Visions: Prison Art in America, (Princeton University Press), and a contributor to Art Education Beyond the Classroom (Palgrave MacMillan). She has published essays and articles, and lectures widely. Her "Cellblock Visions Permanent Collection" of drawings, paintings, and 3D objects created by her workshop participants tours university art galleries. She is the founder of several public projects whereby prison artists donate their artwork to benefit people in need. “The Envelope Project: Incarcerated Men and Women Making Art for a Cause” sold hundreds of original pieces of envelope art from six institutions at the Outsider Art Fair in NYC.

Ron Levine is a commercial and fine art photographer splitting his time between New York and Montreal. His documentary work has earned him international acclaim, resulting in solo exhibitions in Australia, Ireland and Mexico as well as the United States and Canada. His editorial work has been seen in Travel & Leisure, The New York Times, ESPN Magazine and Forbes and he has won awards from Communication Arts, PDN, Applied Arts and How magazines. He is the recipient of numerous grants and his work can be found in museums and private collections.

Ojore Lutalo is an artist who was released from Trenton State Penitentiary on 26 August, 2009 by way of a court order. He maxed out after 28 years, 22 of which were spent in the Management Control Unit (Solitary Confinement). Ojore began creating art both as a way to maintain his sanity and to more adequately convey to his friends the physical and emotional reality he experienced within solitary confinement. Since his release in 2008, Ojore dedicates himself to assisting the American Friends Service Committee in its attempt to expose the true nature and extent of long term isolation, its effect both on the prisoner individually as well as society at large.

J.D. McGuire is an artist with a BFA in Painting from Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA in Sculpture from Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University. His work has been displayed in galleries and exhibitions nationally. He has also worked as an art instructor at Rutgers, Centenary College, Raritan Valley Community College, and Mountainview Youth Correctional Facility.

Dr. Eleanor Novek is an Associate Professor of Communication whose research focuses on communication in prisons, nonviolence, qualitative research, service-learning, and outsider journalism. She teaches courses in civic journalism; ethics; gender, race, and media; peace communication; and research methods. She is state coordinator for Alternatives to Violence Project, a nonprofit that offers workshops on nonviolent conflict resolution.

Sean Saifa Wall is an intersex activist currently residing in Atlanta, GA. He is the creator of EMERGE, a concept design that documents and reaffirms Black life with visual artistry. Saifa has worked in HIV prevention for over ten years and is an integrated community organizer, somatic student practitioner, and researcher.

Tracey Ziegler began creating exhibitions of her art in maximum-security prisons after having spent 20 years of exhibiting in commercial galleries, seeking a different audience. She now conducts ongoing prison art workshops in various states. In addition, she has a network of 2300 prisoners throughout US with whom she develops through-the-mail-art projects.
PRISON ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

MUSIC

Arts and Music Programs for Education in Detention Centers
http://www.engage.northwestern.edu/AMPED/

The Arts and Music Programs for Education in Detention Centers (AMPED) create an opportunity for students at Northwestern University to engage with the incarcerated population at Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center and provide mentorship through music.

Contact:
Kerry Brown, AMPED Coordinator
Email: kerry-brown@northwestern.edu

Changing Tunes
http://www.changingtunes.org.uk

Changing Tunes, located in Bristol, England, provides education in various aspects of music production and performance designed to help rehabilitate incarcerated populations.

Contact:
Changing Tunes
PO Box 2646
Bristol, BS5 9BU
Phone: 0844 414 6083
Email: info@changingtunes.org.uk

Genuine Voices
http://www.genuinevoices.com

Genuine Voices strives to provide youth in secure facilities, as well as other institutional settings, with education in music, including composition.

Contact:
P.O. Box 665 Needham Hts., MA 02494
Phone: 617 448 7227
Email: genuinevoices@gmail.com

Good Vibrations Project – Imagination for People
http://www.good-vibrations.org.uk/

Good Vibrations, located in the UK, provides incarcerated populations with instruments in order to make music and develop skills during their time in prison.

Contact:
Email (online form): http://www.good-vibrations.org.uk/contact

Heavenly Voices Choir
http://www.bachwithverse.org/the-heavenly-voices-choir.html

The Heavenly Voices Choir is a group that consists of incarcerated men at Howard R. Young Correctional Institution in Wilmington, Delaware. The choir members participate in four chapel services a week, and undergo ministry training.

Contact:
P.O. Box 7653
Newark, DE 19714-7653
Phone: 302 998 5002
Email: kadileprod@verizon.net
Email: prisonoutreachde@comcast.net

The Irene Taylor Trust – Music In Prisons Project
http://irenetaylortrust.com

The Music In Prisons Project is a five day project of music making that allows prisoners to form a group and record CDs of their own music, which are sent to their families.

Contact:
Unit 401 Box Mare Centre
241-251 Fermdale Road
London, SW11 8BJ
Phone: 020 7755 3222
Email: Sara Lee, Artistic Director – sara@musicinprisons.org.uk

Jail Guitar Doors
http://jalguitardoors.org/about.html

Jail Guitar Doors provides outreach programs that involve music education for incarcerated populations.

Contact:
Email: contact@jalguitardoors.org

PERFORMING ARTS

Actors’ Gang – The Prison Project:
http://www.theactorgang.com/prisonproject

The Prison Project, a project of the Actors’ Gang, puts on three 8-week acting workshops a year inside the California prison system. The project aims toward rehabilitation for prisoners and a reduction of recidivism rates through self-expression.

Contact:
The Ivy Substation
9870 Venice Blvd.
Culver City, CA
Phone: 310 838 4264
prisonproject@theactorgang.com

And Still We Rise
http://andstillwerise.org/about/mission-and-vision/

And Still We Rise is an acting project focused on giving formerly incarcerated people and their loved ones a platform to express themselves and enact social change.

Contact:
Dev Luthra
Phone: 857 719 3684
Email: andstillwerise@gmail.com

Art from Ashes
http://www.artfromashes.org

Art from Ashes seeks to provide empowerment workshops to youth from marginalized communities. These creative workshops include the Casting Shadows program, which strives to achieve transformation for youth through theater.

Contact:
853 Inca St., Suite 1A
Denver, Colorado, 80204-4364
Phone: 303 837 1590
Email: info@artfromashes.org

Send Musicians to Prison
http://sendmusicianstoprison.com

Send Musicians to Prison is based in Nashville, Tennessee. The program is comprised of singers, songwriters, and other musicians. The performers spend 2-4 days a month in Nashville jails performing for people who are incarcerated, as well as 6 weeks a year in Los Angeles, and 6 weeks a year in New York City.

Contact:
Email (online form): http://sendmusicianstoprison.com/donate/

Prison Concerts Project – Bach With Verse
http://www.bachwithverse.org/PrisonConcerts.html

Bach With Verse seeks to bring performances by Richard “Dobbs” Hartshorne (his One Man Show combines Bach’s Solo Cello Suites with comedic stories told by Hartshorne) to prisons, including New Hampshire State Prisons, Connecticut, and San Quentin State Prison in California.

Contact:
Phone: 603 209 4133
Email: bachwithverse@yahoo.com

MARKING TIME

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Prison Arts & Activism Resource Guide
The Educational Shakespeare Company utilizes drama and film in order to address issues facing marginalized people within society, including prisoners and ex-prisoners.

Contact: Esc (Educational Shakespeare Company) 
Managed Workspaces, First Floor 109 – 115 Royal Avenue 
Belfast, BT 1 1FF 
Northern Ireland 
Phone: 028 9024 3338 
Email: info@esfilm.com

Anathema Art – Prison Art across the U.S. 
http://www.anatemahart.org
Anathema Art allows incarcerated artists to explore art as a means of self-expression and personal growth.

Artistic Noise 
http://www.artisticnoise.org/about.php#program
Artistic Noise provides studio arts workshops in which youth in detention facilities are given the opportunity for self-expression and storytelling through art.

Contact: Email: sueem.adelman@artisticnoise.org

Reforming Arts Incorporated, Georgia 
http://www.reformingarts.org
The Theatre Reentry Project, one of the Reforming Arts’ projects, provides an opportunity for women in Georgia’s criminal justice system to create original plays as a way to work through and explore issues surrounding reentry after incarceration.

Contact: 
1570 Monte Dr. 
Suite 414 
Atlanta, GA 30324 
Phone: 678 689 8263 
Email: wendeballew@reformingarts.org

Shakespeare Behind Bars 
http://www.shakespearebehindbars.org/links/popadult/
Shakespeare Behind Bars provides theatrical programming to incarcerated, as well as formerly incarcerated, adults and juveniles as a way to provide an opportunity for successful reentry post-incarceration.

Contact: 
PO Box 35293 
Louisville, KY 40232-3293 
Email: info@shakespearebehindbars.org

VISUAL ARTS

Alliance for California Traditional Arts 
http://www.actaonline.org/content/mission
The Alliance for California Traditional Arts seeks to provide rehabilitation through the arts at Kern Valley State Prison and California State Prison – Corcoran, focusing on folk and traditional art including Ojibwe basketry and African-American quilt-making.

Contact: 
1245 Van Ness Avenue 
Fresno, CA 93721 
Phone: 559 237 9812 
Email (online form): http://www.actaonline.org/content/mission

Artistic Noise 
http://www.artisticnoise.org/about.php#program
Artistic Noise provides studio arts workshops in which youth in detention facilities are given the opportunity for self-expression and storytelling through art.

Contact: 
Email: sueem.adelman@artisticnoise.org

City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program 
http://www.muralarts.org
The Mural Arts Program strives for transformation of places, individuals, communities and institutions, and dialogue about important social issues through art.

Contact: 
Mural Arts Center 
Thomas Eakins House 1727-29 Mt. Vernon Street 
Philadelphia, PA 19130 
Phone: 215 685 0750 
Email: info@muralarts.org

Prison Arts & Activism Resource Guide
**Eastern State Penitentiary**
Artists can install art in Eastern State Penitentiary’s cellblocks in order to create a bridge between the history of the Penitentiary and the way the criminal justice system operates today.

Contact:
Sean Kelley
Senior Vice President, Director of Public Programming
Phone: 215 236 5111
Email: skel@easternstate.org

**Prisoners of Age**
http://www.prisonersofage.com
Prisoners of Age is a series of photographs and interviews with elderly inmates and corrections personnel conducted in prisons both in the United States and Canada since 1996.

Contact:
Ron Levine, Photographer
Email: ron@ronlevinephotography.com

**Project PAINT**
https://ucsdscx.wordpress.com/2014/05/01/laura-pecenco-launches-project-paint/
Project PAINT is a volunteer-run visual arts program for prisoners at the Richard J. Donovan Correctional Facility in California.

Email: prisonersinitiative@gmail.com

**WRITING, LITERATURE, AND POETRY PROGRAMS**

**American Prison Writing Archive**
http://apw.dhinitiative.org/
The American Prison Writing Archive is an online resource for incarcerated populations to contribute their writings and bear witness to the effects of mass incarceration.

Contact:
Dan Laron, Ph.D.
Email: danlor@hamilton.edu

**Herstory Inside Program – Herstory Writers Workshop**
http://www.herstorywriters.org/in_the_justice_arena.html
Herstory Writers Workshop is a program in which incarcerated women and girls create literary publications to share their stories.

Contact:
Kathy Goodkin
Email: kathy@hostpointwriting.org

**Windows from Prison**
http://www.windowsfromprison.com
Windows from Prison is a program that strives for social change through the power of photography in order to engage students, faculty, NGOs, family members of incarcerated individuals, former prisoners, and policy makers in issues surrounding mass incarceration.

Contact:
Email (Online form): http://www.windowsfromprison.com/contact.html

**Windows from Prison**
http://www.windowsfromprison.com
Windows from Prison is a program that strives for social change through the power of photography in order to engage students, faculty, NGOs, family members of incarcerated individuals, former prisoners, and policy makers in issues surrounding mass incarceration.

Contact:
Email (Online form): http://www.windowsfromprison.com/contact.html
Justice Denied – The Magazine for the Wrongfully Convicted
http://www.justicedenied.org
Justice: Denied is a magazine focused on publicizing and sharing stories of wrongful convictions.
Contact:
PO Box 66291
Seattle, WA 98166
Phone: 206 335 4254
Email: contact@justicedenied.org

Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop
http://www.mnpwritings.org
The Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop operates in Minnesota’s state prisons and provides opportunities for fiction writing, essay writing, poetry, spoken word, and story-telling. It is facilitated by children’s literature, fantasy writing, and more.
Contact:
Email: info@mnpwritings.org

Prison English Project
http://www.prisonprogrambrochure.212nation.gov
The Prison English Project brings university-level English courses from Arizona State University to the New Mexico State Penitentiary.
Contact:
Prof. Joe Lockard
PO Box 872012
Tempe, AZ 85287-0302
Email: joe.lockard@asu.edu

Prison Poetry Project
http://www.prisonpoetryworkshop.org
A radio program that sets out to explore the power of prison poetry by broadcasting incarcerated populations’ poetry.
Contact:
Nick Szuberla: 606 454 8664
Email: nickszuberla@gmail.com

Prison Writers Speak Out
http://www.prisonwriters.com
Prison Writers Speak Out is an online collection of stories by incarcerated people about life behind bars.
Contact:
Email: info@prisonwriters.com

Prisoners Poetry – Willamette University
http://www.willamette.edu/people/archives/2013/01/prison_poetry.html
Rey Guisachena and Rei Ayala teach poetry at Oregon State Penitentiary and share their work with the public.
Contact:
Rey Guisachena
Email: reyguisachena@willamette.edu
Rei Ayala
Email: rayala@willamette.edu.

Prisons Foundation
http://www.prisonfoundation.org
Prisons Foundation publishes free downloads of books and guides that are produced by or about incarcerated populations.
Contact:
2532 Virginia Ave. NW, #58043
Washington, DC 20037

SwallowTale Project
https://swallowtaleproject.wordpress.com/2014/03/26/introducing-the-swallowtale-project/
The SwallowTale Project is an effort to share the stories and poems of incarcerated women.
Contact:
Email (online form): https://swallowtaleproject.wordpress.com/contact-us/

Tenacious: a Zine of Art & Writings by Women in Prison
http://resistancebehindbars.org/node/19
Tenacious is a zine that compiles articles, essays, poetry, and art by women who are currently or formerly incarcerated.
Contact:
Valle Law
PO Box 20188
New York, NY 100019
Affiliated with Books Through Bars – NYC

Tenacious: a Zine of Art & Writings by Women in Prison
http://resistancebehindbars.org/node/19
Tenacious is a zine that compiles articles, essays, poetry, and art by women who are currently or formerly incarcerated.
Contact:
Valle Law
PO Box 20188
New York, NY 100019
Affiliated with Books Through Bars – NYC

Write to Release
http://writetorelease.org/about-2/
Write to Release brings creative writing workshops to jails and prisons, and publishes the Write to Release Review.
Contact:
Email: info@writetorelease.org

WritersCorps – Juvenile Hall Program
http://creativewriting.wisc.edu/friends.html
The Writers in Prisons Project consists of educators, writers, performers, scholars and community members throughout Wisconsin who promote self-expression and literacy engagements in prisons.
Contact:
Sean Bishop, Graduate Coordinator
600 N. Park St, H.C. White Rm 6195
University of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53706
Email: mfamilak@english.wisc.edu

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS AND PRISON EDUCATION PROJECTS

Art Therapy in Prison
http://arttherapyinprison.com
Art Therapy in Prison is a web resource that compiles research on art, art history, and incarcerated populations. It is facilitated by staff at Florida State University.
Contact:
Email: arttherapy@pinson.com

Arts and Restorative Justice Program – San Francisco Youth Guidance Center (Community Works)
The Arts and Restorative Justice Program provides opportunities for youth at San Francisco’s Youth Guidance Center to express themselves through Hip Hop, creative writing, and theater.
Contact:
Phone: 415 486 2340
Email: info@communityworkswest.org

Arts-in- Corrections
http://www.caac.ca.gov/Initiatives/sic.php
Arts-in-Corrections comprises a wide range of arts programs for incarcerated populations to facilitate rehabilitation and adjustment to life after release from prison.

Arts in Prison, Inc. – East Hill Singers
http://www.artsinprison.org/about/index.html
Arts in Prison utilize a variety of programs in order to bring art into prisons, including music, poetry, visual art, and writing. One of these programs, the East Hill Singers, is a chorus group located at Lansing Correctional Facility in Lansing, Kansas. This program includes four performances outside of the prison each year.
Contact:
PO Box 23502
Oevaland Park, Kansas 66283
Phone: 913 403 0229
Email: info@artsinprison.org
ArtSpring
http://artspring.org/about/
ArtSpring provides various arts programs to the Florida Department of Corrections including the Inside Out Program, which consists of interdisciplinary arts programming and theater workshops.
Contact:
PO Box 343432
Florida City, FL 33034
Phone: 305 278 1601
Email: artspring@artspring.org

Avodah Dance
http://avodahdance.org
Avodah Dance conducts dance, music, and art residencies and workshops that strive to raise awareness about issues surrounding incarceration, including work with incarcerated women through public performances.
Contact:
Avodah Dance c/o Hebrew Union College
One West 4th Street
New York, NY 10012
Email: avodahdance@gmail.com

Bard Prison Initiative
http://bpi.bard.edu/what-we-do/
The Bard Prison Initiative allows incarcerated women and men to pursue a Bard College degree while in prison.
Contact:
PO Box 5300
Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504-5000
Phone: 845 758 7308
Contact:
Email: bpi@bard.edu

The Beat Within
http://www.thebeatwithin.org
The Beat Within provides incarcerated youth with a safe space to explore and share their experiences through literacy, self-expression, and critical thinking skills.
Contact:
David Inocencio
PO Box 34310
San Francisco, CA 94134
Phone: 415 890 5641
Email: dinocencio@thebeatwithin.org

Bedford Hills College Program – Marymount Manhattan College
http://www.mmm.edu/academics/bedford-hills-college-program.php
The Bedford Hills College Program, facilitated through Marymount Manhattan College, provides prisoners with opportunities to pursue an Associates of Arts degree in Social Sciences and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology. The program also includes college prep courses in writing and math.
Contact:
Cathy Jenkins
Phone: 212 517 0469
Email: cjenkins@mmm.edu

Behind These Prison Walls
http://behindtheseprisontwalls.webs.com
Behind These Prison Walls is an arts program directed toward at-risk youth with the purpose of steering them away from the criminal justice system.
Contact:
Email: Lorenzosteelee2@yahoo.com

Between the Bars: Blogs from Writers in Prisons
https://betweenthebars.org/blogs/
Between the Bars provides an opportunity for incarcerated populations to share their stories online via scanned letters.
Contact:
Email: info@betweenthebars.org

Champaign County Juvenile Detention Center Arts Project
http://ccjdcartsproject.weebly.com/about.html
The CCDC Arts Project involves educating students at the Champaign County Juvenile Detention Center through music, visual arts, and drama.
Contact:
Email (online form): http://ccjdcartsproject.weebly.com/contact-us.html

Children’s Prison Art Project
http://www.childrensprisonart.org
Children’s Prison Arts Project strives to educate juvenile offenders through theater and visual arts.
Contact:
P.O. Box 130584
Houston, TX 77219-0584
Phone: 713 520 7661
Email: childrensprisonart@jbsglobal.net

Community Works
http://communityworkswest.org/index.php/about-us
Community Works facilitates public exhibits, performances, and activism about the impact of incarceration.
Contact:
4601 Telegraph Avenue
Oakland, CA 94609
Phone: 510 486 2340
Email: info@communityworkswest.org

Family Crisis Services Incarcerated Women’s Program
http://familycrisis.org/incarcerated-womens-program/
Offers support groups and creative writing groups for incarcerated women. Developed the art and poetry exhibit “More than a Rap Sheet.”
Contact:
Email (online form): http://familycrisis.org/contact-us/

Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop
http://freemindsbookclub.org/about-us
Free Minds utilizes creative expression, job readiness training, and prevention outreach in order to provide an opportunity for DC youth incarcerated as adults to achieve their full potential.
Contact:
2201 P Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: 202 768 0829
Email: mail@freemindsbookclub.org

Gateways for Incarcerated Youth
http://gateways.evergreen.edu
Gateways for Incarcerated Youth brings academic and creative arts programs, including college preparation, to incarcerated youth. It is a public service program of Evergreen State.
Contact:
Phone: 360 867 6025

Goucher Prison Education Partnership
http://www.goucher.edu/academics/other-academic-offerings/Goucher-prison-education-partnership
The Goucher Prison Education Partnership (GPEP), a division of Goucher College, provides incarcerated populations in Maryland with the opportunity to receive a college education.
Contact:
Director: Amy Roza
Phone: 410 537 6035
Email: amy.roza@goucher.edu

Incarcerated Voices
https://www.incarceratedvoices.com
Incarcerated Voices invites a variety of programming, including a radio broadcast to broaden public understanding of incarceration.
Contact:
Email (online form): https://www.incarceratedvoices.com/contact

Inside Dharma
http://www.insidedharma.net
Inside Dharma is an organization that seeks to provide support for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals through Buddhist teachings and principles.
Contact:
6419 Clemens Ave.
University City, MO 63130
Phone: 314 254 3243
Email: insidedharma@gmail.com

Inside-Out Oregon
http://insideoutoregon.com/about/
Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program creates a link between institutions of higher education and correctional facilities. The program includes a semester or quarter long academic course where undergraduate students from “outside” attend classes with incarcerated students.
Contact:
Melissa Crabbe
Assistant [Inter]national Director, Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program
Email: melissa.crabbe@insideoutcenter.org

Insight-Out Program
http://insight-out.org
Insight-Out works with GRIP (Guiding Rage into Power) Prison Program at San Quentin State Prison to create a process that transforms violent offenders into peacekeepers.
Contact:
Jacques Verduin
Phone: 415 488 1348
Email: jverduin@comcast.net

Insight Prison Project
http://www.insightprisonproject.org
Insight Prison Project is a program operating in San Quentin State Prison that provides rehabilitation to incarcerated populations.
Contact:
PO Box 1516-62
San Rafael, CA 94915
Phone: 415 459 5800
Email: info@insightprisonproject.org
Michigan Women’s Justice & Clemency Project
http://umich.edu/~clemency/

Michigan Women’s Justice & Clemency Project works to free women prisoners who were convicted of murder but who acted in self-defense against abusers and did not receive due process or fair trials; and to conduct public education and advocacy for justice, human rights, and humane alternatives to incarceration for women.

Contact:
Professor Carol Jacobsen
1019 Maiden Lane
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Phone: 734 662 0776
Email: jacobsen@umich.edu

Mountainview Program
http://reptis.newark.rutgers.edu/about/mountainview-program/

Founded by Rutgers History Professor Donald Roden, the Mountainview Program provides incarcerated students with an opportunity to pursue a four year degree at Rutgers University after release, with academic, social, and professional support.

Contact:
Chris Agans
Email: chris.agans@rutgers.edu

Penn Program on Documentaries & the Law
https://www.law.upenn.edu/institutes/documentaries/

The Penn Program on Documentaries & the Law promotes visual legal advocacy, and includes the Clemency Video Project made on behalf of capital defendants and those imprisoned for life without the possibility of parole.

Contact:
Regina Austin
William A. Schubert Professor
Director, Penn Program on Documentaries & the Law
University of Pennsylvania Law School
3501 Sansom Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6204
Phone: 215 898 5185
Email: raustin@law.upenn.edu

Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project
http://p+nap.org/watb.html

Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project provides workshops on poetry, visual arts, film study, and history to men at Stateville Prison in Crest Hill, Illinois.

Contact:
contactpnap@gmail.com

Prison Arts Coalition
http://prisonartscoalition.com/programs/

The Prison Arts Coalition is a national network that provides opportunities for support, information, and partnership to those engaging in prison arts.

Contact:
Becky Mer and Wendy Jason, PAC Managers
Email: pecacolliteadmin@gmail.com

Prison Arts + Education Project
http://www.humsr.auburn.edu/apaep/involved

The Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project is focused on providing education in the arts, humanities, hard sciences, and human sciences to incarcerated adult communities. The APAEP is facilitated through Auburn University.

Contact:
205 Spidle Hall (Mailing address)
220 M. White Smith (Office address)
Auburn, Alabama USA 36849
Phone: 334 844 8946
Email: apapea@auburn.edu

Prison Arts Outreach Program – Boston College
http://www.bc.edu/offices/artscouncil/prison-arts-outreach.html

The Prison Arts Outreach Program connects Boston College students with incarcerated populations. Students (undergraduate or graduate), faculty, and staff volunteer to conduct workshops on theatre, dance, music, art, and creative writing.

Contact:
Email: asp@bc.edu

Prison Arts Program – Offender Victim Ministries
http://offendervictimministries.com/prison-art/

Offender Victim Ministries provides programming that includes courses on music, drama, creative writing, book discussion groups, and visual arts.

Contact:
Nathan Koontz, Director of Prison Ministries
900 N. Poplar, Suite 202
Newton, KS 67114
Phone: 316 283 2038
Email: m-2-om@boglobal.net

Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project
http://p+nap.org/watb.html

Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project provides workshops on poetry, visual arts, film study, and history to men at Stateville Prison in Crest Hill, Illinois.

Contact:
contactpnap@gmail.com

Prison Arts Coalition
http://prisonartscoalition.com/programs/

The Prison Arts Coalition is a national network that provides opportunities for support, information, and partnership to those engaging in prison arts.

Contact:
Becky Mer and Wendy Jason, PAC Managers
Email: pecacolliteadmin@gmail.com

Prison Arts + Education Project
http://www.humsr.auburn.edu/apaep/involved

The Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project is focused on providing education in the arts, humanities, hard sciences, and human sciences to incarcerated adult communities. The APAEP is facilitated through Auburn University.

Contact:
205 Spidle Hall (Mailing address)
220 M. White Smith (Office address)
Auburn, Alabama USA 36849
Phone: 334 844 8946
Email: apapea@auburn.edu

Prison Arts Outreach Program – Boston College
http://www.bc.edu/offices/artscouncil/prison-arts-outreach.html

The Prison Arts Outreach Program connects Boston College students with incarcerated populations. Students (undergraduate or graduate), faculty, and staff volunteer to conduct workshops on theatre, dance, music, art, and creative writing.

Contact:
Email: asp@bc.edu

Prison Arts Program – Offender Victim Ministries
http://offendervictimministries.com/prison-art/

Offender Victim Ministries provides programming that includes courses on music, drama, creative writing, book discussion groups, and visual arts.

Contact:
Nathan Koontz, Director of Prison Ministries
900 N. Poplar, Suite 202
Newton, KS 67114
Phone: 316 283 2038
Email: m-2-om@boglobal.net

Prison Creative Arts Project – University of Michigan:
http://www.lsa.umich.edu/prc

The Prison Creative Arts Project, housed at the University of Michigan, enables faculty and students to work with community members both inside and outside prisons to engage in workshops in theatre, dance, visual art, creative writing, slam poetry, and music.

Contact:
1801 East Quad
701 E. University
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1245
Phone: 734 647 7673
Email: pcapinfo@umich.edu

Prison Diary Program – Anne Frank Center, USA
http://annefrank.com/prison-diary-program/

The Prison Diary Program uses the Diary of Anne Frank as an inspirational tool for incarcerated people.

Contact:
44 Park Place
New York NY 10007
Phone: 212 431 7993
Email: info@annefrank.com

Prison Education Project
http://www.prisoneducationproject.org

The Prison Education Project operates in several California prisons and seeks to reduce recidivism and create a prison-to-school pipeline.

Contact:
Email: prisoneducationproject@gmail.com

Prison Honor Program
http://www.prisonhonorpogram.com/Purpose.htm

The Prison Honor Program, created by prisoners, exists to promote healing and safety in maximum-security prisons.

Contact:
Email: prisonhonorpogram@hotmail.com

Prison Mindfulness Institute
http://www.prisonmindfulness.org/about-us/

The Prison Mindfulness Institute strives to bring mindfulness-based interventions to prisoners, prison staff, and prisoner volunteers to promote rehabilitation and development.

Contact:
11 S. Angel St. #303
Providence, RI 02916
Email (online form): http://www.prisonmindfulness.org/contact-us/
Prison Public Memory Project
http://prisonpubmemory.org
This project utilizes public history, art, and new technologies in order to begin a dialogue with communities about the roles prisons play in our society.
Contact:
Tracy Huling, Founder/Director
Email: tracy@hudsonprisonmemory.org
Brian Buckley, Hudson Site Coordinator
Email: brian@hudsonprisonmemory.org

Prison University Project
http://www.prisonuniversityproject.org
The Prison University Project's goal is to bring higher education programs to San Quentin State Prison.
Contact:
Email (online form): http://www.prisonuniversityproject.org/contact/contact-us

Prison Yoga Project
http://www.prisonyoga.org
The Prison Yoga Project enables prisoners to be able to draw upon what they have learned while doing yoga during everyday situations.
Contact:
P.O. Box 415
Bolinas, CA, 94924

Prisoner Correspondence Project
http://www.prisonercorrespondenceproject.com
The Prisoner Correspondence Project links incarcerated people who identify as gay, lesbian, transgender, genderqueer, two-spirit, intersex, bi-sexual and/or queer in Canada and the United States with people outside of prison who identify as part of these communities.
Contact:
1405 de Maisonneuve O
Montreal, QC H3G 1M8
Phone: 514 648 7583
Email: info@prisonercorrespondenceproject.com

Prisoner Express
http://www.prisonerexpress.org
The Prison Express Program promotes prisoner self-expression through writing and journaling, coordinates a pen pal project for prisoners, and runs a volunteer program to send books to incarcerated people.
Contact:
127 Anabel Taylor Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
Phone: 607 255 6486
Email: ab-1b@cornell.edu

Prodigy: Transforming Young Lives Program
http://www.transformingyounlives.org
Prodigy provides visual and performing arts to youth who either live in high-risk neighborhoods or have been diverted from the juvenile justice system.
Contact:
Phone: 866 963 7622
Email (online form): http://www.transformingyounlives.org/index.php?option=com_form&Itemid=5

Rehabilitation through the Arts
http://www.nta-arts.org
Rehabilitation through the Arts provides five New York State prisons with multi-disciplinary arts programming, including programs in theatre, dance, creative writing, voice, and visual art.
Contact:
12 Huntville Road
Katonah, NY 10536-2002
914 232 7565
info@nta-arts.org

Safe Streets Arts Foundation
http://www.safestreetsarts.org
Safe Streets Arts Foundation helps show and sell the art of prison artists, and also provides incarcerated artists, musicians, and writers with resources, mentors, and connections.
Contact:
2512 Virginia Ave. NW #58043
Washington, DC 20037
Email: staff@safestreetsarts.org

San Quentin Prison Art
http://sanquentinprisonart.com
San Quentin Prison Art sells prison art by incarcerated people on Death Row in San Quentin.
Contact:
855 Cazadero Hwy
Cazadero, CA 95421
Phone: 707 788 6006

Scottish Prison Arts Network
http://www.scottishprisonarts.net
The Scottish Prison Arts Network is a network that seeks to connect artists engaged in the field of criminal justice.
Contact:
Artlink Central, Cowane Centre
Cowane Street, Stirling, FK9 1LP
Email: mhin@p-r-n-co.uk

Suspension Stories
http://www.suspensionstories.com/art/
Suspension Stories seeks to reveal issues surrounding the school-to-prison pipeline through a youth-led participatory action research project.
Contact:
chicagojustice@gmail.com

Sustainability in Prisons Project
http://sustainabilityinprisons.org
The Sustainability in Prisons Project creates programming that connects incarcerated populations with biologists and farmers in order to expose them to science and conservation.
Contact:
Kel Bush, SFF Program Manager
Lab 2 2257, Evergreen State College
2700 Evergreen Parkway NW
Olympia, WA 98505
Phone: 360 867 6863
Email: bushk@evergreen.edu

Theatre of Hearts — Youth First
http://www.theatreofhearts.org/page_id=37
Theatre Of Hearts — Youth First brings multi-disciplinary arts and educational programs to schools and community sites for youth aged 4-18 throughout Los Angeles County.
Contact:
672 South Lafayette Park Place, Suite 47
Los Angeles, CA 90037-5238
Phone: 213 364 6878
Email: info@theatreofhearts.org

Truth Be Told
http://www.truth-be-told.org/about-ft/
Truth Be Told is an organization that provides programming focused on developing skills in writing, public speaking, or performance arts for incarcerated women.
Contact:
P.O. Box 40221
Austin, Texas 78704-0221
Phone: 512 292 6200
Email (online form): http://www.truth-be-told.org/contact-us/

Voices Behind Walls
http://voicesbehindwalls.org/aboutus/
Voices Behind Walls (VBW) promotes creative expression and education for youth, adults, and families involved with the justice system.
Contact:
Email: voicesbehindwalls@gmail.com

Voices Unbroken
http://www.voicesunbroken.org/
#Impact/C4ty
Voices Unbroken provides creative writing, communications, and leadership programs to young people in detention.
Contact:
1414 Metropolitan Avenue, 2nd Floor
Bronx, NY 10462
Phone: 718 684 2125
Email: info@voicesunbroken.org

William James Association – Prison Arts Project
http://williamjamesassociation.org/prison_arts/
The William James Association Prison Arts Project provides transformative arts experiences in nontraditional settings, working with prisoners, high-risk youth, and parolees.
Contact:
P.O. Box 1632
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
Phone: 831 607 8952
Email: info@williamjamesassociation.org

Women = Prison
http://womensandprison.org
Women and Prison: A Site for Resistance comprises of an installation, as well as a website and zine that document women's experiences in the criminal justice system.
Contact:
4001 N. Ravenswood #204 B
Chicago, IL 60613
Phone: 773 857 7300
Email: info@womensandprison.org

Women Rising / Rising Voices
http://www.communityworkswest.org/index.php/women-rising-voices
Rising Voices brings weekly creative writing workshop to incarcerated women at San Francisco’s County Jail II and offers paid writing and performance internships to previously incarcerated women.
Contact:
4681 Telegraph Avenue
Oakland, CA 94609
Phone: 510 486 2340
Email: info@communityworkswest.org

Women + Prison
http://womenandprison.org
Women and Prison: A Site for Resistance comprises of an installation, as well as a website and zine that document women's experiences in the criminal justice system.
Contact:
4001 N. Ravenswood #204 B
Chicago, IL 60613
Phone: 773 857 7300
Email: info@womensandprison.org

Women Rising / Rising Voices
http://www.communityworkswest.org/index.php/women-rising-voices
Rising Voices brings weekly creative writing workshop to incarcerated women at San Francisco’s County Jail II and offers paid writing and performance internships to previously incarcerated women.
Contact:
4681 Telegraph Avenue
Oakland, CA 94609
Phone: 510 486 2340
Email: info@communityworkswest.org
Support for Incarcerated People and their Families

**Alternatives to Violence Project**
http://avpusa.org/

The Alternatives to Violence Project works nationally and internationally in prisons and in communities to provide conflict management workshops and to encourage people to live nonviolent lives.

Contact:
1050 Selby Ave.
St. Paul MN 55104
Phone: 888-278-7820
Email: info@avpusa.org

**American Friends Service Committee Prison Watch Program**
https://afc.org/category/topic/prison-watch

American Friends Service Committee Prison Watch Program monitors human rights abuses in U.S. federal and state prisons, focusing particularly on the use of isolation and torture.

Contact:
Bonnie Kerness
89 Market Street, 6th floor
Newark NJ, 07102
Phone: 973-645-3102
Email: bkerness@afc.org

**Barrios Unidos**
http://www.barriosunidos.net

San Francisco's Barrios Unidos Prison Project is dedicated to providing cultural and spiritual education, support, and hope to incarcerated individuals. The Project advocates for prison policy reform and programs that reduce recidivism, support re-entry, and re-unify families.

Contact:
1817 Soquel Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062
Phone: 831-457-8208
Email: name@barriosunidos.net

**California Appellate Project**
http://www.cap-ssf.org

The California Appellate Project in San Francisco (CAP-SF) provides legal resources for people facing prosecution.

Contact:
101 Second Street, Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: 415-495-0500
Fax/simile: 415-495-5616

**California Coalition for Women Prisoners**
http://womenprisoners.org

California Coalition for Women Prisoners strives to raise awareness of the institutional violence faced by those currently incarcerated within the Prison Industrial Complex (including populations such as women, transgender people, and communities of color) through grassroots organizing, as well as publishing a newsletter called The Fire Inside (http://www.womenprisoners.org/fire/).

Contact:
1540 Market St., Suite 490
San Francisco, CA 94102
Phone: 415-295-7036 ext. 4
Email: info@womenprisoners.org

**Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services**
http://www.cases.org

Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES) assists individuals in living productive lives by running programs that allow judges to offer alternatives to incarceration.

Contact:
151 Lawrence Street, 3rd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Phone: 212 553-6300
Email: info@cases.org

**Center for Constitutional Rights**
http://ccrjustice.org

The Center for Constitutional Rights seeks to protect the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Center strives to utilize law as a force for social change.

Contact:
686 Broadway, 7th floor
New York, NY 10012
Phone: 212-614-6464
Email (online form): http://ccrjustice.org/contacting-center-constitutional-rights

**Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights**
http://www.prisonerhealth.org

The Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights uses education, research, and advocacy to improve the health and human rights of populations involved in the criminal justice system.

Contact:
8 Third Street, 2nd floor
Providence, RI 02906
Phone: 401-793-4783
Email: bbrodmann@lifespan.org

**Center for Young Women’s Development**
http://cywd.org

The Center for Young Women’s Development strives for the empowerment of young women who are incarcerated.

Contact:
832 Folson Street, Suite #700
San Francisco, CA 94107
Phone: 415-703-8800

**Citizens for Juvenile Justice**
http://www.cjj.org

Citizens for Juvenile Justice seeks to improve the juvenile justice system in Massachusetts through conducting research, advocacy, and educating the public on issues around the juvenile justice system.

Contact:
44 School Street, Suite 400
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
Phone: 617 538 1050
Email: cjj@cj.org

**Communities United Against Police Brutality**
http://www.cuapb.org

Communities United Against Police Brutality/FM addresses day-to-day abuses of police brutality, with the ultimate goal of creating resistance to the abuse of authority by police.

Contact:
4200 Cedar Ave S.
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Phone: 612-874-7867
Email (online form): http://www.cuapb.org/contact-us

**Communities United for Police Reform**
http://changehenry.org

Communities United for Police Reform pushes for legislation to end profiling and discrimination by police organizations in New York City, including discriminatory “stop and frisk” practices.

Contact:
Email (online form): http://changehenry.org/contact

**Critical Resistance**
http://criticalresistance.org

Critical Resistance’s ultimate goal is to build an international movement to end the prison industrial complex.

Contact:
1904 Franklin Street, Suite 504
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: 510-444-0484
Email: email@criticalresistance.org

**Equal Justice Initiative**
http://www.eji.org

The Equal Justice Initiative provides legal representation to defendants and incarcerated populations who have not received fair and just treatment within the legal system.

Contact:
122 Commerce St.
Montgomery, Alabama 36104
Phone: 334-269-1823
Email: contact_us@eji.org

**Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted People’s Movement**
https://fpmpmovement.wordpress.com

Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted People’s Movement utilizes litigation, advocacy, and mass mobilization in order to transform the criminal justice system and find alternatives to incarceration.

Contact:
Alysha:
916-501-9988
Fange:
562-688-0472

**Fresh Lifelines for Youth**
http://flyprogram.org

Fresh Lifelines for Youth combines legal education, leadership training, and mentoring to help youth on probation.

Contact:
568 Valley Way
Milpitas, CA 95035
Phone: 408-263-2630
Email (online form): http://flyprogram.org/contact

**Innocence Project**
http://www.innocenceproject.org

The Innocence Project is a national litigation and public policy organization that utilizes DNA testing in order to help incarcerated people prove their innocence.

Contact:
40 Worth St., Suite 701
New York, NY 10013
Phone: 212-364-5340
Email: info@innocenceproject.org
**Just Detention International**

http://www.justdetention.org

Just Detention International works toward the end of sexual abuse in all forms of detention.

Contact:
3325 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 340
Los Angeles, CA 90010
Phone: 213 384 1400
Email: info@justdetention.org

**Justice Committee**

http://www.justicecommittee.com

Justice Committee strives to build a movement against police violence and systemic racism in New York City.

Contact:
105 East 22nd St, Room 105
New York, NY 10010
Phone: 212 614 5343
Email: info@justicecommittee.com

**Last Mile**

https://thelastmile.org

The Last Mile is a program focused on providing business and technology training for incarcerated populations in order to better prepare them for gainful employment upon their release.

Contact:
info@thelastmile.org

**Legal Aid Society**


Legal Aid Society provides education, training and comprehensive legal representation to its clients.

Contact:
199 Water Street
New York, NY 10014
Phone: 212 577 3300

**Legal Services for Prisoners With Children**

http://www.prisonerswithchildren.org

Legal Services for Prisoners With Children organizes communities impacted by the criminal justice system and advocates to release incarcerated people, to restore human and civil rights, and to reunify families and communities.

Contact:
1540 Market St, Suite 490
San Francisco, CA 94102
Phone: 415 255 7036
Email: info@prisonerswithchildren.org

**Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition**

http://www.maineprisoneradvocacy.org/index.html

The Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition (MPAC) promotes ethical, positive, and humane changes within Maine’s prison system.

Contact:
P.O. Box 2173
Waterville, ME 04903-2173
Email: maineprisoneradvocacy@yahoo.com

**Mothers Against Police Brutality**

http://www.mothersagainstpolicebrutality.com/about

Mothers Against Police Brutality (MAPB) is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic coalition that organizes mothers across the nation to fight for civil rights, police accountability, and police reform.

Contact:
512 N. Hampton Rd. #148
Desoto, TX 75115

**NAACP – Legal Defense and Education Fund**

http://www.naacpldf.org

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF) challenges inadequate legal representation, discriminatory jury selection, capital punishment, criminal statutes, and harsh sentencing that disproportionately affect the African American community.

Contact:
40 Rector Street, 5th floor
New York, NY 10006
Phone: 212 965 2200

**National Police Accountability Project**

http://www.npap.org

The National Police Accountability Project (NPAP) consists of plaintiff’s lawyers, law students, and legal workers, and strives to end police abuse of authority through coordinated legal action, public education, and support for grassroots as well as victims’ organizations.

Contact:
499 7th Avenue 12N
New York, NY 10018
Phone: 212 630 9959
Email: npap@npap.org

**A New Way of Life Reentry Project**

http://www.anewwayoflife.org

A New Way of Life provides housing, support services, and leadership development to formerly incarcerated women in South Central Los Angeles to enable them to successfully transition from prison.

Contact:
P.O. Box 875288
Los Angeles, CA 90087
Phone: 323 563 3575

**New York Civil Liberties Union**

http://www.nyclu.org

The New York affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union promotes and protects the values embodied in the Bill of Rights, the U.S. Constitution, and the New York Constitution.

Contact:
125 Broadway, New York NY 10010
Phone: 212 607 5300

**New York State Prisoner Justice Network**

http://www.nysprisonerjustice.org

The New York State Prisoner Justice Network strives to explore, plan, strategize, and organize collaboration between organizations and individuals working toward changing the criminal justice system.

Contact:
33 Central Avenue
Albany, NY 12210
Phone: 518 484 4037
Email: nypisprisonerjustice@gmail.com

**New York Therapeutic Communities, Inc.**

http://www.stayout.org/about.php

New York Therapeutic Communities, Inc. (NYTC) provides substance abuse treatment primarily to incarcerated adults in the criminal justice system.

Contact:
266 West 37th Street, 21st Floor
New York, NY 10018
Phone: 212 971 6033
Email (online form): http://www.stayout.org/contact.php

**Parenting Inside Out**

http://www.parentinginsideout.org

Parenting Inside Out provides evidence-based, parenting skills training programs (the Parenting Inside Out® program) to parents involved in the criminal justice system.

Contact:
Mindy Clark
Phone: 503 977 6399
Email: mindy@childrensjusticalliance.org

**People’s Justice for Community Control and Police Accountability**

http://peopleusjustice.org/about

People’s Justice for Community Control and Police Accountability is a coalition of grassroots organizations working in Black, Latinx, and Asian communities seeking to create police accountability through community education, empowerment, and organizing.

Contact:
Phone: 212 614 5343
Email: info@peopleusjustice.org

**Police Reform Organizing Project**

http://www.policeremorganizingproject.org

The Police Reform Organizing Project utilizes research, analysis, public education, policy advocacy and coalition building in order to end unjust and racially biased practices in the New York Police Department.

Contact:
Director, Robert Ganz
507 West 56th Street, 12th floor
New York, NY 10018
Phone: 917 327 7648
Email: prep@nypnyc.org

**Power Inside**

http://www.powerinside.org

Power Inside seeks to prevent the incarceration of women and families in Baltimore through direct client services, advocacy, leadership development, and public education.

Contact:
325 E. 25th St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
Phone: 410 869 8533
Email: contact@powerinside.org

**Prison Action Network**

http://prisonaction.blogspot.com/

Prison Action Network connects people who are incarcerated or who have an incarcerated loved one in New York State with people who care about the impact of incarceration to work together for social justice.

Contact:
P.O. Box 6355
Albany, NY 12206
Email: prisonactionnetwork@gmail.com

**Prison Activist Resource Center**

https://www.prisonactivist.org

The Prison Activist Resource Center (PARC) works on prison abolition and exposing institutionalized racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, and classism in the prison industrial complex. PARC also produces a free directory for prisoners.

Contact:
P.O. Box 70447
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: 510 895 4648
Email (online form): https://www.prisonactivist.org/contact

**Prison Entrepreneurship Program**

http://www.pep.org

The Prison Entrepreneurship Program (PEP) seeks to connect executives, entrepreneurs, and students with incarcerated populations.

Contact:
P.O. Box 150274
Houston, TX 77292-6274
Email: info@pep.org
Prison Pet Partnership
http://www.prisonpetpartnership.org/index.htm
Prison Pet Partnership provides incarcerated populations with the opportunity to learn pet industry-related vocational skills.
Contact:
9601 Bujacich Road NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98832
Phone: 253 858 4240
Email: info@prisonpetpartnership.org

Prison Policy Initiative
http://www.prisonpolicy.org
The Prison Policy Initiative produces research that exposes the harm of mass criminalization in order to spark advocacy campaigns that strive to create a more just society.
Contact:
PO Box 127
Northampton, MA 01061
Email (online form): http://www.prisonpolicy.org/contact.html

Prison S.M.A.R.T. Program
http://www.prisonsmart.org
The Prison S.M.A.R.T. Program provides tools for people involved in the criminal justice system to reduce stress and heal trauma.
Contact:
2401 15th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: 888 673 8999
Email: prisonsmart@iahv.org

Prisoners’ Legal Services of New York
http://plsny.org
The mission of the Prisoners’ Legal Services of New York is to offer effective legal representation and assistance to incarcerated populations in order to secure their civil and human rights.
Contact:
41 State Street, Suite M112
Albany, NY 12207
Email (online form): http://plsny.org/contact/Project NIA

Project NIA
http://www.project-nia.org
Project NIA strives to end youth incarceration by reducing reliance on arrest and detention, and by promoting restorative and transformative practices.
Contact:
Marianne Kaba
Phone: 773 392 5165
Email: marianne@project-nia.org

Real Cost of Prisons Project
http://www.realcostofprisons.org
The Real Cost of Prisons Project pursues legal and grassroots activism and advocacy on behalf of incarcerated populations.
Contact:
5 Watfield Place
Northampton, MA 01060
Email: info@realcostofprisons.org

Resettlement Program – Community Partners In Action
http://www.cpa-ct.org/resettlement/
This program seeks to assist people leaving prison with returning back to their communities.
Contact:
110 Bartholomew Avenue, 4th Floor
Hartford, CT 06105
Email: oei@cpa-ct.org

Rutgers University Correctional Health Care
http://ubhc.rutgers.edu/uchc/index.html
University Correctional Health Care (UCHC), operating within Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is dedicated to excellence in providing physical, mental health, dental and sex offender treatment services to the people of New Jersey involved in the criminal and juvenile justice systems.
Contact:
University Correctional Health Care
Bates Building, 2nd Floor
PO Box 865
Whitney Road & Stuyvesant Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08625
Phone: 609 292 4036 x5228
Email: contactuchc@ubhc.rutgers.edu

Sentencing Project
http://www.sentencingproject.org/template/page.cfm?id=2
The Sentencing Project’s ultimate goal is to work toward a fair and effective criminal justice system by pursuing sentencing policy reforms and promoting alternatives to incarceration.
Contact:
1705 DeSales Street NW, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202 628 0871
Email: staff@sentencingproject.org

Transition from Jail to Community Initiative
http://www.urban.org/projects/tjc/index.cfm
Transition from Jail to Community strives to create the best possible outcomes for individuals upon release from prison.
Contact:
Email: tjc@urban.org

And They Stay Hungry for Dark Meat
Sean Saifa Wall
Mixed media, 10x12 inches. Using the 1901 Riots in Pierce City, MO, as a backdrop, the piece reflects on the premature death of Black men and women at the hands of police and white vigilante violence.
Vera Institute of Justice
http://www.vera.org/about-us
The Vera Institute of Justice seeks to improve the criminal justice system through research, demonstration projects, and technical assistance for leaders in government and civil society.
Contact:
233 Broadway, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10279
Phone: 212 334 1500

Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform
http://www.vermontersforcriminaljusticereform.org/about-us
Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform focuses on education and advocacy to decrease incarceration.
Contact:
177 Lost St. Terrace
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: 802 864 5651
Email: vjrf@burlingtontelecom.net

Witness Against Torture
http://www.witnessagainsttorture.org
Witness Against Torture organizes to shut down detention facilities at Guantanamo.
Contact:
Email (online form):
http://www.witnessagainsttorture.org/contact/

Women on the Rise!
http://www.womenontherise-worth.org
WORTH (Women On the Rise Telling HerStory) consists of currently and formerly incarcerated women who advocate for others by engaging, navigating, and challenging policy as well as perceptions of those in prison.
Contact:
171 E. 122nd St.
New York, NY 10035-2945
Phone: 917 626 8168
Email: info@womenontherise-worth.org

Women’s Prison Association
http://www.wpsonline.org
Women’s Prison Association offers support to women who are currently incarcerated as well as after leaving prison.
Contact:
110 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10003
Phone: 646 292 7740
Email: info@wpsonline.org

Yes, In My Backyard Project
http://www.yesinmybackyard.org
The Yes, In My Backyard Project distributes information about the closing and reusing of prisons throughout the United States. They aim to assist government, communities, and businesses with the repurposing of prisons throughout the country.
Contact:
Tracy Huling
Email: tracy@tracyhuling.com

Newsletters / Books / Online Resources

Coalition for Prisoners’ Rights Newsletter
http://www.realcostofprisons.org/coalition.html

The Fire Inside Newsletter
http://www.womenprisoners.org/fire/

Health and Incarceration: A Workshop Summary (available for free online):
http://www.nap.edu/catalog/18372/health-and-incarceration-a-workshop-summary

Incarcerated Fathers Library
https://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu/resources/library/incarcerated-fathers-library/

Jail and Prisoner Law Resources
http://www.aele.org/law/jb-resources.html

Journal of Prisoners on Prisons
http://www.jpp.org

Liberation Prison Project
http://www.liberatorprisonproject.org/ourprograms/free_books_and_materials.php

National Prison Resource List – Books in Prison Organizations

The New Jim Crow – Michelle Alexander
http://newjimcrow.com

Newsletter Archive – Prison University Project
http://www.prisonuniversityproject.org/newsletter-archive

Oregon CURE – Newsletter
http://oregonoure.org/prison-newsletters/

Prison Focus Newsletter
http://www.prisons.org/publications.htm

Prison Law Blog – Prisoner Newsletter
http://www.prisonlawblog.com/prisoner-newsletter/

http://jailhouselaw.org

Prison Writings: My Life is My Sun Dance – Leonard Peltier
http://www.amazon.com/Prison-Writings-Life-Sun-Dance/dp/0512263805

Prisoner Express
http://www.prisonexpress.org/?mode=newsletter

Prisoner Resource List – BAR NONE
https://barnonearcata.wordpress.com/prisoner-resource-list/
Marking Time Conference Directory of Participants

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Resources for Families of People in Prison

- **Band Back Together – Loved One in Prison Resources**

- **Children of Incarcerated Parents**

- **Children With Incarcerated Parents**

- **Children of Inmates**
  [http://www.childrenofinmates.org](http://www.childrenofinmates.org)

- **Families of Incarcerated Individuals, Inc.**
  [http://familiesofincarcerated.org/index.htm](http://familiesofincarcerated.org/index.htm)

- **Mothers of Incarcerated Sons Society, Inc.**
  [http://www.mothersofinmates.org](http://www.mothersofinmates.org)

- **The National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated**
  [http://nrccf.camden.rutgers.edu](http://nrccf.camden.rutgers.edu)
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<th>Name</th>
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