

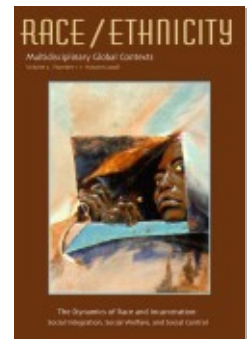


PROJECT MUSE®

From the Editors

Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts, Volume 2, Number 1, Autumn 2008, pp. V-VII (Article)

Published by Indiana University Press



➔ For additional information about this article

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/252429>

This issue of *Race/Ethnicity* addresses incarceration as a form of social control in relation to race and ethnicity, positioning that discussion globally and from different perspectives. Included here are not only academic voices, but also the voices of practitioners in the field and the voices of the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated. From the artwork on the cover to the final reflective essay, this conversation on incarceration is informed by a variety of viewpoints in order to expand ideas about the impact of incarceration on our world today.

In order to give a comprehensive look at incarceration worldwide, we have included fact sheets at the end of this issue. Compiled by Charles Patton III, a graduate research associate with the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity and a doctoral student in the Department of Sociology at The Ohio State University, the fact sheets provide a comparative means through which to assess incarceration rates in a variety of countries, opening the door to further discussion and interpretation. The dearth of publicly available information on the number, identity, and circumstances of incarcerated prisoners throughout much of the world is both noteworthy and unfortunate.

The introduction to the issue is provided by our “classic” piece, a widely-cited excerpt from Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, which was published in French in 1975 and translated to English in 1977. Taken from the chapter entitled “Panopticism,” this selection looks at constant visibility as a manifestation of power exercised over those who are made visible. This mechanism of discipline is used on patients in hospitals, students in schools, workers in factories, soldiers in barracks, and prisoners in prisons. Examination and observation bring about or restore the order, and anything outside the order is abnormal and thus dangerous. Those considered dangerous are placed in “segmented, immobile, frozen space.” These spaces, and the processes to place targeted populations within them, are the subject of this issue.

While the space within the prison limits the movement of the prisoner, spaces located in social proximity to or connected through the judicial system impose equally limiting effects. In the first article, “Locking Down Civil Rights,” Heather Rose and Glenn Martin of the Fortune Society (www.fortunesociety.org) discuss the relationship between incarceration, collateral consequences, and civil rights in the US. The authors acknowledge the role of the US in leading the world to liberty and at the same time identify the path that the US has taken to mass incarceration of populations of color. They call upon the US to deal with the “racism proxy” created by the explosive growth of the criminal justice system and the social and economic exclusion that follows conviction and incarceration.

The second article, “Life Capacity Beyond Reentry: A Critical Examination of Racism and Prisoner Reentry Reform” is co-authored by Vivian Nixon, Patricia Ticento Clough, David Staples, Yolanda Johnson Peterkin, Patricia Zimmerman, Christina Voight, and Sean Pica, members of Community Leadership and

From the Editors

Education After Reentry (CLEAR), an organization of scholars, activists and formerly incarcerated men and women. The authors are concerned that reentry reforms, models, and proposals do not address the racial structures that propel mass incarceration. They see this racism transforming into the crude evolutionary or "biopolitical" racism that generates further imprisonment even beyond prison walls. Throughout the pages of this article, quotations are included in the margins that were taken from interviews of formerly incarcerated men and woman by CLEAR members. The authors selected these quotes because they resonate with their experiences of incarceration, reentry, and reentry reform.

The next two articles in the issue examine incarceration in the European Union, England, and Wales. Loïc Wacquant's, "Extirpate and Expell: On the Penal Management of Postcolonial Migrants in the European Union," expands his model of the link between ethnoracial division and the penal state in the US to the increasing incarceration of migrants in the European Union. He identifies the overrepresentation of this population, based on their proportion of the general population of the EU, and sees it as an effect of the "greater capacity and propensity of the state to deploy its penal resources" to "resolve" the real or imagined problems that migrants pose in the areas of work, place, and identity.

Anthony Goodman and Vincenzo Ruggiero start with Paul Gilroy's "Black Britain" and the Notting Hill riots of 1958 as an introduction to the experience of immigrants in Britain. "Crime, Punishment, and Ethnic Minorities in England and Wales" follows this experience as it leads to declining social and economic conditions. The authors relate the overrepresentation of minorities in the criminal justice system in Britain and Wales to social disadvantage and denial to connections with "the official world, its economy, and its institutional representatives."

Post-apartheid prison practices in South Africa are examined in Kelly Gillespie's "Moralizing Security: 'Corrections' and the Post-Apartheid Prison." Gillespie notes that the release of political prisoners in the early 1990s left the state to "begin to envision a post-apartheid prison practice based on an intervention into this depoliticized criminal remnant." The author looks at the use of moral appeals as the basis for the continued mass-incarceration of black South Africans, particularly those from the townships and ghettos where the "legacy of the country's long violation of black subjects and communities" has resulted in soaring crime rates. As a means of easing the tension between liberation and incarceration, imprisonment is positioned as a form of rehabilitation by presenting the "image of the prison as a benevolent moral institution capable of providing a developmental remedy for crime" that forges criminals into good citizens.

Jena McGill dramatically opens her discussion of federally-sentenced aboriginal women in Canada with the story of Ashley Smith, who was a prisoner in a federal woman's prison in

Canada and tragically died in her cell at the age of 19. The author examines the sexist, racist, and neo-colonial nature of the discrimination experienced by federally-sentenced aboriginal women and discusses the possibility of employing the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as a tool to draw international attention to discrimination against federally-sentenced aboriginal women in the country. "An Institutional Suicide Machine: Discrimination Against Federally Sentenced Aboriginal Women in Canada" draws attention to the situation of aboriginal women in Canadian prisons and demands a stop to the discrimination.

Stephen C. Richards brings the convict's voice into the discussion through the Convict Criminology (CC) perspective. CC was first organized in the 1990s to give a voice to ex-convict criminology professors and, unlike traditional prison research programs, actually reflects the views of prisoners. "Convict Criminology: Voices From Prison" discusses the value of teaching Convict Criminology courses at the university and in the prisons. In part by using feedback from university students and prisoners who have completed the courses, the authors present their program as a way to help prisoners exit prison and enter college as well as a means to open the doors to other perspectives for university students studying criminology.

The final essay, by Reginald A. Wilkinson, is a retrospective on his long career in correctional administration. In "Reflections on Incarceration and Beyond," the author recalls the key events that shaped his leadership approach and offers his philosophical positions on justice applications. He comments on daily routines, the advent of the "prison industrial complex," and the emergence of reentry models. He also proposes the adoption of "a social justice philosophy, requiring all the various sectors of society be participatory in offender reintegration."

The articles in this issue raise questions that must be addressed in order for true change to occur. An examination of who gets imprisoned and why and the effects of incarceration on individual lives and society necessarily requires that we critically examine societal attitudes towards race and ethnicity, as well as the impacts of class and economic access in regards to control, integration, and welfare.