

Imprisonment and Justice

January Term 2012

Seattle University School of Law

Prof. Dean Spade

Jan 7-10, 12pm-3pm, Room 328

The U.S. legal system has increasingly relied on imprisonment as an outcome of its immigration and criminal punishment systems in the last several decades. Criminal imprisonment has expanded more than five fold since the 1980's and immigration imprisonment has quadrupled since 2001. This four-day seminar will explore how this expansion has occurred and what its consequences have been. What changes to law and policy are responsible for the increase in imprisonment? How are scholars and advocates from various perspectives evaluating these changes and what are they proposing? What relationship does the question of imprisonment have to other areas of law and policy, such as housing, public finance, education, health care, labor and environmental law? How do definitions of criminality and conditions of targeted imprisonment relate to regimes of racialization and gendering? In this compressed course, we will examine a variety of contexts of imprisonment to engage these questions.

Required Texts:

- Victoria Law, Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women (2009).
- The CR10 Publications Collective (eds.), Abolition Now!: Ten Years of Strategy and Struggle Against the Prison Industrial Complex (2008).
- Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith (eds.), Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex (2011).

Recommended Background Reading:

- Angela Y. Davis, Are Prisons Obsolete? (2003).
- generationFive, Toward Transformative Justice.
- Paul Kivel, "Social Service or Social Change?" *in* The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non Profit Industrial Complex, Ed. Incite! (2007)
- Dylan Rodríguez, "The Political Logic of the Non-Profit Industrial Complex," *in* The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non Profit Industrial Complex, Ed. Incite! (2007).
- Andrea Smith, "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy: Rethinking Women of Color Organizing," *in* Color of Violence (ed. Incite!) (2006).

Reading Schedule

January 7

From Abolition Now!:

- Ofelia Ortiz Cuevas, "COPS and the Visual Economy of Punishment;"

- Martha Escobar, “No One Is Criminal;”
- Pete White, “Safer Cities Unplugged.”

From Captive Genders:

- Wesley Ware, “‘Rounding Up the Homosexuals’: The Impact of Juvenile Court on Queer and Trans/Gender-Non-Conforming Youth;”
- Michelle C. Potts, “Regulatory Sites: Management, Confinement and HIV/AIDS;”
- Erica Meiners, “Awful Acts and the Trouble with Normal: A Personal Treatise on Sex Offenders.”

Recommended but optional:

Findings Letter from Investigation of Seattle Police Department by the Department of Justice (Dec 16, 2011) (<http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/spl/seattlepd.php>)

January 8

Resistance Behind Bars, pp. i-170.

January 9

From Abolition Now:

- Dylan Rodriguez, “Warfare and the Terms of Engagement;”
- Damien Domenack and Rachael Leiner, “Toxic Connections: Coalition Strategies against Jail Expansion;”

From Captive Genders:

- Julia Oparah, “Maroon Abolitionists: Black Gender-oppressed Activists in the Anti-Prison Movement in the US and Canada,”

Recommended but optional:

Materials on recent strikes by prisoners:

- Coverage of Georgia prisoner strikes from Black Agenda Report: <http://blackagendareport.com/category/us-politics/georgia-prison-strike>
- Democracy Now interview with former Black Panther Elaine Brown about Georgia prisoner strike: http://www.democracynow.org/2010/12/14/prisoner_advocate_elaine_brown_on_georgia;
- Richard Falk, “Palestinian Hunger Strikes: Media Missing In Action,” <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/05/2012551069467110.html>;
- Jason Leopold, “Guantanamo Detainees Stage Hunger Strike to Protest Confinement Conditions,” <http://truth-out.org/news/item/827:guantanamo-detainees-stage-hunger-strike-to-protest-confinement-conditions>.

January 10

From Abolition Now:

- INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence and Critical Resistance, “The Critical Resistance INCITE! Statement on Gender Violence and the Prison Industrial Complex;”

- Alexis Pauline Gumbs, “Freedom Seeds: Growing Abolition in Durham, North Carolina;”

Washington Incarceration Stops Here, “Why Oppose the New Youth Jail?”,

<https://nonewyouthjail.wordpress.com/why-oppose-the-new-youth-jail/>

Recommended but optional:

“The Challenge of Prison Abolition: A conversation between Angela Y. Davis and Dylan Rodriguez,” <http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/davisinterview.html>