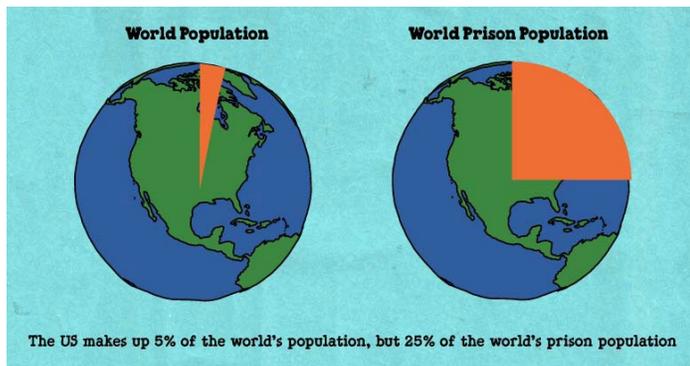


Key Questions & Terms

WALLS TURNED SIDeways

ARTISTS CONFRONT THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

23 January – 19 April 2020



EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

Walls Turned Sideways: Artists Confront the Justice System features work made by artists in response to the state of our criminal justice system, mass incarceration, and the prison industrial complex. The more than 30 artists participating in the exhibition each bring their own perspective to this complicated issue. Below are key terms, facts, and questions that you might find helpful to reflect on as you walk through the exhibition and consider the many voices represented here. Further resources on the topics raised in the exhibition can be found in the reading area downstairs. We welcome feedback – please feel free to leave a comment about your visiting experience.

What do you already know about the justice system? How did you get this information?

What assumptions do you have about prisons, incarcerated people, or the criminal justice system? Where did you learn these?

How do you think formerly incarcerated people can and should re-enter society? What challenges might they face upon re-entering their communities?

KEY TERMS

Mass Incarceration: Refers to the phenomenon in which the United States imprisons more people than any other country on earth.

Criminal Justice System: A complex network of institutions and individuals, generally separated into processing/pretrial services, determination of punishment, sentencing, and corrections.

Jail: Jails are typically local facilities under the jurisdiction of a municipality or county that often hold incarcerated people for short-term sentences, those awaiting trial, or sentencing.

Prison: Prisons fall under the authority of state and federal governments, and house people who have long-term sentences. Some prisons are run privately by a corporation.

Detention Center: A facility where people, usually refugees, those seeking asylum, and juveniles, are meant to be held for short periods.

Prison Industrial Complex: The network of individuals and corporations that financially benefit from the existence of private prisons and the increase in prison population in the US.

Restorative Justice: An alternative to existing criminal justice practices (that can also be used in tandem with criminal justice) which encourages repair of the harm caused by crime through interactions between the perpetrator(s), victim(s), and other community stakeholders.

What roles do prisons have in our society?

How has the prison system changed throughout history? How has it stayed the same?

How is the prison system similar or different to other cultural institutions?

KEY FACTS ABOUT MASS INCARCERATION AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- There are approximately 2.3 million incarcerated people in the US, 8,292 of whom are in Massachusetts (as of 1/1/2020).
- There are 1,719 state prisons, 109 federal prisons, 1,772 juvenile correctional facilities, 3,163 local jails, and 80 Indian Country jails in the US. 16 of these institutions are in MA, and the one closest to Tufts' campus is in Jamaica Plain.
- The US prison population has increased by 500% in the last 40 years, due not to significant changes in crime rates, but to changes in law and policy.

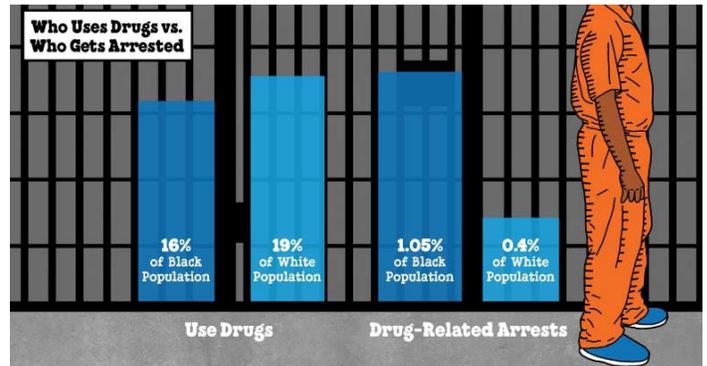


- Incarcerated men far outnumber incarcerated women, but the population of women in prison has increased at a rate 50% higher than that of men since 1980.

Tufts University
Art Galleries

#WallsTurnedSideways

- MA has the lowest rate of prison incarceration in the US, but has among the highest rates of racial disparity in its prisons in the country. Including the population of people in local jails, MA has a rate of incarceration higher than that of many countries.



- Racial inequity is present in all aspects of the criminal justice system, and is caused in part by biased criminal justice policies, implicit bias, unequal resource allocation to defendants, and the tendency for criminal justice policies to exacerbate pre-existing socioeconomic inequities.
- Bias by law enforcement and high rates of poverty, homelessness, and discrimination of LGBTQIA+ people have led to their increased contact with the criminal justice system. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are 3 times as likely to be incarcerated as non-LGBT people. Trans people are twice as likely to be incarcerated. These rates increase for trans people of color and low-income trans people.

How can artists address these issues?

What is the social role and responsibility of the artist in times of political urgency?

How has the art on view changed or reinforced your beliefs about incarcerated people, prisons, mass incarceration, or the criminal justice system?