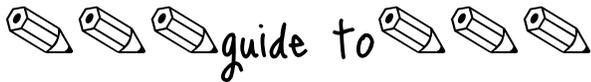


BACK TO SCHOOL SHOPPING



MASS INCARCERATION AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Hello! We are the **Incarceration to Education Coalition**! We've come up with this "back pocket" guide to mass incarceration and access to education. We hope you'll learn something, and that learning something will motivate you to DO something!

This project is part of a larger campaign to "**Abolish the Box**" at NYU and across the U.S. This means ending discrimination against people who are currently and formerly incarcerated and impacted by the criminal punishment system, and removing barriers to accessing higher education for this community.

Change starts with you! Find out how to get involved at our website:
iecforchange.wordpress.com

Peace,
The IEC



MASS INCARCERATION F.A.Q.

What is mass incarceration?

This is a term that refers to the United State's criminal punishment system, which incarcerates people at the highest rate ever seen in human history. The term implies a racialized and oppressive force of imprisonment so vast that it shapes collective identity; this is because mass incarceration is a force of racialized social control that disproportionately impacts black and brown people.

2.3 million people living in the U.S. are incarcerated.

This country holds 25% of the world's imprisoned population, even though it only contains 5% of the world's total population

What is the prison industrial complex?

The PIC is a combination of systems that promote the belief that imprisonment is an effective solution to society's problems: this includes state violence and an oppressive legal system, economic forces that perpetuate and grow privately funded prisons, and enormous structures of surveillance and policing.

The PIC reflects the power of the state and private industry in their goals to maintain financial power and white privilege.

✌️ look up Prison Divest for more information on resistance against the PIC!

Who do these systems impact?

This growth of the U.S. prison system has not been distributed equally across the country, it has a disproportionate impact on communities of color, immigrants, undocumented people, LGBTQ folks, and youth. The effects of mass incarceration on young black and latino men have been absolutely devastating.

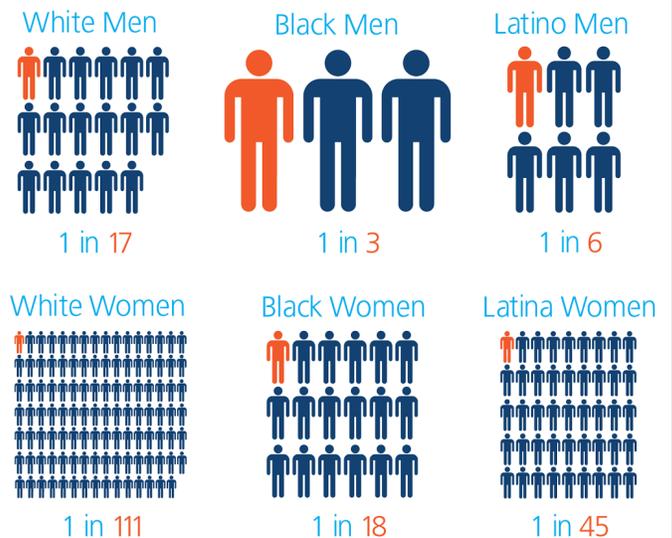
How did this happen? I mean, didn't the Civil Rights Movement solve a lot of these problems?

The current crisis of mass incarceration and the PIC are founded in the history of racial oppression in the U.S. There are many different factors leading this state control of various marginalized communities.

One huge cause is the War on Drugs, an enormous effort to police and punish the trafficking and usage of drugs on both an international and domestic level. The War on Drugs was launched by Nixon and pursued by Reagan during a time of economic growth for the U.S. The War on Drugs had an incredibly disproportionate impact on communities of color, which is sustained to this day.

In fact, although 5 times as many white people use drugs as African Americans, African Americans are incarcerated for drug-related offenses at 10 times the rate of white people.

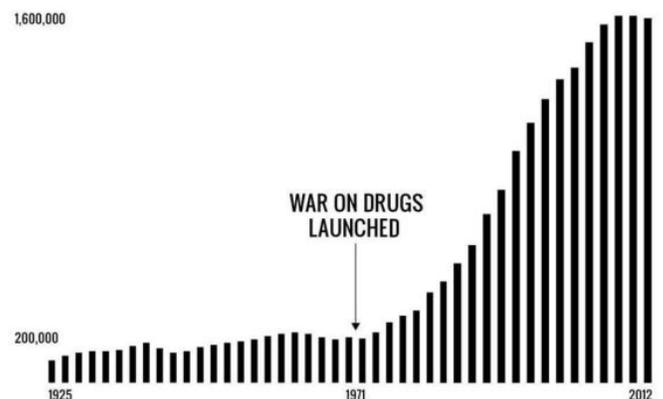
Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment.



Source: The Sentencing Project

All of this began shortly after the the Civil Rights Movement, which did not redistribute resources or provide access to social goods like education to the extent that was necessary to establish thriving communities.

✌️ look up the Drug Policy Alliance for more information on the War on Drugs!



THE U.S. STATE AND FEDERAL PRISON POPULATION HAS INCREASED OVER 800% IN JUST 40 YEARS

But don't we live in a colorblind society?

No. The law has never been colorblind, and efforts for desegregation and equality have never been truly inclusive.

In 1995, a journal of alcohol and drug education study asked respondents to envision and describe a drug user. 95% of them described a black person.

In that same year, 15% of drug users in the U.S. were black. This proportion remains the same today

In 2000, the Human Rights Watch reported that the majority of people incarcerated for drug-related offense in this country are black and latino.



WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ACCESS TO EDUCATION?

In part because of mass incarceration and the prison industrial complex, education is not equally accessible for people of color.

The School to Prison Pipeline describes the connection between prisons and education: students across the country are being pushed out of schools and into prisons at alarming rates. This impacts youth of color. Students of color across the country are being suspended and expelled at more than double the rate of white students.

70% of arrests/law enforcement referrals in schools are of black and latino youth
68% of incarcerated men do not have a high school diploma.

It costs the U.S. an average of \$30K per year to incarcerate one person.
The U.S. spends an average of \$11.5K on a public school student.
We also spend \$88K per year on each incarcerated youth.

Both our educational and criminal punishment systems are invested in disenfranchising people of color by using harsher punishments and incarceration. These structures are NOT invested in uplifting communities through education.

Beyond the school to prison pipeline, our educational system continues to punish people who are currently or formerly incarcerated.

After being released from prison, people are forced to report their "criminal" history when applying for jobs, housing, and higher education. This contributes to a system of continued policing and surveillance, uneven distribution of resources, and race and class based oppression!



SO... WHAT IS "THE BOX" ?

Colleges and universities defend the existence of the box by arguing that it keeps our school campuses safe, and that the school has the right to know about the criminal backgrounds of its applicants, so that they can decide who is "risky" and who is "safe".

But the Box does NOT predict who will commit a crime on campus: empirical evidence actually confirms that the majority of crimes committed on campuses are committed by people WITHOUT documented criminal records. AND, it is proven that higher education dramatically reduced recidivism: increasing access to education is one of the most effective forms of resistance to mass incarceration that we as a society can advocate for.

The Box is an institutional tool of surveillance that discriminates against populations of color that have been oppressed and considered more "criminal" throughout U.S. history. It is a barrier to true equal participation in higher education,

What we call the Box is the question on the Common App that screen applicants for criminal records. It looks like this:

Have you ever been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at any educational institution you have attended from the 9th grade (or the international equivalent) forward, whether related to academic misconduct or behavioral misconduct, that resulted in a disciplinary action? These actions could include, but are not limited to: probation, suspension, removal, dismissal, or expulsion from the institution.*

Yes

No

[Clear](#)

Have you ever been adjudicated guilty or convicted of a misdemeanor, felony, or other crime? Note that you are not required to answer "yes" to this question, or provide an explanation, if the criminal adjudication or conviction has been expunged, sealed, annulled, pardoned, destroyed, erased, impounded, or otherwise ordered by a court to be kept confidential.*

Yes

No

Now that you know more about mass incarceration and The Box, you can get involved with our campaign to get universities to STOP THIS RACIST NONSENSE!

**FIND OUT HOW:
IECFORCHANGE.WORDPRESS.COM
(COPIES OF THIS GUIDE ARE AVAILABLE
FOR DOWNLOAD)**