

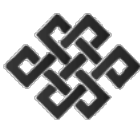


The Center for Justice at Columbia University and The Confined Arts presents

# FROM THE INSIDE OUT

## 2018-19 PROGRESS REPORT

1<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY



The Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities  
Columbia University



God's Touch Healing Ministry



The research being presented at this conference was conducted at the Center for Justice at Columbia University and the strategic engagement aspects of the From the Inside Out project is organized in partnership with The Confined Arts.

# RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2018 – 2019 PROGRESS

## THE POWER OF LANGUAGE TO INCARCERATE

# CURRENT RESEARCH

Through empirical studies and the artistic dissemination of their results in publications, through public outreach campaigns and art-based programming, and through media this project aims to produce and exhibit evidence about the detrimental effects of dehumanizing language and misrepresentations of people in jail/prison in three different contexts: public opinion, judicial context, and prison settings. In so doing, this project ultimately aims to sensitize public opinion and criminal justice professionals about the negative consequences that dehumanizing labeling and misperceptions have on the lives of those who are or have been impacted by incarceration.

The research conducted in this project is divided into two parts. First, a statistical analysis of whether negative and dehumanizing stigma attached to the language used to describe people in prison (**Language of Dehumanization Project**). Second, an investigation into what role prison has on social relationships (**Social Dynamics of Incarceration**).

### Language of Dehumanization Project

1. **Historical Reference:** The History of Language Project aims to produce a historical reference of how media and language has been used to shape perceptions of people in prison. It is analyzing the manner in which law, policy and popular discourse has shaped punitive attitudes. The study constitutes a longitudinal assessment of attitudes towards crime and people in prison both in the legal system and the media. It utilizes historical research and literature review to assess how the media representation of people in prison intersects with and is reflected in the policy and law of the day.
2. **Label Impact Study:** The study evolved from a body of research which identifies that people in prison are widely perceived as dangerous and manipulative and are therefore dehumanized by way of severe neglect in the form of moral exclusions and disengagement by prison guards and other staff (Haslam, 2006; Blackler, 2015; Gullapalli, 2015). Despite this accumulated knowledge of abuses in a prison context, mistreatment continues to occur. The study hypothesized that widespread dehumanization of the prison population through the language used to describe people in prison and the stigma this language carries could be one reason why a large proportion of society remains silent in the face of mistreatment of people in prison.
3. **Television Research:** This research demonstrates a sense of the urgency to facilitate discourse around dehumanizing labels and stereotypical representation of people in the criminal justice system and to understand how the general public forms perceptions of different groups of people based on the common labels used to reference them. Labels carry stigmas and stereotypes. They allow us to acknowledge social, cultural, or physical differences amongst one another. Labels also inadvertently influence our perceptions of one another depending on the social significance of the label that is attributed to a person. In one study students who were labeled as “bloomers” were perceived by

teachers to be more cognitively adept than their peers, even if their capabilities were the same. This effect was so strong that some teachers gave increased levels of support to students labeled as capable, which resulted in concrete differences in educational performance. In a 2010 poll conducted to gather the approval rates of gay men and lesbians in the US Military, approval rates for including gay people in the military were higher when the words "Gay Men & Lesbians" were used instead of "Homosexuals" Finally, people who are directly impacted by the criminal justice system reported, using stigmatizing language to reference them is the first step in "dehumanizing them".

4. **(De)humanizing Language in the Courtroom:** This study aims to examine the impact of dehumanizing language on punitive attitudes both in lay people and legal experts and to assess whether specific linguistic choices that are commonly used in courtrooms (at the sentencing stage) to describe people who are on trial influence the perception of these people and, consequently, the emotional and punitive attitudes towards them.

### Social Dynamics of Incarceration

Because people in prison are isolated from free society, are geographically distanced and may be emotionally distanced from family as a result of their incarceration, considering peer relationships that are formed within prison is a critical part of understanding what social support means for people in prison. This study will investigate questions such as: (1) what impact does prison have on social relationships? How does it have this impact? (2) do the rules and regulations for people in prison within NYS prisons impede healthy relationships for people serving time? And if so, how? (3) does the social environment of NYS prisons impact how people feel about their personal role in society (during sentence and post-incarceration)? And if so, how?

# 2018-19 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## PAST EVENTS

LOCATION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
Delaware County Community College	April 9 – May 4, 2018	Project Launch Solo Exhibition By Pastor Isaac Scott
Delaware County Community College	April 11, 2018	Artist Lecture By Pastor Isaac Scott: From the Inside Out Gallery Reception
Gallery 35 at Community Church of New York	Sept. 9 –Nov. 4, 2018	Collaborative group exhibition "Time Served"
Gallery 35 at Community Church of New York	Sept. 24, 2018	Social Tea Lecture By Pastor Isaac Scott
Commons Café Brooklyn	Oct. 14 2018	Art Festival: Full Participation is a Human Right - Discussion and Performance
Columbia Law School	Nov. 14 2018	Conference: NY Art for Justice Forum - Group Exhibition
The Forum at Columbia University	March 8, 2019	Beyond the Bars: Pre-Conference Event - Group Exhibition

## UPCOMING EVENTS

The Center for Justice in partnership with The Confined Arts presents **From the Inside Out: The Power of Language to Incarcerate**, a one-day justice conference in New York City, which is sponsored by:

1. The Society of Fellows and the Heyman Center for the Humanities
2. Humanities NY
3. God's Touch Healing Ministry

This Conference will meet and resist linguistic methods of dehumanization, which cultivate implicit and explicit biases about people in the criminal justice system. The mission of the conference is to unveil language marginalization and popular labels, which foster misconceptions about incarceration and the people that are incarcerated.

### LANGUAGE CONFERENCE ENGAGEMENT CHART

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Overview</u>	<u>Social Engagement Activities</u>	<u>Physical Engagement Activities</u>
<b>Language: Dehumanizing Labels</b>	Widespread labeling, and its lasting impact	-Keynote Address -Panel Discussions (Q&A) -Linguistic Landscape -Research Presentations -Breakout Sessions -Spoken Word/Poetry	- Creative/Art Making -Reflective Writing Opportunities -Public response board -Breakout Sessions -Human in Prison Report-1 <sup>st</sup> Ed
<b>History of Language as a Weapon</b>	Historical overview of the use of language to dehumanize groups of people.	-Keynote Address -Research Presentations -Breakout Sessions -Spoken Word/Poetry	-Breakout Sessions -Public response board -Human in Prison Report-1 <sup>st</sup> Ed
<b>Language in Popular Discourse/Media</b>	Language in popular media has been used to shape public perceptions of PIP.	-Keynote address -Panel Discussions (Q&A) -Research Presentations -Breakout Sessions -Spoken Word/Poetry	-Breakout Sessions -Public response board -Human in Prison Report-1 <sup>st</sup> Ed
<b>Language Rights</b>	Language marginalization and exclusion	-Breakout Sessions -Keynote address -Panel Discussions (Q&A) -Breakout Sessions -Spoken Word/Poetry	-Breakout Sessions -Public response board -Human in Prison Report-1 <sup>st</sup> Ed

# STAFF AND SUPPORT

## SNAPSHOT

### Paid Staff

Full time: Pastor Isaac Scott,

Part time: Aedan Macdonald, and Lauren Hagani

(Paid through Columbia for conducting research for the summer)

### Summer 2019 Volunteers and Interns:

Columbia Doctoral Student Volunteers: Federica Coppola, Dara Huggins

Columbia Masters Student Volunteers: Gabrielle Marshall, Akintunde Ahmad

Masters Educated Volunteers: Autumn Talley, Michael Kelly, Christie Cunningham

Bachelors Educated Volunteers: Tanya Pierce, Olivia Charles, and Annabel Manning

High School Summer Intern: Abigail Everett

## FULL PROJECT STAFF LOG

Active This Term/Onsite	Active Remote Participation	Active/Pending This Term	Term Completed	Term Abandoned
Name	Position	Term	Email	Affiliation
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