STATES OF INCARCERATION
A NATIONAL DIALOGUE OF LOCAL HISTORIES
EXHIBITION PAMPHLET
**ABOUT STATES OF INCARCERATION**

**States of Incarceration** was created by over 500 students and others deeply affected by incarceration in 20 cities, and growing. They grew up in a United States that incarcerates more of its people, including immigrants, than any country in the world – and at any point in its history. Recently, they have witnessed a new bipartisan consensus that the criminal justice system is broken and the intense conflict over how to fix it.

In 2015, they came together to ask: How did this happen? What new questions does the past challenge us to ask about what is happening now? To find answers, they examined their own communities’ histories. Through courses at 20 universities, local teams shared stories, searched archives, and visited correctional facilities. Each team created one piece of a nationally traveling exhibit and website, statesofincarceration.org.

Together, they created a diverse genealogy of the incarceration generation. It challenges all of us to remember our own past and use the insights of history to shape what happens next.

Your history — and that of your community — will tell a different story that teaches us all something new. Join the national dialogue by hosting the exhibit, hosting public dialogues, contributing your community’s history to the exhibit through the SOI process, or participating in the online discussion.

**States of Incarceration** is a project of the Humanities Action Lab, a coalition of universities led by Rutgers University-Newark working with issue organizations and public spaces to create traveling public projects on the past, present, and future of pressing social issues.
EXHIBIT COMPONENTS

The States of Incarceration exhibition consists of:

- **20 Local Stories** panels (with more being added each year), each exploring a local history and curated by that community;

- **4 thematic framing panels**, each containing a national thematic question around which the local stories are organized;

- **20 “outside face” panels** featuring quotes and large-scale images from that locality;

- a tactile interactive installation that invites visitors to place themselves and their stories on a scale titled: *How Close Are You to Incarceration*?;

- a **Timeline** comparing rates of incarceration over time and among communities today;

- a **Shape the Debate** mobile dialogue that allows visitors to contribute to the national dialogue and connects with the web platform.
What is a Crime? Who is a Criminal?

How Do Prisons Reflect Societal Values?

Locked Up—Understanding Prison in Pre-Modern Context

Societal values were markedly different from the system of incarceration. In the antebellum South, prisons were created to exert power over slaves. Homes in the antebellum South represent the constant threat of surveillance.

Are Prisons for Punishment or Rehabilitation?

The Norfolk Prison Colony Debate Society: Are prisons for punishment or rehabilitation? Norfolk Prison Colony was founded as the nation’s first “community prison” in 1929. It was built on the philosophy of keeping incarcerated people engaged with, rather than removed from, the world. (Brown University)

Why Are Prisons the Nation’s Mental Hospitals?

Intersections of Incarceration and Mental Illness

Today, an arena between people with mental illness and those with low incomes, poverty, and prison is centered on the concept of “criminalization of poverty.” In turn, people with mental illness are criminalized. Prisoners with mental health issues face long-term incarceration and are subject to technologies and cultures of control.

How Have Youth Been Criminalized?

In Detention: How have youth been criminalized? Since the opening of state institutions for “juvenile delinquents” and “uncivilized” Native American children in the 1890s, young people of color and those with disabilities have been disproportionately subjected to technologies and cultures of control.

What Are Women’s Prisons For?

Reforming Gender and the Carceral State

The Massachusetts Reformatory for Women, established in 1902, was one of the first state prison facilities for women in the United States. Prisoners were subjected to technologies and cultures of control. Women in prison today continue the policing of youth culture.

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Are criminals citizens? Are non-citizens criminals?

**How Has Settler Colonialism Shaped the Carceral State?**

**MINNESOTA**

Carceral Colonialism: Imprisonment in Indian Country: How has settler colonialism shaped the carceral state? Settler colonialism has involved denying Native people sovereignty and access to land and resources. It has also produced high rates of incarceration of American Indians in Minnesota and the country. (University of Minnesota)

**NEW JERSEY**

Seeking Asylum, Resisting Detention: How can detained immigrants and asylees fight back? In the mid-1990s, as concerns about terrorism and growing numbers of asylum seekers rose, the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) contracted Esmor Correctional Services to open a detention facility in Elizabeth, NJ. (Rutgers University-Newark)

**NORTH CAROLINA**

Death and Life at Central Prison: Who is the death penalty for? This project explores the past and present of the death penalty in North Carolina through changing technologies, constitutional controversies, philosophies of punishment, and social inequities. (Duke University)

**FLORIDA**

Crimmigration at Krome: Processing center or prison? In 1980, Fidel Castro opened the Mariel port, and approximately 125,000 Cubans left en masse. At the same time, more than 10,000 Haitians fled the Duvalier regime and landed in the United States. (University of Miami)

**ILLINOIS**

Legacies and Voices: What do you want your legacy to be? During a prison exchange program, DePaul students and incarcerated men asked each other: What do you want your personal legacy to be? (DePaul University)
Who Works For Prisons?  
Who Do Prisons Work For?

What Should Tourists Learn at a Historic Prison?
CONNECTICUT  
Digging Deep into the Carceral Past: What should tourists learn at a historic prison? Those incarcerated at Newgate were required to work in the mine and confined underground the rest of the time. Why was a mine presumed a good place for incarceration, prison labor, and tourism? (University of Connecticut)

LOUISIANA  
Windows on Angola Prison: Louisiana has the highest incarceration in the world with an estimated 40,000 incarcerated individuals. Our exploration of Angola Prison and its layered histories examines the wartime relationship between captive labor and capitalism, and how social control extended beyond the immediate confines of internment camps. (University of New Orleans)

NEW JERSEY  
Seabrook Farms and “Free” Labor: How is the racialized prisoner the ideal worker? Our exploration of Seabrook Farms and its layered histories examines the wartime relationship between captive labor and capitalism, and how social control extended beyond the immediate confines of internment camps. (Rutgers University-New Brunswick)

ARIZONA  
The Cost of Immigrant Detention: How do profits shape punishment? Arizona’s Eloy Detention Center is the third largest immigrant detention facility in the nation. It is also one of the most notorious. (Arizona State University)

NORTH CAROLINA  
North Carolina: Voices from the Chain Gang: What Can We Learn From Listening? In the early 1900s, courts sentenced prisoners to pound rocks and shovel dirt. Convicted of minor crimes, these men built North Carolina’s highways. (University of North Carolina at Greensboro)
Where Is the Carceral State?

PARIS, FRANCE
Michel Foucault and the Groupe d’Information sur les Prisons: How can information inspire action? By looking at different approaches to discipline over time, Michel Foucault counters the apparent “naturalness” of prison as the unique and most humane mode of punishment.
(Parsons Paris)

NEW YORK
Closing a Prison, Deferring a Dream: What’s lost when a prison closes? In 2014, as New York State’s prison population declined, state officials shuttered Mount McGregor. This medium-security correctional facility had a long history of creative rehabilitation.
(Skidmore College)

TEXAS
Spatial Stories of Migration and Detention: How does architecture shape punishment? Texas has 26 detention centers, 5 prisons, and 2 county jails used to detain migrants in connection with immigration proceedings or immigration related crimes.
(University of Texas at Austin)

TENNESSEE
Prison Profiteering in a Nuclear Shadow: Why do rural communities become prison towns? The Trousdale Turner Correctional Center is a private prison built in 2015 at the foot of a mothballed nuclear reactor in rural Tennessee. It is owned and operated by Corrections Corporation of America, headquartered in a wealthy Nashville suburb.
(Vanderbilt University)

NEW YORK
Rikers Island, NY 11370: In Plain Sight: How do you see Rikers Island? Between boroughs in the East River, off a runway of LaGuardia Airport, on the Q100 bus route, connected by a sole bridge, Rikers demonstrates the contradictions of visibility and invisibility that define mass incarceration. (The New School)
What Is a Crime? Who Is a Criminal?

Are Criminals Citizens? Are Non-citizens Criminals?

Who Works for Prisons? Who Do Prisons Work For?

Where Is the Carceral State?
Thematic framing panels contain Shape the Debate prompts through which visitors can vote on important questions around incarceration. Responses are aggregated on www.statesofincarceration.org, where visitors of the digital exhibit can also share their take by voting on the questions.

As the project travels, responses will be shown to exhibit visitors, and will be used as starting points for public dialogues in each host city.
Partners create **Outside Face Panels** to complement or highlight one element of their local panels. Outside Face panels contain one large format, striking image of a person or a site, accompanied by a quotation that helps contextualize the image and relate it back to the larger exhibit themes.
TIMELINE INSTALLATION
CREATING LOCAL COMPANION EXHIBIT CONTENT

Partners have the option of creating up to four modules of additional local content that can be installed when the exhibit travels to your community. The timeframe for submission of content is the same as during the course, and partners may want to use the course as an opportunity to produce both the traveling module and the additional local content.
PUBLIC PROGRAMS

States Of Incarceration provides program designs, facilitation resources, and a speakers’ bureau to support local public dialogues. Or, local partners can develop their own.
HOSTING THE EXHIBITION

Partners who have contributed to the project host the exhibit in their communities. Venues currently include museums, public spaces like libraries or community centers, art galleries, government buildings, and campus spaces.

BECOMING A PARTNER

Through a collaboration agreement and $6000 participation fee, new universities can become HAL partners and contribute to the SOI exhibit. University partners serve as the anchor in all communities, and are responsible for: identifying and securing an exhibit host venue; developing a community partnership and working with that local community partner on the curation of content and on planning and recruiting participants for public programs.
ADDING YOUR STATE TO THE EXHIBITION

HAL provides curricular resources, design guidelines and support, and historical advisors to help new partners engage students and communities in dialogue around their local histories of incarceration, and add these histories to the exhibit and web platform. Through a semester-long course, faculty lead students, in collaboration with constituents of a community partner organization, to explore a local history of incarceration and curate local exhibits. Teams don’t have to worry about design or layout for the physical exhibit or digital platform. Using SOI guidelines for text and media formats, teams submit their content to SOI exhibit and web designers to provide the final physical and digital exhibit material. Local teams may create one additional panel and up to 20 pieces of video, audio, or other media to be included in the nationally traveling exhibit and web platform, and up to four additional exhibit panels to be displayed locally. New partners can expect to have their work incorporated into the exhibit after production is complete, which takes up to four months.
EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

April 3 – April 24, 2016
New York, NY | Aronson Gallery, Sheila Johnson Design Center

May 7 – August 6, 2016
Riverside, CA | California Museum of Photography

August 29 – September 23, 2016
Providence, RI | University of Rhode Island Gallery, Providence Campus

October 5 – October 26, 2016
Austin, TX | Mebane Gallery, UT Austin School of Architecture

November 8 – December 15, 2016
Greensboro, NC | International Civil Rights Museum

January 23 – February 17, 2017
Coral Gables, FL | CAS Gallery

March 1 – March 12, 2017
Holyoke, MA | The Wauregan Building presented by Wistariahurst Museum

March 13 – March 30, 2017
Northampton, MA | Forbes Library and Historic Northampton

April 6 – May 1, 2017
New Orleans, LA | Ogden Museum of Southern Art

April 13 – May 14, 2017
Indianapolis, IN | Central Branch of the Indianapolis Public Library

May 16 – August 11, 2017
Chicago, IL | Jane Addams Hull-House Museum

September 2 – October 11, 2017
Saratoga Springs, NY | Tang Teaching Museum

October 18 – December 15, 2017
Newark, NJ | Gateway Project Spaces

January 22 – March 9, 2018
New Brunswick, NJ | Douglass Library

March 19 – May 15, 2018
Boston, MA | International Village, Northeastern University

March 29 – June 2, 2018
Yellow Springs, OH | Herndon Gallery, Antioch College

September 5 – October 27, 2018
Phoenix, AZ | Phoenix Public Library (Burton Barr)

September 2018 – May 2019
Lansing, MI | Michigan History Center

March 11 – April 18, 2019
Hartford Public/Storrs, CT | Hartford Public Library and Thomas J. Dodd Research Center

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: statesofincarceration.org

or CONTACT US AT: humanitiesactionlab@gmail.com