

The top left corner of the page features a complex, abstract graphic composed of several thin, black lines. These lines intersect to form a series of overlapping, irregular polygons and shapes, creating a sense of depth and movement. The lines vary in length and orientation, some extending towards the center of the page while others are more contained.

BREAKING OUT FROM BINARIES BEHIND BARS

How Structural Identity Denial Influences Pro/Anti-Social Reactionary Responses and Corresponding Psycho-Social Experiences Inside and Outside the Prison Industrial Complex

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PURPOSE OF STUDY

Purpose Statement

Promoting Access and Quality of Human Services through Psycho-Social Multidimensional Interdisciplinary Evaluation and Multi-Faceted, Participant-Informed, Consensual, Rehabilitative Alternatives Centering Equitable Care

Social Relevance

Taking these arguments as a whole, the prison simultaneously (1) extracts the most marginalised and places them in a prison environment that undermines their health and wellbeing; (2) pushes these people into social instability, which (3) undermines the livelihoods of the whanau of current and formerly incarcerated people, making other whanau members more likely to be caught in the criminal justice system; (4) collectively disempowers entire communities by entrenching intergenerational poverty and incarceration; and (5) blames the individuals for this collective, societal failure. Prisons thus play a crucial ideological role in providing a convenient excuse to blame the least powerful people in society for our social problems. (p. 244) – (Lamuse, 2022)





RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Question 1

How does Identity Denial manifest in the Pro/Anti-Social Reactionary Responses from Black, Queer men and Transfolk who have experienced (or are currently experiencing) incarceration?

Question 2

How does this Denial influence Corresponding Psycho-Social Experiences Inside and Outside the Prison Industrial Complex?

Question 3

Why are these Reactionary Responses devalued as Societal Responses while other Responses are enabled? Whose voice does this allow for and who does it silence? What does that mean for those who may question Socio-Structural Authority and how does that occur?

NO PRIDE for SOME of US without
LIBERATION for ALL of US



CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

The aim of this research is to identify and synthesize the experiences of 16 Black, Queer men and Transgender individuals in the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) by reading 61 submissions to the American Prison Writing Archive (APWA) for explicit and implicit Racialized, Gendered, and Sexualized experiences that interact with identities personally disclosed during submission to the Archive.

Black Queer and Trans identities experience the highest Socio-Economic Marginalization, leading to them representing the greatest population affected by State Detention and Surveillance.

IDENTITY GROUPS

First Analysis Group

Black, Bisexual men

- 7 individuals

(one overlap w/ Trans Identity)

- 19 total submissions

Second Analysis Group

Black, Queer/Gay men

- 4 individuals

- 25 total submissions

Third Analysis Group

Black, Queer, Transfolk

- 4 individuals

- 15 total submissions

Author Pseudonym	Gender Identity + Sexual Orientation	Frequency + I.D.
Jamilah	T	2; 27, 28
BuddhaBle\$\$	T/B	1; 29
Shariff	T/O	11; 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
Ebony	T/O	1; 41
Danny	Q	15; 26, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 58, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65
Joseph	Q	8; 43, 50, 51, 53, 55, 56, 57, 59
Reese	Q	1; 54
David	Q	1; 61
Bobby	B	13; 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 66
James	B	1; 12
Dominee	B	2; 15, 16
Derrick	B	2; 19, 22
Eugene	B	1; 24
Lawrence	B	1; 25

Black Criminology

- 1) White people constructed a racially hierarchical society with their benefit in mind
- 2) Black and white histories are not comparable because of racialization and corresponding effects
- 3) Crimes committed by a small number of Black folks are the result of racial subordination

Social Learning Theories

SLT, Routine Activities, Control Theory, Bond Theory, Social Class and Prosociality

Labeling Theory

Extrinsic/Intrinsic/Quest-Seeking Learning Processes

Strain Theory

Social Dominance Theory

SOCIOLOGICAL / CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

	ACCEPT GOALS	REJECT GOALS
ACCEPT MEANS	Conformity <i>(behavioral conformity, ideological conformity)</i>	Ritualism <i>(behavioral conformity, ideological rejection)</i>
REJECT MEANS	Innovation <i>(crime)</i>	Retreatism <i>(social disengagement)</i> Rebellion <i>(protest)</i>

MAJOR FINDINGS

Pre-Inside Experiences

“We’re taught to suppress the trauma we experience on a daily basis.” (22)

Peri-Inside Experiences

“One day at a time, one day at a time, is all I can do.” (39)

Structural Resource Denial

“Most of us will not write the truth or admit the truth so as the spokesperson for us you have to take my word and opinion about the facts of our life.” (9)

Author-Proposed Recommendations

“I too want to live.” (43)



“WE’RE TAUGHT TO SUPPRESS THE TRAUMA WE EXPERIENCE ON A DAILY BASIS.” (22)

Socio-Structural Authority’s influence on Racialized Experiences

Bobby: “Reality is that this nation was formed, built, and is still sustained on the oppression, degradation, humiliation, eradication, and suppression of people of color and indigenous people of this land and throughout the world. This is my reality. This is my truth as a modern day 2018 slave, intergenerational trauma is a real thing.” (22)

Structural Influence of Carceral Settings on Individual Experiences

Danny: “So I pose this question, can we say that prison plays a role in reinforcing the negative self-*imagine* [*sic*] and destructive nature many come to prison with?” (25)

“ONE DAY AT A TIME, ONE DAY AT A TIME, IS ALL I CAN DO.” (39)

Major Meta-Analysis _____

Intersectional Oppression In and Influenced by the Prison Industrial Complex, informed by the following three minor meta-analyses:

1) Race’s Influence _____

“Guilty until proven innocent” (25)

How does one’s Race influence experiences able to be had Inside the PIC?

2) Gender’s Influence _____

“My life in California Prison has been Exceptionally Hard, due to being misunderstood about the different Spectrums of Sexual Orientation and Identity in the L.G.B.T.Q.+ Community” (38)

How does deviation from the Gender Binary influence opportunities Inside the PIC?

3) Sexuality’s Influence _____

“Are you paying for protection?” “I’m 6’2”-230 lbs- do I look like I need protection?” “But you are gay, right?” (46)

How do Queer Sexualities influence experiences Inside the PIC?

“MOST OF US WILL NOT WRITE THE TRUTH OR ADMIT THE TRUTH SO AS THE SPOKESMEN FOR US YOU HAVE TO TAKE MY WORD AND OPINION ABOUT THE FACTS OF OUR LIFE.” (9)

Denial of Equitable Access to Resources Pre-Detention

Danny: “Proclivities for which black culture endures on a constant basis such as; ‘living conditions, unemployment, poor health care, crime, voting suppression, violation of civil rights as just a few discriminations black culture still experiences in the US’.” (25)

“The black neighbor [*sic*], aka the hood are war zones not just for injustice, racial profiling, segregation and political propaganda which leads to poor housing, poor education, poor health care, and other structural enforcements of socio-economic marginalization.” (25)

“The truth of equality and racism has been a continuum of sweeping it under the rug.” (25)

Denial of Equitable Access to Resources Post-Detention

Joseph: “I want to spend the rest of the time I have left finding me.” “I want to explore more the political, mental, physical, social, spiritual, educational, sexual, and other sides of myself. I am still questioning things. I don’t have all the answers.” (50)

“Only quality programming will enable prisoners to obtain the marketable job and interpersonal skills needed to become a productive member of society, thereby reducing crime, recidivism, and the corrections budget, goals we can all agree upon.” (54)

Bio-Psycho-Social Resource Denial

“I’ve met some Gifted People in Prison. But what is a Gift if you never get to use it?” (24)

Shariff: “To be honest, I’m scared to Death of Catching Coronavirus, then Dying from it without my Mom not being informed [*sic*], or being led to the cause of my death, because that does happen unfortunately.” (35)

Danny: “How is it that crime and evil are only associated to a class of people who are thrown away, disadvantaged, devalued, underminded [*sic*], disrespected, as well as under-privileged?” (25)

Major Finding 1

Identity Denial manifests in experiences of Microaggressions toward Socially Deviant, Marginalized identities in the form of Black, Queer-masc and Trans experiences for this research. These identities occasionally compound Microaggressions through Intersectional Oppression with Socio-Economic means prior to State Detention, which leads to unmet needs being met in unconventional ways (crime).

Major Finding 2

Denial of expression and resources that enable expression limits the amount and quality of available choices. Limiting choices, in this case through Structural and Fundamental Denial of Resources of Expression, leads to a Socially Inferior population who is unable to argue their case in a “legitimate” way.

Major Finding 3

One’s Societal Position affects how/if they are able to question Socio-Structural Authority – those with greater access to resources are more readily able to do this but are less inclined to question Authorities out of fear of losing their own benefits. Coincidentally, those with less access to resources are more inclined toward social change, but are less able to question Socio-Structural Authority due to this lack of resources.

Implications

-Limiting influences/structures of care limits humanistic outcomes possible for the wider society

-Coping Behaviors (Reactive Responses to Prosocial Behavioral Influences) are the most common model of Individualized care Inside, described in my analysis as Pollyanna (hyperpositivity) and Physical Adaptations to the environment

-These Reactive, Coping Behaviors are often performed by Marginalized/Socially Deviant, Subordinate groups and are comprised of the Reactionary Responses these groups use when interacting with their environment

-Allowed Responses are a result of Socio-Structural enforcement of accepted goals/means of achievement through the threat of State-Perpetuated Violence in the form of incarceration

CONCLUSIONS

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This research was completed in hopes of encouraging the following:

REPARATIONS NOT REFORM.

REHABILITATION NOT RECIDIVISM.

ACTION. ACTIVISM. ABOLITION.

CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT OVER COMPLIANCE.

THE BEAUTY IN DIFFERENCES OF EXPRESSION.

THANK YOU