Teach-in on Mass Incarceration: Important Data for Understanding Our Nation's Mass Incarceration Crisis

1. The US leads the world in incarceration

Global incarceration rates, per 100,000 people

[Graph showing global incarceration rates]

Source: International Centre for Prison Studies
Credit: Carmen Lopez

2. IV. High crime and drug use led to "tough-on-crime" policies

Crime was very high in the 1970s through early 1990s, leading to an overreaction from policymakers

[Graph showing US murder rates per 100,000 people]

Source: U.S. Uniform Crime Reports

3. Crime rates have fallen since the early 1990s

Trends in U.S. violent crime and property crime, 1993-2018

- Violent crimes per 100,000 people (FBI)
  - '93: 747.1
  - '18: 368.3

- Violent crimes per 1,000 people ages 12+ (BJS)
  - '93: 79.8
  - '18: 23.2

- Property crimes per 100,000 people (FBI)
  - '93: 4,740.0
  - '18: 2,199.5

- Property crimes per 1,000 households (BJS)
  - '93: 351.8
  - '18: 108.2

Note: FBI figures include reported crimes only. Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) figures include unreported and reported crimes. 2006 BJS estimates are not comparable to those in other years due to methodological changes.

Source: FBI, Bureau of Justice Statistics

4. V. The policies behind mass incarceration

Prisoners serve much more time for the same crimes

[Graph showing estimated time served for different crimes]

Source: Pew Research Center
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Life sentences have been on the rise

**Figure 3. Expansion of Life Sentences, 1984-2012**

**Figure 4. The Rise in Life without Parole Sentences**

To really end mass incarceration, the US will need to cut back on some violent prisoners

**Figure 6. Nationwide, the Number of Prisoners Age 55 and Older Rose Sharply Over the Past Decade**

Percentage change in sentenced prison populations by age group, state and federal, 1999-2011

Note: The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates the age distribution of prisoners using data from the Federal Justice Statistics Program and statistics that states voluntarily submit to the National Corrections Reporting Program. State participation has varied, which can cause year-to-year fluctuations in the Bureau’s estimates but does not affect long-term trend comparisons. Between 2009 and 2010, the number of states submitting data increased substantially.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics © 2013 The Pew Charitable Trusts

U.S. Violent Crime Rate vs. Americans’ Perception of Crime Rate vs. Year Ago

% More crime in the U.S.     Violent victimization rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>More Crime</th>
<th>Violent Victimization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
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<td>63</td>
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<td>1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>2012</td>
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<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ Violent crime rate is number of victimizations per 1,000 persons that occurred during the year. Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1996-2013

GALLUP
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9. Prosecutors filed more charges even as arrests remained flat

Prosecutors are driving mass incarceration
Percent chance a prosecutor will press felony charges for each violent, property, and non-marijuana drug arrests

Source: John Pfaff

10. The racism of America’s criminal justice system
Black Americans are much more likely to be incarcerated

Incarceration rates per 100,000 US residents, by race and ethnicity

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

11. Black defendants get longer sentences for the same crimes
Black Americans receive longer sentences than white Americans for the same crime
Percent length of sentences of black people for drug trafficking above those of white people

Source: U.S. Sentencing Commission

12. Black Americans are disproportionately arrested for drugs

Past-month illicit drug use
2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics
Louisiana incarcerates more of its residents per capita than any other state (1052/100,000), except for Oklahoma (1079/100,000), in a country that leads the world in incarceration rates (698/100,000)*. One in 20 black males are incarcerated in LA, a rate exceeded by only 6 states. LA has second highest proportion of black prisoners in U.S. * (Prison Policy Initiative/2018/local/state/federal/other systems of confinement)