

## [Experiencing Prison: 7th Global Interdisciplinary Conference](#)

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Conference

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Slovakia

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Public Policy, Political Science, Political History / Studies, Human Rights, Contemporary History

### **Experiencing Prison 7th Global Inclusive Interdisciplinary Conference**

**Friday 3rd July to Saturday 4th July 2020  
Bratislava, Slovakia**

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Prison is used world-wide as a form of punishment or detention for men, women and children, within a functioning criminal justice system, and its use can be traced back to the rise of the earliest forms of state or social organisation in which humans have lived. Prisons are variously known as jails, gaols, penitentiaries, detention centres, correctional centres, and remand centres. They can be used as a tool of political repression, or a means of detaining large groups of civilians during times of war.

Incarceration has a long history, and despite its core commonality, as an experience it has varied historically, and continues to vary, in different societies all over the world. Although imprisonment is most commonly in a building, often purpose-built, it has variously taken place on ships, in camps, on islands, and in castles, fortresses, penal colonies, quarries, sewers, cages and dungeons. Imprisonment has become the dominant form of punishment in most societies across the world, and may occur prior to trial or as a result of sentencing by a properly constituted court. Imprisonment without trial or due process occurs in various forms in most societies across the world, mostly sanctioned by the state itself, sometimes used as a political strategy by military, ideological, political or religious groups within a state, or by groups desirous of becoming a state.

The prison has become a formidable employer, sometimes the dominant employer in neighbourhoods or towns. Over time, it has also been the site of creativity: prison labour, prison art and prison literature (including poetry, drama and autobiography) have contributed hugely to our understanding both of the phenomenon of imprisonment and of the impact it has on lives. It can therefore be approached from a variety of experiential perspectives - that of prisoner, visitor, employee, volunteer, writer, artist, analyst or researcher.

The prison is a powerful metaphor as well, with the capacity to describe a challenging or difficult situation for an individual, a family or a community that seemingly presents no way out, and which

presses down upon the human psyche in often unbearable ways. It has been an effective trope within literature, art, poetry and drama.

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### Key Topics

We welcome contributions about the prison from a wide range of perspectives, including legal, architectural, criminological, historical, geographical, fictional, psychotherapeutic, artistic, phenomenological, biographical and autobiographical points of view.

Contributions are particularly welcomed from former prisoners, detainees, incarcerated asylum seekers, former prisoners of war, political prisoners or those detained because of nationalist, religious or other convictions, those who have been to prison and have written about the experience; those who have fictionalised the prison experience in art and literature; those who have done paid or voluntary work in prison; and those who have researched the prison of the past and of the present. Additionally, we hope to hear from those involved with the architecture and design of prisons, those who are directly or indirectly involved with the delivery of incarceration, and those involved with any prisoners' rights groups or with those who seek to ameliorate incarceration by providing therapeutic drama, literacy, education, counselling, religious support, death row support, and other services.

All genres and media will be considered, in order to examine the widest possible range of representations, past and contemporary, which inform us about the strange phenomenon of the prison with a view to forming a selective innovative interdisciplinary publication to engender further research and collaboration. We particularly welcome creative responses to the subject, such as poetry/prose, short film screenings/original drama, installations, and alternative presentation styles that engage the audience and foster debate.

Topics for discussion include, but are not restricted to:

#### *Prisoners and the Prison Experience*

- ~ Types of Prisoners: political dissidents, prisoners of war, violent offenders, non-violent offenders, white collar criminals, innocent/wrongly accused, asylum seekers
- ~ The female experience in prison
- ~ Transgendered people in prison
- ~ Relationships in prison: motherhood, sex, friendship and bonding, relationships with people 'outside'
- ~ Rape, assault and other acts of violence
- ~ Torture in prison
- ~ Death and dying in prison
- ~ Social structures within the prison environment
- ~ Prisoner interactions with guards and administrators
- ~ Historical perspectives on the prison experience
- ~ Race, racism and prison
- ~ Poverty, class and prison

- ~ Writing, art and other creative practices in prison
- ~ Representing the prison experience in literature, theatre, TV, film, video games, music and art
- ~ mental health in prison
- ~ addictions, self-harm and suicide
- ~ medical ethics and care in prison

### *Life After Prison*

- ~ Challenges of reintegration
- ~ Rehabilitation and education
- ~ Discrimination against former inmates
- ~ Family and friends coping with the release of loved ones
- ~ Community service and volunteerism

### *Prison As Institution*

- ~ Prison as workplace: experiences of guards, administrators and institutional officials
- ~ Prison spaces: architectural design in theory and practice, boot camps, work camps, open air prisons, etc.
- ~ Technologies of incarceration
- ~ Teaching and learning in prison
- ~ Spirituality and religion in prison
- ~ Counselling and other clinical experiences with prisoners
- ~ (In)Famous prisons and their legacy (Auschwitz, Guantanamo Bay, Alcatraz, Newgate Gaol, etc.)
- ~ Prisons and dark tourism
- ~ Prison conditions around the globe
- ~ Economics of incarceration: politics of awarding contracts, private vs public management, impact of prison location on local communities, etc.

### *Prisons in Law and Policy*

- ~ Theories and practices in rehabilitation and humane containment
- ~ Balancing punishment and human rights
- ~ Prison reform initiatives
- ~ Innovative approaches to incarceration
- ~ Relationship between justice system and corrections system
- ~ Race, class, sex and other forms of discrimination in sentencing
- ~ Correctional services as public policy: governmental/civil service perspectives
- ~ National and international legal provisions around prison conditions and prisoners' rights
- ~ NGOs and charities working in the area of prison reform
- ~ Social attitudes toward prison and prisoners

### **What To Send**

The aim of this inclusive interdisciplinary conference and collaborative networking event is to bring people together and encourage creative conversations in the context of a variety of formats: papers, seminars, workshops, storytelling, performances, poster presentations, problem-solving sessions, case studies, panels, q&a's, round-tables etc. Creative responses to the subject, such as poetry/prose, short film screenings/original drama, installations and alternative presentation styles that engage the audience and foster debate are particularly encouraged. Please feel free to put forward proposals that you think will get the message across, in whatever form.

At the end of the conference we will be exploring ways in which we can develop the discussions and dialogues in new and sustainable inclusive interdisciplinary directions, including research, workshops, publications, public interest days, associations, developing courses etc which will help us make sense of the topics discussed during the meeting. There is an intention, subject to the discussions which emerge during the course of the meeting, to form a selective innovative interdisciplinary publication to engender further research and collaboration.

300 word proposals, presentations, abstracts and other forms of contribution and participation should be submitted by Friday 10th January 2020. Other forms of participation should be discussed in advance with the Organising Chairs.

All submissions will be at least double reviewed, under anonymous (blind) conditions, by a global panel drawn from members of the Project Team, The Development Team and the Advisory Board. In practice our procedures usually entail that by the time a proposal is accepted, it will have been triple and quadruple reviewed.

You will be notified of the panel's decision by Friday 24th January 2020.

If your submission is accepted for the conference, a full draft of your contribution should be submitted by Friday 1st May 2020.

Abstracts and proposals may be in Word, RTF or Notepad formats with the following information and in this order:

a) author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in the programme, c) email address, d) title of proposal, e) type of proposal e.g. paper presentation, workshop, panel, film, performance, etc, f) body of proposal, g) up to 10 keywords.

E-mails should be entitled: Experiencing Prison Submission

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### **Where To Send**

Abstracts should be submitted simultaneously to the Organising Chairs and the Project Administrator:

Diana Medicott: [diana@progressiveconnexions.net](mailto:diana@progressiveconnexions.net)

Len Capuli (Project Administrator): [bratislavaprison@progressiveconnexions.net](mailto:bratislavaprison@progressiveconnexions.net)

Please direct all enquiries to: [bratislavaprison@progressiveconnexions.net](mailto:bratislavaprison@progressiveconnexions.net)

For further details and information please visit the conference web page: <http://www.progressiveconnexions.net/interdisciplinary-projects/human-rights/experiencing-prison/conferences/>

Contact Info:

Diana Medicott: [diana@progressiveconnexions.net](mailto:diana@progressiveconnexions.net)

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