

Incarceration Collection

Archive Mission

The Journal of the Plague Year is a digital crowdsourced archive about the human experience during the time of the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. It contains images, photographs, narratives, art, news stories, and documents submitted by the public and academics across the world in order to document the experience and create a space of shared memory.

Collection Mission

The collection, Incarceration, is a collection based on documenting the voice and lived experience of those incarcerated at the time of the pandemic, those released early due to the pandemic, and societies reaction to the incarcerated population during the pandemic. By documenting the experience of this particular population, it adds to the larger archive by widening the voices recorded, documents another portion of the minority population of the nation, and illustrates the changing view, or lack thereof, of the public toward the incarcerated.

Collection Scope

- The Incarceration Collection will include narratives, images, oral interviews, written interviews, letters, and documents by and about adult persons incarcerated in the United States during the pandemic.
- The purpose of this collection is to include the voice and experience of this particular population during the pandemic.
- The addition of this collection will broaden the voices included in the archive.
- The following are key themes and subjects this collection seeks to address:
 - Thoughts and feelings of the incarcerated
 - Show how the pandemic uniquely effects the incarcerated/ Highlight new problems and concerns that have arisen for the incarcerated during the pandemic
 - Show how the general public views the incarcerated and if this view changes from before, during and after the pandemic
 - Illuminate how the daily rhythms of prison life have been changed by the pandemic.
 - (While guards and other prison personal are key to the overall inclusion of prisons in the archive this collection will focus on the inmates.)
- 4 long-term goals for the collection
 - Document the experience of people incarcerated during the pandemic so that researchers will have a way to understand and learn about their lived experience.

- Examine the wider question of how the general public views people who are incarcerated and if that view changed across time (before, during, and after the pandemic).
- Examine the prison systems response to a national/global emergency.
- Provide a window into examining the treatment of minority populations. (This is possible because the incarcerated population is made up of largely of minorities.)

Acquisitions

- Types of materials that will support this collection
 - First person accounts
 - Third person accounts
 - News coverage, both print and video
 - Statistics
 - Memes
 - Still images
 - Art
 - Poetry
 - Narrative
 - Music
- How materials will be gathered
 - Searching the internet using a variety of key words throughout the time span of collecting.
 - Watching hashtags on Twitter and scanning other social media.
 - Work through other people that have the ability to get into contact with inmates and/or family members of those incarcerated or released early due to the pandemic.

Evaluation

- Thus far this collection is unique. This collection is focusing on a specific population within the United States, the incarcerated. There are other collections that focus on specific populations.
- The US prison population is skewed to include more African American and Latinx individuals than white so it also will add to the coverage of those minorities.
- This collection does fill a silence because it covers both minorities and the incarcerated.