

REINTEGRATION IN A RURAL COMMUNITY: STRENGTHS, BARRIERS, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REENTRY IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

By

Vanessa Elyce Vrtiak

A Project Presented to

The Faculty of Humboldt State University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Sociology

Committee Membership

Dr. Joshua Meisel, Committee Chair

Dr. Renée Byrd, Committee Member

Dr. Meredith Williams, Program Graduate Coordinator

May 2017

ABSTRACT

REINTEGRATION IN A RURAL COMMUNITY: STRENGTHS, BARRIERS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REENTRY IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

Vanessa Elyce Vrtiak

There is a current lack of reintegration services in rural Humboldt County, California. To understand the services available, and develop recommendations for future reentry services, I conducted focus groups and interviews with the currently incarcerated, service providers, and the formerly incarcerated. Some of the formerly incarcerated participants live in Humboldt County currently, and some have moved to other communities in the state of California. This research was conducted using a convenience sample, and snow ball sampling methods. The initial goal of this research was to promote communication between both community based service providers and those involved in the criminal justice system. My hope is that this will ease the process of reentry, and reduce the likelihood of recidivism. In addition, this research will aide in the planning and development of the new rehabilitation center for the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. The rehabilitation center will be used to support the currently and formerly incarcerated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supportive loving fiancé, Ulyses Dorantes. You are my love, my family, my best friend and partner. Thank you for supporting me throughout my research, and this process.

I would also like to thank my friends that have become my family. There are many of you that believed in my passion for reentry work, and have supported my efforts to create change within our community. I'm truly blessed to have your support. Sista, Mike Da Bronx, Troy, and Charlie my loving neighbors and allies in our beautiful Manila neighborhood. Your love shines even through the thickest morning fog. Jennifer Bravo, Klark Swan, Jessica and Arny King, Carly Robbins, Jamie Carroll, Gretchen Peck, Natasha Fischer, Ian Yeo, Eileen McGee, Travis Lockwood, Jay and Crystal Collins, Sara Okeeffee, Nezzie Wade, and Therese Fitzmaurice your ongoing support and ability to always show up in my life keeps me going. Your love and laughter fuel my soul.

Maureen and Bruce Taylor thank you for loving me fiercely. You both have championed my potential since the beginning. I simply would not be the woman I am today without your support.

Thank you to my tribe of aunties. Each of you is such an incredible model for me of womanhood. Amber VanDunk, Maire Dodd, Jill Garinger, Sherri Siegel, Micki Elaine, Nicole Chase, Tracy Nord, and Brenda Bluntzer.

I would like to thank those that I look up to locally in the criminal justice field. Donna Bullard, Bill Damiano, Dennis Griffin, Marco Luna, Mark Lamers, and Shannan

Oneal. You are incredible human beings. Thank you for showing me that love and compassion can exist within the confines of concrete. It's incredible to witness you doing 'the work.' You each inspire me every day.

I would like to thank the Sociology Department. This department has championed me through many projects and pushed me to be proud of my story. Jennifer Eichstedt Joshua Meisel, Alicia Persson, Anthony Silvaggio, Meredith Williams, and Mary Virnoche.

I would like to thank the incredible research team I had the honor of working with. Hanna Baus, Fidel Castro, Jonah Platt, and Haley Hannan, I adore each of you. We were truly a dream team, and SHATTER will live on in my heart. In the same vein, I would like to thank my incredible cohort. Hanna Baus, Christopher Coker, Loren Collins, Yancy Mejia, Julian Rivera, Carly Strand, Heather Clark, Liza Olmedo. Thank you for the laughter. It has been a joy getting closer to each of you.

I would like to thank my mother, my two sisters Sheree Pike, and Rochelle Handley. Our story is what lit this fire in me. I'm in awe of the courage that you carry. Rochelle, and Sheree, I look forward to watching you pass that courage down to your beautiful children.

Finally, I would like to thank the participants in this research project. Your voices and stories leave me in awe, and I'm honored to be working alongside you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
INTRODUCTION	1
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	4
Reentry and Mass Incarceration	5
Review of Reentry Literature	8
Stigma as a Barrier to Successful Reintegration.....	10
Employment and Housing Barriers.....	12
Reentry Barriers for Women.....	15
Rural Communities in the Reentry Process	18
Conclusion	24
METHODS	26
Design Overview	26
The Community Breakdown.....	28
Sampling	29
The Formerly Incarcerated.....	30
The Currently Incarcerated	32
Service Providers	34
Data Collection	34
Data Analysis	35

Ethics	36
Limitations of the study	37
DATA ANALYSIS.....	39
Findings	39
Stigma.....	39
Disconnection	42
Lack of opportunities: Employment and Housing Barriers	46
Community: A Barrier and a Tool	49
Recommendations for Successful Reintegration	52
CONCLUSION.....	58
REFERENCES	64
APPENDICES	74

INTRODUCTION

My mother suffered with physical and emotional abuse her entire life. She was addicted to drugs and alcohol. She was abused by all three of my fathers. I watched her struggle, and ultimately fall apart in October 2000. My mother was driving drunk and nearly killed my two sisters and me. She was arrested and in court several times that year. We all believed that my mother would not be sentenced to jail time, but she was. During my mother's incarceration, I cared for my two younger sisters.

When the day of her release arrived, we moved to the reservation. We stayed in a friend's small garage. My mother lost her respect in the community. She lost her business, and her home, and we had to rebuild completely. As a part of her sentence, she washed police cars and was on probation. We would all get up early and catch the bus to our respective places. She would go to Eureka to fulfill her SWAP requirements and we would take the hour-long bus ride to school. I continued to witness my mother's struggle. People would whisper in the grocery store, and behind my back in school. I watched as my mother worked hard to rebuild what she lost. Despite all her hard work, the stigma and the lack of community support left her unable to reach the life she had built before her incarceration. She returned to alcoholism, and our family struggled with homelessness for the rest of my childhood.

I believe that the criminal justice system should look to those incarcerated with love, compassion, and support. My mother was never given the guidance and

resources to survive her incarceration. She was stigmatized and chastised in our community. Losing her led to me losing my childhood.

I believe that the criminal justice system has the power to support those who fall into the cycle of incarceration rather than shaming them and taking them away from their families. The criminal justice system has the potential to radically improve communities by supporting those impacted by incarceration with supportive services upon release. My story, is just one of millions in this country. My story has been the backbone for my interest in conducting research on reentry services in Humboldt County.

The work that I present here is an exploratory, qualitative study of not only the support services that exist within Humboldt County, but also a list of recommendations from service providers and the formerly and currently incarcerated. Throughout my interviews and focus groups I draw on the resources that currently exist, as well as the rich experiences provided by those impacted by the criminal justice system.

My work includes a Literature Review that covers the micro, meso, and macro barriers faced by those who have been incarcerated. This includes stigma from the community and community service providers, housing and employment barriers, and a rural community as a barrier within itself. I also review the prior theoretical literature related to the influence of social capital theory and social disorganization theory on community health and the reentry experiences of the formerly incarcerated. Social capital theory stresses the importance of social bonds

to community as a tool for successful reintegration. Social disorganization theory explains the barriers that exist on a community level for the reintegrating individual. These theoretical frameworks provide the foundation for this work.

I next describe my methods and how I gained access to my participants, as well as my data collection methods. In addition, I explore the themes that emerged from my research. I conclude with recommendations made from community service providers and from the currently and formerly incarcerated. These recommendations include several suggestions that are now being implemented in our community. I will explain my role with integrating some of them within our community and discuss how we can move forward.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review is designed to set the stage for a discussion around reentry. There is a plethora of research on prisons, jails and reintegration. Within this body of research there is limited literature on reentry from a rural community. Therefore, this chapter looks at the vast literature regarding reintegration, what can hinder recidivism, and what helps make people successful. I will discuss micro, meso, and macro factors that come into play with reentry. I will also cover some theoretical perspectives surrounding reintegration.

Reentry is a term in the criminal justice field to describe how the formerly incarcerated return and adjust to life in their homes and communities following their time incarcerated. Reentry can begin before an individual's release from a jail or prison, or upon release (Travis 2002; Petersilia 2003).

The study of reentry is important because more than 2 million inmates are released from jails and prisons each year (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2013). In California, on average, there are over 13,000 people being released from prisons and jails annually (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2013). Ninety-five percent of those who are incarcerated will eventually return into communities (Petersilia 2005). These are individuals returning to families that may have been largely impacted by the incarceration (Lynch and Sabol 2001), and communities that may be feeling the impacts of mass incarceration, which I will explore in more depth below. Incarceration, and therefore reentry, has an impact far beyond the individual. Ex-prisoners returning to communities

may bring high rates of PTSD and other physical, mental and health issues with them (Kubiak 2004), as the underlying trauma, addiction and other issues that may have led to their incarceration have likely gone untreated during their time in jail or prison (Gonzalez and Connell 2014). Therefore, it is important to understand the challenges individuals face as they return to communities. Society needs supportive, holistic support for formerly incarcerated individuals, their families and the communities to which they are returning.

Reentry and Mass Incarceration

It is important to acknowledge that the reentry of individuals after incarceration is just one step in a complex system of criminal justice, and systems of punishment and social control in the United States. The United States has had the highest incarceration rate in the world since 2002 (Tsai and Scommegn 2012), with 2.4 million (West and Sabol 2008) people currently incarcerated in the United States. The rate of incarceration has been increasing since the 1970's (Travis and Western 2014), with a small dip in the incarceration rate in just the past two years (Winters, Globokar, and Roberson 2015). These systems of mass incarceration have especially impacted communities of color, where African American men are seven times more likely to be incarcerated than white men (Crutchfield and Weeks 2015). Thirty percent of young African American men today can expect to spend some of their life in prison (Garland 2001), and African American men make up more than 40 percent of the total incarcerated population (Mauer 2004). The Bureau of Justice (2013) reports that Hispanics comprise 16.3% of the U.S.

population, but comprise 20.6% of the nation's jail and prison populations. Communities of color have become disproportionately represented within the criminal justice system, and this social issue is tied to mass incarceration.

Several complex issues have led to mass incarceration nationally. In her book *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Alexander (2010) outlined how the War on Drugs has duplicated the racist Jim Crow laws, funneling African American individuals into the criminal justice system, and creating legal racial discrimination in housing, education, employment and social services. There has also been a "get tough on crime" approach to handling crime (Kessler and Levitt 1999), which has led to a reduction in services for the incarcerated (Bard, Davis, and Ward 2012), and a focus on punishment, rather than on prevention or rehabilitation. In her book *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Davis (2010) writes, "1 in 100 people in this country are under surveillance" (p.38). The surveillance in place is primarily focused on people of color who are perceived to be diminishing social resources. Community resources are then spent on criminalizing people rather than addressing significant social issues. Conservative ideologies in place perpetuate the belief that we must criminalize poor people of color and create policy changes that expand harsh sentences.

The criminal justice system, including reentry systems and programs, are embedded in broader systems of racism (Brewer and Heitzeg 2008), classism (Reiman and Leighton 2017), sexism (Pasko 2013), homophobia (Kohn 2001) and so forth. All of this impacts every level of the criminal justice system: what behaviors are considered criminal, who is monitored, who is arrested, who is punished and how harshly, and the

treatment of individuals inside of prisons and jails. For example, members of the LGBTQ community are more likely to be criminalized and punished than heterosexual and cisgender individuals (Mogul, Ritchie and Whitlock 2011). Steep legal fees have created a new type of “debtor’s prisons” for low-income individuals (ACLU 2017), and Stop and Frisk policies in cities like New York have perpetuated a system of racial profiling (NYCLU 2014). Davis (2010) asserts the idea that the prison industrial complex, “...functions ideologically as an abstract site into which undesirables are deposited, relieving us of the responsibility of thinking about the real issues afflicting those communities from which prisoners are drawn in such disproportionate numbers” (p.16). She suggests there is a hidden agenda to mass incarceration which is to mask the social problems within our country inside prisons or jails.

These systems do not end when a prisoner is released. An individual’s race, class, gender, sexuality, immigration status and so forth may still impact how they are treated after prison. This is the case with employment, housing, education and social services, as Alexander (2010) explored for African American ex-offenders, but also for those who remain under different forms of social control through the system of probation. While more than 2 million people are currently incarcerated in jails and prisons, the criminal justice system expands further than that; there are an additional 4.66 million people under probation and other forms of control (Kaeble and Glaze 2016).

As Byrd (2016) has explored in her research on reentry programs, such programs, while trying to demonstrate they are critiquing mass incarceration, may reproduce the very systems that cause the high incarceration rates in the United States. Reentry

programs must be careful to not legitimate maintaining high levels of social control, especially for people of color. While studying Humboldt County's reentry programs with this lens is beyond the scope of this current study, future research could explore this, and alternative supports for the members of our community leaving our jail.

Given these bigger systems, while a reentry program may serve immediate needs for people leaving jails and prisons right now, there is much work to be done to address the larger systems and ideologies that feed mass incarceration, and disproportionately impact people of color and other marginalized communities.

Review of Reentry Literature

In California, there are multiple correctional facilities with a significant amount of releases each year (Kadela and Seiter 2003). On April 5, 2011, California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law AB 109, the "2011 Realignment Legislation Addressing Public Safety" ("Realignment"). This law quickly shifted responsibility from the state to the counties for offenders (Lofstrom, Raphael, and Grattet 2014). For counties, this means they are now allocated funds to provide realignment services for those in the criminal justice system. Counties can choose how they spend their realignment funding. They can implement drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, provide more mental health services, expand employment programs for the formerly incarcerated and so much more. Realignment has truly transformed county jails. Currently non-serious, nonviolent, non-sexual offenders from state prison are fulfilling their sentences in county jails (Board of State Community Corrections, 2015). We now have up to 18,000 incarcerated people in

northern California alone (Lofstrom, Raphael, and Grattet 2014). Humboldt County has also been greatly impacted by realignment. The Stanford Criminal Justice Center conducted a statewide study on realignment in California and reported that in Humboldt County, “15 to 19 percent of the pre-trial population could be viewed as viable candidates for an alternative to incarceration program, and 10 to 15 percent of sentenced inmates could be considered for an alternative in lieu of jail confinement,” (Abarbanel, McCray, McCann Newhall and Snyder 2013:20). However even with the viable option of an alternative to incarceration, local jail populations have increased at the state level (Sabol 2007; Aukerman 2003). The increase in jail populations has risen from a violation of probation, or parole (Beck 2006). Formerly incarcerated people can be released into the community through probation, or they can serve some of their sentence in our local jail and be released to parole to finish their time (Abarbanel, McCray, McCann Newhall and Snyder 2013).

In 2000, The American Correctional Association surveyed states, asking if they were offering transitional services from prison, and 39 out of the 41 states surveyed are offering services. Even though there has been an increase in our jail populations, where are the reentry services for our jails? (Austin 2001; Roman and Chalfin 2006). Our county jails are expected to provide multiple services and operate as multipurpose institutions (Petteruti and Walsh 2008). As a practical reality, they are expected to provide mental health services, shelter, and much more beyond their scope of purpose. This is primarily because of the lack of resources in our rural community for those with mental health issues, as well as a large homeless population. However, the purpose of the

jail is not to hold people because they are homeless or mentally ill. The purpose of the jail is to house people awaiting trial for a misdemeanor, or it is for people who are waiting to be transferred to another facility like prison or a mental hospital, and to keep the public safe (Roman and Chalfin 2006). John Irwin (1985) argues that jails are holding places where people are confined and congregate. They are places for people that have not yet been charged, but jails play a role in mass incarceration. For the public, the belief that the purpose of jails is to keep the public safe has been primary, and there has been minimal emphasis on reentry services (Mellow, Mukamal, LoBuglio, Solomon, and Osborne 2008).

County jails contain currently incarcerated people who have offenses that range from infractions, to misdemeanors, and even felonies. Sentences can range from overnight to several years. Regardless of the amount of time someone may spend in jail, one must consider the amount of sheer volume of releases and entries, and the value of providing services to those incarcerated in jails (Roman and Chalfin 2006). Where does this leave our county jails? Those returning to their community after incarceration in county jail suffer from the same struggles as those being released from prison, including substance abuse, stigma, lack of family support, and a lack of educational opportunities, to name a few (White, Saunders, Fisher, and Mellow 2012). For these reasons, we must consider the importance of providing a supportive community environment rich with resources, so that reintegrating individual will be successful.

Stigma as a Barrier to Successful Reintegration

There are many barriers that exist upon reentry, but they all trace back to the concept of stigma. The idea of stigma is often defined as a spoiled identity or a characteristic that one possesses that is devalued by society (Goffman 1963). Stigmatization results in labeling and stereotyping that occurs (Link and Phelan 2001). There is a distinction between the good and the bad, the powerful versus the powerless (Link and Phelan 2001). In the case of involvement within the criminal justice system, the level of stigma is so severe that it is often managed through secrecy (Link 1989). This takes place throughout the reintegration process, while obtaining employment, housing, social services, and so forth. The formerly incarcerated go through the process of having to “reveal” their identities when someone asks about their criminal background (Ross and Richards 2003). The phenomenon of stigma has far-reaching implications for the formerly incarcerated, and those with a criminal background can receive such heavy stigmatization, that long term homelessness can even occur (Metraux and Cullhan 2004).

Due to the amount of stigma that occurs there is also a level of invisible punishment that continues after incarceration. Jeremy Travis argues that new punishments are now imposed by the operation of laws (Travis 2002). Travis and Alexander both describe how invisible punishments occur in the form of discrimination against the formerly incarcerated. They show up in employment, housing, education, and public benefit sectors (Aukerman 2003; Luther, Reichert, Holloway, Roth, and Aalsma 2011; Hattery and Smith 2010). The stigma that exists regarding any involvement with the criminal justice system is so crippling, it makes it very difficult for someone

reintegrating to succeed. The impact of the criminal justice system on someone's identity should be considered upon sentencing (Travis 2002).

Employment and Housing Barriers

Because of the stigma that exists around involvement within the criminal justice system, housing can become a major barrier for someone reintegrating from jail. Housing is one of the most challenging barriers the formerly incarcerated face (Lee, Tyler, Wright 2010; Lynch and Sabol 2001). Incarceration, no matter how long, can have a great impact on the ability to secure housing once released, and potentially have a lifelong effect (Freudenberg, Daniels, Crum, Perkins, and Richie 2005). In California, landlords screen tenants, and are legally able to deem one ineligible due to prior convictions (Dennis, Locke, and Khadduri 2007). Housing providers require full disclosure thus often leading to discrimination for people with felonies in their past (Dunn and Grabchuk 2010). JoAnne Page, CEO, President of the Fortune Society, observed that "Landlords using blanket bans based on conviction history, rather than individualized assessments, disproportionately preclude people of color who are statistically incarcerated at higher rates" (p.6).

These blanket bans become huge barriers, as do changes in public assistance (Holtfreter, Reising, and Morash 2004). Formerly incarcerated people are limited to public assistance due to their criminal history, and private landlords often refuse to rent to those with criminal involvement (Metraux and Culhane 2004). Section 8 housing providers can deny housing assistance to anyone who has engaged in drug related or violent criminal

activity (Travis 2002). “For those convicted of drug crimes, they can reapply for housing after a three-year waiting period, and must show they have been rehabilitated,” (Travis 2002: 12). Due to the difficulties in obtaining housing assistance through Section 8, the formerly incarcerated may rely on a friend or family member for housing upon release. However, this is not always a viable option (McNeil, Binder, and Robinson 2005).

There are also restrictions placed on an individual who is on probation or parole that limits where he or she can stay. If there is another individual in the home where the formerly incarcerated member would like to reside who also has a criminal background, this could result in a violation of probation. Parole agencies continuously report prohibiting parolees from any association with an individual with a criminal record (Sampson 2011). The disassociation that is expected from law enforcement upon the formerly incarcerated limits housing options. The formerly incarcerated cannot live with others who have convictions on their records.

There is no national data on the number of people denied housing because of their past convictions (Roman and Travis 2004). There are however, organizations working on policies that support the formerly incarcerated in their efforts to receive housing rights. The Legal Action Center has proposed several policies that support the involvement of the federal government in the process of supporting housing for all, regardless of a criminal background. Their recommendations include the idea that there should be limits to how far back housing providers can go when investigating prior convictions. They suggest that there should be a limit to the type of criminal records that are considered. The Legal Action Center stresses, “Only convictions relevant to the safety of tenants and

property should be considered,” (2009:2). They also recommend that there should be more housing opportunities for people with criminal records, and more funds to give people a second chance. Housing is vital to the success of the reintegrating individual (Dunn and Grabchuk 2010), and yet remains one of the greatest barriers upon release from incarceration.

Another significant barrier to successful reintegration is limited employment opportunities (Bushway, Stoll, and Weiman, 2011; Agan and Starr 2016). In the release process, work plays a crucial role. It serves as an opportunity for change through which the formerly incarcerated begin to construct pro-social replacement selves (Opsal 2012). Individuals who are working are less likely to commit crimes (Solomon 2012). Research suggests that a successful post release transition requires stable employment, yet convicted felons are likely to have difficulty finding legitimate opportunities for work. This occurs for many reasons: weakened connections to employment opportunities, the gaps of time in employment while incarcerated, and the stigma of incarceration (Laub and Sampson 2001). It is difficult for the formerly incarcerated to explain to a potential employer the reasons for gaps in employment and the details around their incarceration (Petersilia 2003). For many employment opportunities, the question around past convictions surfaces on an application. Employers also commonly require background checks, and this can be an obstacle for someone with a criminal background (Lam and Harcourt 2003). Background checks limit opportunities for the formerly incarcerated, and they provide a level of discrimination for people with a criminal background (Lam and Harcourt 2003). Employers are reluctant to hire formerly incarcerated people,

especially if they are a person of color with a criminal background (Pager 2003).

Employers are already more likely to hire someone white over someone that is non-white, add in a criminal background, and it becomes a greater challenge to find employment.

If someone who was formerly incarcerated is unable to find reasonable employment, there is the option of extending education. However, there are barriers also in higher education that make it difficult for the formerly incarcerated to succeed. The 1988 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act gave State and Federal courts the power to deny benefits to someone who was convicted of drug trafficking or drug possession (Lin and Harris 2010). These restrictions within the educational sphere act as institutional barriers that perpetuate recidivism for the formerly incarcerated (Wacquant 2001).

Providing adequate opportunities for education or job training to assist in reentry is critical to the success of the reintegrating individual (Petteruti and Walsh 2008). Lack of housing, employment and educational opportunities are some of the barriers that exist for all reintegrating individuals. However, it is important to note the additional barriers that exist for women reintegrating from jail.

Reentry Barriers for Women

Women have their own unique needs within the reentry process (McCampbell 2006). Scholars have contended that female offenders are unique from male offenders for many reasons. First, they engage in different offenses, and pose less threat of violence across criminal justice settings. They also follow different pathways into criminal

behavior (Hardyman and Van Voorhis 2004). Females who are currently and formerly incarcerated are economically and socially marginalized just by being women. In addition, they are more likely to experience childhood and adult victimization, substance abuse, and have a diagnosis of mental illness (Bauman, Salisbury, Van Voorhis, and Wright 2012). This level of victimization is important to consider when looking at women within the criminal justice system. Pathways into criminal justice involvement are gendered and, so too are the pathways out of the criminal justice system. Women, like their male counterparts, also face a significant amount of stigma. However, their internalized shame presents unique obstacles for them when being released from jail (Harrison and Beck 2006; Laub and Sampson 2001). Our society views women who have been incarcerated as women who have violated the social contract and transgressed fundamental moral principles of womanhood. Formerly incarcerated women report feeling a greater need to prove themselves as worthy citizens to community members who know they have been incarcerated (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001). This need to prove oneself worthy compounds the woman's shame when she must deal with the realities of finding housing, employment, and even reintegrating back into her own family. Women are released with the hope that they can build a new life for themselves and their children, and are quickly faced with an array of barriers (McCampbell 2006). Parents on parole/probation, must prove that they have sustained employment, can financially support their children, maintain a permanent and appropriate residence, and have no criminal activity (Dodge and Pogrebin 2001). Such requirements of employment,

financial, and residential stability present obstacles to parents who wish to regain custodial rights of their children.

Formerly incarcerated women are also not able to rely on welfare for financial assistance. State block grants create time limits for financial assistance and set state discretionary models (McNeil, Reisig, and Morash 2004). Congress created block grants this legislation so that the formerly incarcerated would not be able to rely on welfare. The welfare reform law is called Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. In addition, assistance will be withdrawn if someone violates their probation or parole. States can decide where they stand on this law, but it ultimately perpetuates the invisible punishments that exist after reentry (Travis 2002).

For a formerly incarcerated woman, seeking employment has its own challenges. Formerly incarcerated women have reported initial work in the telemarketing, food service, and janitorial industries. However, this work is not desirable because of low wages, and lack of benefits, and limited full time opportunities (Opsal 2012). The kind of work offered is simply not sustainable.

Housing for women that are parents after they have been incarcerated is even more critical if they hope to reunite with their children (McNeil, Binder, and Robinson 2005). If a woman can leave the jail with identified safe housing, and a community service plan that meets her individual needs, she will be less likely to return to jail (McC Campbell 2006). The barriers to housing, employment, and other financial incentives that one can normally count on to get ahead in our system, however, are ultimately lost or difficult to receive due to a person's history with the criminal justice system (Covington

2008; Blitz, Wolff, Pan, and Pogorzelski 2005). These are barriers that anyone reintegrating from jail may face, but they are emphasized for women.

Rural Communities in the Reentry Process

In addition to housing and employment barriers, there is the barrier of the rural community itself (Brooks, Naser, and Visher 2006; Roman and Travis 2004). There are many myths surrounding rural communities that impact the reintegration process. Rural communities are often idealized by popular culture and are seen as crime free environments (Locki and Bourke 2001). In fact, some urban communities may have higher rates of crime than rural communities, depending on the type of crime (Donnermeyer and DeKeseredy 2014). The amount of reentry resources and services are limited in rural communities (Garland, Brett, Wodahal, and Mayfield 2011). Since rural communities offer even less resources than their urban counterparts, housing (Freudenburg 1986), and employment opportunities are also difficult to obtain and provide additional significant barriers (Solomon 2012). Access to public transportation can also compromise successful reintegration and this is especially difficult in rural communities (Wodahal 2006). Transportation is needed to meet with a probation officer, search for housing and maintain employment. In rural communities, the formerly incarcerated are often relying on bicycles, walking, or friends to take them around (Garland 2011).

In the development of reentry resources in rural communities it is also important to consider the uniqueness of each rural area. The same programs that are developed

within urban communities may not be applicable to rural communities. Some rural areas have unique values of wanting less government involvement, which in turn impacts the resources allocated to the formerly incarcerated (Mauer 2004). This means less funds even for county jails, which are already struggling with limited resources (Wodhal 2006). Another important factor to consider is that rural communities also offer a unique sense of closeness, which can be both helpful and detrimental to the transition process (Hecht 2006). With popular culture, there is a myth that rural communities provide solidarity within the small networks that exist as well as moral accountability (Donnermeyer and DeKeseredy 2014). The misconception is that rural acquaintance networks can lessen crime and make people more accountable for their actions. However, the close acquaintance networks can perpetuate stigma around incarceration and work against the reintegrating individual. It can be difficult to be accepted back into a rural community where everyone, including employers and community members, may know the details of their past criminal behavior (Wodahl, 2006; Young, Faye, Taxman, and Byrne 2002). However, each rural community is unique and requires its own system to support the formerly incarcerated during their reintegration journey (Weisheit and Wells 2005).

There is also the barrier of the neighborhood to which the formerly incarcerated is returning. Incarceration imposes harmful social, economic, and political consequences on racial minority communities because offenders tend to be drawn predominantly from the same racially isolated and socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhoods (White, Saunders, Fisher, and Mellow 2012). The environment from which the individual came from and may return to will play a significant role in his or her success (Kubrin and

Stewart 2006). Research by Robert Sampson and Stephen Raudenbush (2015) on residents in neighborhoods with high incarceration rates found that residents faced a level of implicit bias that perpetuates neighborhood racial stigma.

“Neighborhoods with high concentrations of minority and poor residents are stigmatized by historically correlated and structurally induced problems of crime and disorder. These historically resilient, psychologically salient correlations have deep roots in American social stratification, which are not likely to be overcome easily through short-term interventions.” (2015:4)

The impact of incarceration is not only detrimental to the individual, but to the wellbeing of the neighborhood to which he or she is returning.

Other research Lum, Swarup, Eubank, and Hawdon (2014) has exposed the contagious nature of imprisonment by examining the effects of formerly incarcerated people interacting with their original community upon release. The proximity one may have to someone who has been incarcerated increases the likelihood of incarceration for the entire community that is exposed to that individual. This new research suggests the value in breaking this feedback loop by providing continued support services to neighborhoods in which incarceration rates occur. Their work highlighted the importance of having service providers within a two-mile radius of the neighborhoods that hold the highest rate of formerly incarcerated people. Support within a two-mile radius, will reduce recidivism, particularly for African-Americans (Kubrin and Stewart 2006). This recommended two-mile radius may not be possible for those in a rural community. However, there is value in understanding that supportive reentry services provide the

social context and support that some formerly incarcerated individuals need (Blessing, Golden, and Ruiz-Quintanilla 2008). If we can provide support from not only the community, but also from law enforcement and service providers these combined efforts can help reduce recidivism for the reintegrating individual (Taxman 2004).

In closing there is a general lack of research on reentry in rural communities (Wodhal 2006). Most of the research on reentry for the formerly incarcerated focuses on employment and housing as the two main objectives (Solomon 2012). We must continue to consider the barriers in rural places, and the lack of resources available to those impacted by the criminal justice system. The role of the community cannot be underplayed in the reintegration process.

Theoretical Framework

This research was based on two theoretical frameworks. The first framework is social capital theory. “Social capital is the social support and social obligations people and community acquire and owe through the norm of reciprocity” (Hardcastle, Powers, and Wencour 2011:11). Social capital theory is about more than just obtaining legal employment and sufficient housing, it also includes networking abilities that can truly advance someone’s life.

The formerly incarcerated need social connections, and job skills so that they can obtain employment. Upon release from incarceration, someone being released not only has a criminal record, but also has been unable to advance their job skills (Clear 2007). The idea of social capital regarding reentry work relates to introducing the formerly incarcerated back into the community with supportive social structures. If the community

to which they are introduced can offer ties of solid and dependable mutual support, that can provide meaning and value for the individual reintegrating. (Lochner, Kawachi, Brennan, and Buka 2003).

Berg and Huebner (2011), theorize that reintegrating individuals that had social capital and social ties were less likely to recidivate. This is likely due to the level of emotional attachment the reintegrating individual has to people as well as support provided by institutions. The greater the emotional attachment, the less likely someone is to engage in criminal activity (Hirschi 2004).

Social capital can also help the reintegrating individual become successful by providing collective efficacy. Forrest and Kearns (2001) identify empowerment, participation, supporting networks of reciprocity, safety and belonging as all components to domains of social capital. If the reintegrating individual experiences trust, respect, and feels empowered in their community, crime rates are not only expected to decline, but well-being of the overall community will increase (Ohmer 2008). However, it is important to consider that through collective efficacy the individuals that make up the community are only a fraction of the key players within the reentry process. Sampson (2011) discusses the role of social networks within institutions inside and outside of a community. There is a level of control exuded from the community over the individual residents. This level of control helps the community create a safe environment. This is implemented by the community members when they monitor public areas and approach individuals that may be disturbing the communal environment. The hope is that increased

collective efficacy will create a reduction in crime, and allow for increased community participation.

The next theoretical framework that I considered during this study is social disorganization theory. This theory considers crime in various communities from a macro and a micro level. Social disorganization theory takes an emphasis on the community and the ability to create social cohesion through shared values and the use of informal networks so people do not resort to crime (Shaw and McKay 1969).

The community has a special role in reintegration, and supporting the individual reintegrating (Rose and Clear 1998). Individuals reintegrating are likely to return home to their communities that are considered socially disorganized. This social disorganization occurs for communities that have a high number of people that have been incarcerated, it's almost expected that someone will be involved with the criminal justice system. If many community members are absent and are incarcerated, there is a higher level of distrust towards the government, which in turn weakens the institutions that exist within the community (Travis 2002). This theory asserts the belief that everyone wants to live in a safe community, but the communities that reintegrating individuals are returning to lack social control, due to the amount of community members impacted by incarceration (Rose and Clear 1998). These communities also suffer from lack of employment and housing opportunities (Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush 2001). This theory is important to consider when discussing the barriers of reentry because if an individual is planning on returning to the community from which they came, their chances for success are limited, due to the social disorganization that often exists.

Compared to urban communities, rural communities are less organized because they offer less mobility and rely on the informal community surveillance to curb any social disorganization that can occur (Donnermeyer and DeKeseredy 2014). The relationship the community has with the reintegrating individual plays a major part in the reintegration process. When there is an extreme level of disorganization within a community, it can be difficult to regain social control (Travis 2001). A level of self-efficacy is generated when the community has informal networks that help maintain the level of social disorganization. An example of this can be viewed within trying to find housing after incarceration. When someone has access to a resource such as housing opportunities it helps them successfully reintegrate. These theories both provided a general framework for considering the role of the rural community in reintegration, as well as some of the barriers that may occur.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to inform the reader about current research regarding reintegration for the formerly incarcerated. The shift that has occurred in jails with realignment has greatly impacted Humboldt County, and communities across the country. Realignment has increased sentences as well as increasing local jail populations. This increase means that more people are being released, and more reentry services will need to be developed. This chapter describes the micro, meso, and macro barriers that exist upon release from jail. These barriers include but are not limited to housing, employment, education, and barriers of living in a rural community. The stigma of incarceration itself

is also a barrier because it's the root cause to not being able to find housing and employment. In addition, this chapter also discussed the gaps in research in reentry in a rural community. Theoretical considerations for the reintegration process were identified and described as Social Capital theory and Social Disorganization theory. These theories are used to describe the role of the community in the reintegration process.

METHODS

After reviewing the existing literature on reentry barriers on a micro, meso, and macro level, I wanted to examine my own community and the challenges we face. I decided to conduct my research in two parts. The first part focuses on the reentry barriers identified by the currently and formerly incarcerated. I uncover what current practices exist in our rural northern California community that help the formerly incarcerated. The second part of this research project examines what service providers offer, to assist in successful reentry and what is missing.

Design Overview

I collected data using the qualitative method of interviews and focus groups. I interviewed three separate populations: formerly incarcerated, currently incarcerated, and services providers. I enrolled in a Community Action Research Class in Spring of 2017. My professor had enlisted me to lead a group project on reentry in Humboldt County, because she knew that was my focus in the MA program. This project allowed me to assemble a small team to help bring this research project to fruition. This team consisted of three undergraduate students, and another MA student. I initiated the project by contacting the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. I had read an article in the local paper about the development of a new resource center for those reintegrating from the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. After contacting the Humboldt County Correctional Facility, I set up a time to meet with the Operations Lieutenant. He gave me

a tour of the facility, and we discussed the possibility of conducting research in the jail. From this meeting, my project emerged.

I interviewed five formerly incarcerated participants, eight service providers, and twelve currently incarcerated people held in the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. The other team members in my group helped transcribe the interviews and create the interview guides. All interviews were recorded using electronic recording devices.

During the interviews and the focus groups, I implemented several tactics while researching reentry in this rural community. Some of the tactics were tailored to the group, and others to the setting. However, one tactic I used across the board was believing the stories of the participants who were sharing their experiences with me (Reinharz and Lowental 1979). The currently and formerly incarcerated populations face implicit power dynamics within the criminal justice system. These dynamics do not always honor the voices of those impacted by incarceration. It was therefore important for me to remain supportive and compassionate towards the stories that were shared with me. The speakers are experts in their own lives, and the richness of this research project lies within the participants experiences within the criminal justice system.

Also, important to my data collection was recognizing the significance of gender, race, and class throughout the research process. I'm a visibly white, working class, female researcher. While conducting interviews with those impacted by the criminal justice system, I recognize that many participants are identified as people of color. I chose to openly consider the diversity of my participants, and intentionally came to this research project with a lens that considers gender, race, and class. This is important to

consider because of the inherent racial disparities within the criminal justice system (Alexander 2010).

The Community Breakdown

Humboldt County is covered in community forests. The timberland industry has fueled a long history of logging as well as reliance on timber for economic growth. Per the US Forest Industry, there are 1,500,000 acres of combined public and private forests (Laaksonen-Craig and McKillop 2003). Our community is working class, and has limited racial diversity. Per the 2010 census, the average household income is \$57,000. In terms of crime, Humboldt County is below the national average for personal crime risk, but in terms of rape, and larceny risk, Humboldt meets the national average. The median age of the current population is 36, and the household expenditures are below the national average. In terms of racial demographics, per the 2010 census data, the racial/ethnic breakdown there are 83.6% Caucasian, 1.4% African-American, 6.2% Native American, 2.9% Asian American, and 11.1% Hispanic (US Census 2010).

Humboldt County was first comprised of Native American tribes, and Spanish traders began settling here in 1775. Humboldt County has a long history of decimation of the native populations, as well as participating in the Chinese Expulsion Act. Despite a troubling history with Native Americans, there are still eight Indian reservations within the borders of the county (Van Kirk 1999).

Another notable reference within this community is the cannabis industry. There have been national news stories on the cultivation of marijuana within this rural area and

marijuana is now one of the central components of the economy (Brady 2013). This rural community creates a level of privacy from law enforcement due to the rural landscape itself (Weisheit and Brownstein 2016).

In the heart of the largest city in Humboldt County, Eureka, is the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. In 1996, the 12-million-dollar facility opened. It started with 215 beds (Faulker 1996), and was considered a high-tech facility. It was labeled a high-tech facility because of the open dorm environments and having a central operator electronically monitor the jail. The currently incarcerated are free to roam their dorm areas if they are not in protective custody. In the dorm facilities one officer monitors the room which can hold up to 64 people (Faulker 1996). The Humboldt County Sheriff's Office is now in the development stages of creating a new reentry resource center. According to local news coverage of the jail's plans for the resource center, "The idea is to consolidate re-entry services under one roof and create a warm handoff from incarceration to post release services," (Greenson 2015:1). Next, I will explain my sampling strategy, as well as the participants in my research project.

Sampling

I gathered participants for this study using convenience and snowball sampling. I asked people I knew who had been incarcerated if they would be willing to participate, and then my participants asked their formerly incarcerated friends if they would like to participate. The Lieutenant of the jail informed the currently incarcerated participants verbally about the opportunity to volunteer for a focus group. The Operations Lieutenant,

then posted a signup sheet in the commons area of the male and female dorms. All currently incarcerated people were made aware of the upcoming focus group. If potential participants had any questions regarding the research they were encouraged to speak with the Lieutenant. Ultimately, the Lieutenant had the final say in who would be able to participate in the focus group. The Lieutenant made his final selection based on who he believed would be most helpful and willing to provide information on reentry. This reveals an obvious level of response bias as only participants selected by the Lieutenant participated in this research.

I selected service providers and invited them to participate based on my literature review findings, personal experience serving low income families in this community, and recommendations made through conversations within the criminal justice field. I'm currently employed as a social worker and am therefore familiar with the service providers who participated. The service providers included the Department of Probation, the Department of Corrections, housing services, mental health care services, education, and employment.

The Formerly Incarcerated

I asked the formerly incarcerated about their past experiences regarding reintegration, incarceration, factors that helped with reentry, factors that hindered, and any judgement they may have experienced around past convictions. The formerly incarcerated participants included three males and two females who had served a sentence and were released from either jail or prison. The length of incarceration ranged

from one week to twenty-seven years. The demographics of participants included: a 26-year-old self-identifying white male, a 36-year-old self-identifying African American male, a 48-year-old self-identifying African American male, a 23-year-old self-identifying white female and a 28-year-old self-identifying African American female. All but the 23-year-old white female was from another rural area that was not near Humboldt County. I found participants using snowball sampling starting with participants who had spent time in the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. I then asked participants if they knew anyone that may be willing to speak about reentry for a research project. Each interview lasted around an hour.

The interviews I conducted with the formerly and currently incarcerated were a collaborative process (Collins 2015). This was important to me because the voices of the incarcerated are so marginalized. They have experienced bouts of powerlessness due to the inherent nature of being incarcerated, and I wanted to reduce any feeling of exploitation during the interview process. Therefore, I invited participants to share freely. If they wanted to add information that was not on the interview guide, I encouraged them to do so. I also expressed that if there was a question that they were not comfortable answering we could simply skip this question. Although the participants answered all the questions, I felt this was important to establish. This allowed me to build trust with the participants (Patton 2002). In addition, I built trust by showing interest in the participants and I did not judge their answers. I demonstrated sensitivity so my participants were comfortable. I also shared pieces of my life when participants asked. Sharing my personal experience within the criminal justice cycle bridged the gap between me as a

researcher and the participants (Oakley 1981). My participants usually shared an audible sigh of relief, but some of them laughed, and said, “I’m glad you understand.”

I conducted these interviews over the telephone, due to Institutional Review Board restrictions and “ensuring safety for the researcher.” This request made by the IRB reveals the stigma that exists around incarceration and any involvement with the criminal justice system. I followed through with the request to not conduct face-to-face interviews with self-identified formerly incarcerated participants, but felt that these demands were not necessary. Lastly, I conducted the phone interviews in my home with no one else present to ensure the confidentiality of the participant.

The Currently Incarcerated

I contacted the Humboldt County Correctional Facility after reading a local news article on the development of the new resource center. I met with the Lieutenant and the Administrative Sergeant and expressed my interest in reentry work. I was then given a tour of the facility and shared my research goals. The Humboldt County Correctional Facility was incredibly eager and excited to support the first student research project to ever take place at the jail. After being permitted to do research in the facility, I conducted two focus groups. The focus groups I conducted were segregated into a gender binary. The Lieutenant made this recommendation due to the way the genders are currently segregated within the correctional facility. The ages of the male participants ranged from twenties to forties. I asked about services they are currently receiving during

incarceration, resources they would like to see, concerns surrounding release, support they have on the outside, and what it will take for them not to return to jail.

In the male focus group, there were two self-identifying Hispanic males, one Native American male and three white males. The second group included six female inmates. All the females identified as Caucasian. The ages of the female participants also ranged from early twenties to mid-forties.

The focus groups each lasted one hour, and were held in rooms provided by the staff at the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. I wanted to extend the focus group to two hours, but an hour was allotted to us, due to lock down restrictions and other obligations of the currently incarcerated. For example, some of the women who participated in the focus groups also worked in the kitchen, and needed to be available for their shift. To get IRB approval, a lieutenant was present at each focus group. Since an officer was present in each focus group, there were additional limitations in the data collected.

Participants created pseudonyms on their own prior to starting the interviews. I used this as an ice breaker activity. Both focus groups laughed as they created their own unique name. Next, I read aloud the consent form to ensure that all the participants understood the purpose of the research project. I also informed all participants that I was not working with the jail, but on behalf of Humboldt State University. All participants signed the consent forms. I also stressed that any information shared during the focus group would not impact their sentence, nor help them get out of jail (Newman 1958). In addition to me leading the focus group there was a note taker present. I then set the stage

for the focus group by ensuring confidentiality, and encouraging participants to answer questions that they were comfortable addressing. I also encouraged the participants to ask me questions during the focus group. Once again, I wanted to build rapport and trust with my participants so they would be comfortable and feel respected throughout the focus group (Patton 2002).

Service Providers

The last group that was included in this research project were service providers. I conducted a focus group with eight service providers. Questions ranged from how each provider serves the currently and formerly incarcerated, what are the needs of this population, what are the main barriers to reintegration, how each views the current reentry process within Humboldt County, and how each collaborates with other service providers. The focus group took place in downtown Eureka within the probation department. The focus group lasted two hours.

Data Collection

My team and I created interview guides for each group. We identified common issues that arise with reentry relating to personal experience, curricular readings, and social justice trainings. These guides were tailored to the specific participant. Each focus group had at least one note taker, and one facilitator. As mentioned above, I asked the currently incarcerated what services they would like to receive during incarceration. I asked the formerly incarcerated about their experiences in the criminal justice system.

Lastly, I asked service providers about the current services that exist to assist those in the criminal justice system, as well as what services are missing. We recorded the interviews using small recording devices checked out from the Sociology department. They were then transcribed and the data was coded for major themes.

Data Analysis

The data was transcribed by another team member into a Word document within three days of the interviews. Each transcription included summaries of participant details, such as key themes and any other notable information, such as race, gender, age, etc. I then uploaded the transcriptions into an ATLAS.ti, a program that is used to code qualitative data. Each line of the interviews and focus groups was coded for key themes. After coding line-by-line, I started using selective coding techniques to pull out the “big picture”. The themes that emerged within the currently and formerly incarcerated transcriptions were clear: life before incarceration, during, and after. There were subthemes that followed: criminal behavior, obstacles during and after incarceration, support in the community, and identified strengths. These strengths identified for the formerly incarcerated as what helped them during the reintegration process. For the currently incarcerated the strengths included programs that they are offered during incarceration. For service providers, the strengths were identified as areas that are “working” within the system. In terms of service providers, the key themes remained: wanting assistance, and not wanting assistance, lack of resources within the community, and overall stressors faced by incarcerated populations.

Ethics

I read all participants the consent forms prior to participation. Each participant then signed a consent form, ensuring that all parties were acting out of free will and were in no way being coerced to participate in the research project. For the currently incarcerated, I wanted to be able to ensure that the contents of the interview would not be shared with anyone with institutional authority within the jail, but there were officers present in each of the focus groups. I did explain to the participants that I had no affiliation with the correctional system, so that they would feel more comfortable sharing. However, due to the inherent power structures within the correctional system, I'm aware that the participants may have limited their responses. Jail is a restricting environment. The currently incarcerated are commanded to do things, and often they behave based on self-preservation. If they think they are going to be punished for their comments or participation it can jeopardize their responses. In addition, although the currently incarcerated were asked to participate, and sign up on their own free will, signing a consent form does not truly show consent. They are incarcerated and because of this their consent is not the same as the consent of a free person. Lastly, confidentiality was assured for all participants by changing their names to pseudonyms in the transcriptions as well in the reporting of my results.

Limitations of the study

My findings that I report in the next chapter, like the findings of any research project, are limited. My findings were never intended to be generalizable. My sampling methods gave me a non-representative sample of stakeholders and my research occurred in a rural setting. Though not generalizable, my findings can be used to inform future rural community studies on this subject. Another limitation is the lack of racial diversity among our participants. Most of my participants identified as white and therefore I was not able to gather many views from those who identify as another race or ethnicity.

My data was also gathered under time constraints. I gathered the data within a semester and would have liked more time. If given more time I would have interviewed judges, a public defender, a prosecuting attorney, and family members who have a loved one impacted by incarceration. Another major limitation also comes from how I collected data from the focus groups with the currently incarcerated. I had no control over the requirement to have an officer present during the focus group. The participants who were currently incarcerated may not have answered questions honestly due to the presence of law enforcement. The power dynamics that exist within the criminal justice system were very present in the data collection methods simply because an officer was present during the focus group.

There is also the mere presence of the researcher which must be considered (Holliday 2016). I must acknowledge that interviewing can create a space where the interviewee feels pressured to provide the information they believe you are seeking.

The last major limitation is the influence of the passage of time on our ability to view the past and how we view it. For the focus groups and interviews it is important to remember that time had elapsed since some of the events or topics that we discussed had occurred. The passage of time may alter anyone's recollections of the past.

DATA ANALYSIS

Findings

The goal of the qualitative interviews was to evaluate the existing reentry services offered to people who are currently and formerly incarcerated in a rural community. I analyzed what participants shared regarding their experiences with reintegration and recidivism. The participants included individuals housed in a rural correctional facility, the formerly incarcerated, and service providers working directly with those who are reintegrating back into the community. The key themes that emerged were the role of stigma, barriers to reintegration, the role of the community, and recommendations for moving forward.

Stigma

While the word ‘stigma’ was not used to describe their feelings, the currently and formerly incarcerated expressed fear and worry about their criminal backgrounds. Service providers also admitted to holding their own judgments while serving the formerly incarcerated. The formerly incarcerated participants expressed the need to conceal their past, and worried that if someone were to uncover their criminal record it would have negative effects. One formerly incarcerated participant shared:

It only affects me now when I want to better my life. I must show proof to everyone that I’m not that person anymore. It gets old. People judging me for an action I did so long ago, without understanding why I did what I did.

Another participant stated that he wished he could prove that he is no longer the person that he was before, and that he is not dangerous. He shared:

If there is something that, like something to prove that I'm never going to hurt anybody, like counseling or something that I can take to prove that and get that off my record, but I do not know if there is or if that's how it works, but that's how I feel it should work because I know I would never hurt anybody or do anything like that.

The formerly incarcerated openly expressed the desire to not have to share their backgrounds. However, they realize that to obtain employment or housing they are typically required to reveal information about prior convictions. Many participants expressed a level of frustration at being stained by the stigma of their incarceration. They have 'done their time' and they are ready to change their lives, but it seems that society is still punishing them for their past.

Within the focus group of service providers, concerns were voiced over their own potential bias. Participants admitted that they may feel prejudiced against someone after learning of their involvement with the criminal justice system. One service provider stated:

I would say that on the mental health side we place stigma on people that have correctional involvement. Like they're like oh, well, they're substance abusers or they're criminals and we do not want to help them because we're overwhelmed by them or scared by them. We put up our own barriers to providing help to these people who we have even more responsibility for.

The service providers are gatekeepers for the formerly and currently incarcerated. They offer social services and programs that can be the keys to success. However, the service providers themselves seem to stigmatize the currently and formerly incarcerated. The speaker in the last quote acknowledges that this population needs significant support, but admitted that they too perpetuate ideas that the formerly and currently incarcerated are a population to be feared.

Another component in perpetuating stigma and negative attitudes is expressed through language. One participant in the focus group of service providers said the people she serves with a criminal background can't function in the same way that other members of society can. She shared, "A lot of the time they are using drugs. The people that come into our program are the bottom of the barrel, they're feral, and they do not know what it's like to have a job." The perspective that this population are the "bottom of the barrel" was common amongst this group of service providers, and their use of this type of language aides to perpetuate the stigma that accompanies a criminal record. Those impacted by the criminal justice system rely upon their service providers for resources and support, but the language and stigma which accompanies a criminal record may be an additional barrier to their success.

Conversely, one incarcerated participant felt that there are some service providers offering support that will have a long term positive effects. This person said:

We had someone come from a college, and he enrolled us all in classes. He was so helpful. I hope he comes back. He gave us 8-10 certificates of completion.

People have said they have gotten out and gotten way further with the help of

those certificates. That's been the one thing that I have seen that helps when you get out, that doesn't just make you look like just a criminal.

This participant was grateful for the certificates provided. He wanted to show the public that he is more than just someone who has been incarcerated: he is also a student. A student that follows through with his education and wants to show others that he is capable of other things.

Disconnection

Service providers repeatedly expressed that people with a criminal record do not always want help. One service provider shared, "They've been institutionalized and are coming out with strong antisocial beliefs, and values that make them resistant to any sort of outreach. It's hard to get them to participate." Many service providers viewed the formerly incarcerated as resistant, and this disconnect between the service providers and the currently and formerly incarcerated is reflected in their attitudes. A few of the service providers shared their frustrations with serving those impacted by the criminal justice system. One participant said, "They budget the necessities and spend the rest on alcohol and weed." The lack of empathy and understanding for those who have been in the criminal justice system is evident. One would expect these professionals have more compassion towards the traumatic process of incarceration, and the obstacles that persist upon release. Additionally, this comment illustrates a level of justification for not assisting the formerly and currently incarcerated, as well as not trusting them as capable people who can take care of themselves.

When discussing reentry services with the formerly and currently incarcerated, they expressed a lack of knowledge about services available. Participants described getting social services on their own once they are released, but with no assistance from service providers. They stated that they had to take the initiative, and if they didn't ask the right person(s) they wouldn't know what was available. One participant shared:

I got my food stamps when I got out of prison. I just walked down there and told them I just got out of prison. Three days later I had a thing to get my ID, and a \$7 voucher to get my ID. What I found is that there is not enough information to get this stuff. You have to know how to ask to get this stuff. These services, they do not tell you about any of them.

The formerly and currently incarcerated also described unrealistic expectations from service providers. In practice, this translates into a disconnection between service providers and this population of currently and formerly incarcerated people. One participant who was currently incarcerated expressed that she wanted to check in with her probation officer, and she wanted to find housing, but it was simply impossible.

It was impossible to check in. If you do not have a car you are screwed in this community. I really couldn't get anywhere. There is no public transportation where I live, and no one will pick you up hitch hiking, and they won't come down there to work with you. They may not even give you a bus pass.

The 'they' in this quote is referring to her probation officer. Another participant expressed feeling like she isn't treated equally by service providers, "It really depends on

how they feel about you now. Some people take their personal feelings out on you, and that can make or break what they tell you about services in town.”

Perhaps the recurring disconnectedness between service providers and those with a criminal conviction record stems from the assumption that they are not ready to be helped. Many of them expressed that they are, in fact, as one participant proclaimed:

Just that little bit of a helping hand that would inspire somebody to do better. Cause nobody wants to be living in the squalor. But what are your options? You do drugs because your life sucks and it just keeps going down and down and down. You try not to feel it, try not to think about it. So, you do more drugs. If there was an opportunity to get out of it, you'd be surprised how many people would pull themselves out of it.

This participant was asking for tools to help him regain control over his own life, but he felt the system was not supportive of his efforts. The formerly and currently incarcerated express wanting to be treated with respect, and they also do not want the assumption placed upon them that they do not want to better their lives. Overall, participants involved with the criminal justice system asserted that services were never offered prior, and in some cases post incarceration. They also repeatedly stated that they are simply unaware of the services that exist. How are they supposed to reintegrate into the community without an awareness of the community resources that exist?

Another disconnection highlighted during a focus group with the currently incarcerated was the lack of support they receive as parents. One participant said:

I do not even have my kids come here because I do not want to talk to them through the glass window and I can't talk to them at the same time. You're only allowed to have one of your children come up at a time. I'm not going to even put my kids through that.

A different participant said, "I was going to say, that I was here this time last year, and this time has been harder to be away from my kids. I have to stop myself from calling every day because it makes it harder for me." These participants expressed concerns with having Child Welfare Services involved during their incarceration. A participant stated, "You have to accept CWS into your life before you can hold your kids, and many concurred that they do not appreciate this part of the process." Another person said, "If I could have visits with my kids that would make a difference. I'm not a bad mom, and I do not want CWS in my life telling me how to raise my kids."

When I conducted this research, there were no support measures in place to help families during the incarceration of a parent. This example of fear of CWS involvement reveals a disconnection between the service providers and the participants impacted by the criminal justice system. Perhaps being able to spend time with the children during incarceration, and offering parenting classes could provide incentives to follow through with getting support after incarceration.

Lack of opportunities: Employment and Housing Barriers

An additional theme that I found throughout all three groups interviewed is the dire need for employment and housing opportunities. However, before they can obtain housing or employment, the formerly incarcerated need identification cards. One participant in the focus group with the currently incarcerated shared, “The other problem there with employment is, we need our social security card, and we need our ID to get that job.”

In addition to not being able to obtain identification, the participants identified fears around finding employment and the discovery of their criminal record. One participant expressed, “When they see a felony on your record they think a lot worse of you than just a misdemeanor.” Another participant said, “If I ever want a legitimate security job, my violent record may show up on the background check and future employers are not going to like that.” The currently and formerly incarcerated expressed fears with not being able to escape their past. They expressed concerns that prospective employers wouldn’t even glance at their application, especially after filling out the criminal history portion of job application forms. They also mentioned the need to support their families, and the importance of finding good jobs so they can do that.

Another common theme that emerged throughout the employment conversation is the type of work available to those with convictions in their background. All participants shared that there are few employment opportunities in our rural community. Participants also expressed that employers willing to hire those with a criminal background

unintentionally put them at risk by re-exposing them to other people who have been involved in the criminal justice system. One participant described his experience working with a well-known labor company that hires felons.

They're always down to hire felons but that's kind of a catch 22 when you get hired, there's so many felons there. It's like a jailhouse reunion. It's really easy to fall back into old habits.

This participant was referencing his drug use which led to his cycle in the criminal justice system. Many participants agreed that they could not return to their jobs before incarceration because they would end up back on the path that led them into the criminal justice system. If there were more employers who would openly hire people that have records, the formerly incarcerated would not be at such a high risk to be exposed to their former social circles.

Another barrier that exists upon release is access to safe affordable housing. This barrier was expressed clearly by all three groups throughout the interviews and focus groups. One service provider shared what he commonly hears about the housing issue when working with those impacted by the criminal justice system:

There are single parents who have some kind of substance abuse problem and had to go to some treatment facility, but they have children. They're looking at their housing situation when they get out and it's not quite there. We do not have the resources. I hear about the Multiple Assistance Center all the time, how it closed, and how it was the only place that took families. They struggle with how they are going to manage probation and their family. Housing is big. It goes back down to

the individual, you have to meet people where they are and design services around them.

This service provider is identifying the difficulties that come from living in a rural community with limited resources. There are simply not enough housing options for people that have been incarcerated.

For those participants who were incarcerated at the time of our interview, the need to have a safe place of their own was common. One participant stated:

If I get out and I had a clean and sober house to go to. Boom. Nice place, safe place to lay my head at night, build up my equity, my clothing, put a little money in the bank, maybe a job opportunity.

This currently incarcerated participant is expressing the desire to change his life, and feels that he can do so if the opportunities are there. The currently incarcerated also expressed fears around sharing housing with others struggling to get their lives back on track. The participants expressed that they have gone to clean and sober housing, but then they are exposed to the same friends with whom they formerly used drugs. Those impacted by the criminal justice system expressed the need for more landlords willing to rent to people with felonies on their record. One participant went on to explain, “Just because I have a record doesn’t mean I do not deserve a safe place to live.”

Housing also plays a crucial role in providing stability for those with families. In the female focus group of currently incarcerated participants, women expressed the challenges of trying to get their children back. Their children are in custody with the state or are being cared for by a relative. To prove they are ready to have their children

returned to them, they need to provide those children with a safe place to live. One woman stated:

I slept in my car a lot when I got out before. The police would roll up on me.

They would say I can't park here. I had all my kids inside. I couldn't find a place for us to go, but I wanted to keep my kids. This was my only option.

This participant's situation illustrates the additional difficulties of the formerly incarcerated in being reunited with their children. They must have adequate housing to reestablish custodial rights, however their criminal record keeps them from being able to find that housing.

A clear outcome of the focus groups and interviews is that housing and employment are closely linked. Without one, there is little hope to achieve the other. The individual trying to reintegrate back into society can be successful only if they have both.

Community: A Barrier and a Tool

There are many types of communities that exist within the scope of this research project. There are the communities that are forged between service providers, the currently and formerly incarcerated, and there is the broader community itself. These various networks bring their own strengths and complications to successful reintegration. In terms of the currently incarcerated, there is a community within the jail that acts as a support system. One currently incarcerated participant shared:

I make my family in here. The friends that you have stick together. That's one of the ways we adapt. We are in a quad together. All of us have to adapt.

There is a sense of camaraderie that is exchanged during incarceration. People on the inside share meals with one another, discuss their struggles, and even exchange photos of their children. They offer one another support during one of the most difficult experiences of their lives. The isolation from the outside world forces the inmates to interact, and develop relationships they might not develop under any other circumstances.

The bonds that are formed during incarceration also can be carried into the outside. These bonds can be helpful and hurtful to the reintegrating individual. For those who have been incarcerated together, once on the outside they can provide a sense of hope, community, and support. However, sometimes the bonds forged within the criminal justice system can be detrimental to the success of the reintegrating individuals. One service provider shared, “Sometimes I tell folks the best thing that they can do is just leave our community and go somewhere else and start over.” Another service provider shared, “There’s sober living residences where people are being housed with the same population they were incarcerated with. For people who are overcoming dangerous behaviors, living in sober living is just a set-up for many of them to be perpetuating the same cycle of behaviors that keeps them in and out of incarceration.”

For the formerly incarcerated, they spoke enthusiastically about the bonds they formed through their incarceration. Service providers on the other hand, shared their concerns with these relationships. There was an underlying belief that exposure to the same community directly relates to recidivism.

Service providers and the currently and formerly incarcerated all expressed that being in a rural community is a barrier within itself. Once someone is released and

reintegrated, they may appear free to live within the rest of society, but lack of housing and employment opportunities can quickly lead them back into the criminal justice system, whether they have actually committed a new crime. Even if this is the case, what about the family and friends that are systems of support for the formerly and currently incarcerated? Can their support outweigh the lack of housing and employment opportunities?

There is great value placed upon supportive family and friends for those currently incarcerated. The support of family and friends can greatly contribute to the success of the individual. One formerly incarcerated participant credited his mother with helping him be successful and stay clean and sober. He said:

She is just this super awesome person. It was never even a question, I never had to do anything for her to forgive me. She just was there and stayed in my life and my son's life and just got me out of this really horrible situation I was in and never even questioned it.

Other participants had similar comments such as, "I attribute my success to my family." All participants who had support from friends or family made the most of their time while incarcerated and had a better support system once they were released. They credited their loved ones for their success and strength to move forward. Many stated that if they did not have family or friends (on the inside or outside), they were not sure they could make it through their prison or jail sentence and had no doubt they would go back to their old lives once released. The role of community and support to those currently and formerly incarcerated is crucial in considering the likelihood of recidivism

Recommendations for Successful Reintegration

Overall, the most commonly expressed comment made from the formerly and currently incarcerated participants was, “I just want to be seen as a human being.” One formerly incarcerated individual said, “My sole recommendation is that when I go into the probation department to check in, they simply smile at me. I’m a human being who made bad choices, and that is all.” The currently and formerly incarcerated want to be treated with respect and dignity. Humanizing those with a criminal background by simply smiling at them during meetings or offering them resources during interactions may seem like a small gesture, but it goes a long way. They have paid their debt to society during their incarceration and should not have to continuously pay for their mistakes.

Additional recommendations that were made on behalf of those impacted by the criminal justice system included thoughts on housing, employment, and services offered inside and outside of jail. In terms of services offered during incarceration one participant said: Just having someone there to talk to that has been through what we have been would be useful.

Others currently incarcerated stated that, “Mandatory counseling helps tremendously,” and they argued that, “There should be even more counselors to help with the amount of people who need it.” Other recommendations made by the currently incarcerated were, “More mental health services.” Both focus groups identified mental health counseling as being particularly important to their success. One participant said, “A lot of people here do not have someone to go to. I was never comfortable talking to a

psych, but then it helped me.” Another participant stated, “You got to be crazy, or you go to request it. Mental health should come talk to everybody. We do not get that here. “

The currently incarcerated claimed that counseling helps them cope while they are incarcerated and continues to help them upon release. It seems that helping the currently and formerly incarcerated address the traumatic events in their lives leading up to their incarceration provides them opportunities for healing. Lastly, the currently incarcerated stressed the desire to develop “exit strategies,” for a few days prior to when they are released. One participant in the male focus group said:

We need rehabilitation. A plan based on how long you are going to be in here. If this person is going to be here for a month get him an ID and his social security card. His driver’s license application, maybe he has started SSI. Or even just general assistance so you can get out and get money, so you do not have to revert to crime.

Again, participants reiterated their interest in services that help prepare them for a successful reintegration back into the community. The formerly incarcerated participants shared their recommendations for successful reintegration. They emphasized a focus on life prior to the criminal justice system and interventions that could have occurred. All five participants identified that they had come from low-income homes, had few options for extracurricular activities outside of school, and did not feel like they had someone to talk to about their experiences. One participant shared:

There was a missed opportunity for intervention for me when I was 17, I overdosed on methadone. I flat lined in the ambulance, and I woke up naked in

the hospital. They took me to juvenile hall and treated me like I had just been caught stealing beer from a gas station. They put me in a holding cell, and had someone come check on me every 15 minutes to make sure I was alive.

This participant stated that if he had gotten help when he was young, his life could have turned out differently. Another participant identified an earlier time in his life when intervention from the system would have been helpful. He said, “I could have been supported more when I was going through the trial itself because I was a kid. I didn’t know anything about the system and I do not feel like I was taken advantage of, I know that I was taken advantage of, by my attorney, by the district attorney, and by the judge.”

It was clear by the interviews that all formerly incarcerated participants felt that if someone had stepped in to argue on their behalf they may not have ended up incarcerated. After their incarceration, they all struggled getting their lives back. The formerly incarcerated shared that they wanted:

Some way to help with schooling, and finding renters that will take people with felonies. That is the hard part. Finding employers and renters that will accept people with felonies or are willing to work with people.

Lastly, the formerly incarcerated expressed frustrations with the system itself and said, “The system itself is setting us up for failure.” This came up when discussing the role of service providers and how they can best deliver services to those reintegrating. They suggested a “one stop shop” to get the services they need instead of having to navigate the system and find support services they need all over town.

Service providers shared similar recommendations for strategies to support those impacted by the criminal justice system. They acknowledged the barriers related to finding housing, employment, needing identification, and transportation. One service provider shared this:

I think it would be good to have more case management and services for people that do have higher needs so that they can attain more resources because a lot of folks really aren't that capable and they will fail. Especially involving the mentally ill because they really do not know how to navigate the system.

Service providers said they wanted to be able to invest more energy and time into serving those impacted by the criminal justice system, but they pointed out that they are consumed with other priorities that take precedent. One service provider shared that because of the amount of drug use within the correctional facility, he spends time combating this issue rather than providing more supportive reentry services. He said:

Well again, going back to barriers, it's little things like reentry like having them walk out the door with no ID to where they can go access services. It's something we can work on. It's tough because with our population you do not always know exactly when they are being released and you can't always have it ready to go the moment they walk out the door but there are the cases that you can and establishing those could be huge things. We have a body scanner on order because unfortunately, we have drugs in the jail. It makes its way in despite our best efforts to keep it out and control it, there are people that use within the correctional facility it's just a fact. Trying to eliminate more of that. Sending

people to programs when they have used in the jail and they test dirty and turn around and get send back to jail, that's humiliating. It sets them back and us back. We want to help more, but we have to get this under control first.

In addition to other priorities it was also shared that service providers expressed feeling overworked and thus not able to provide services and support to everyone. They want to see more funding and opportunities to support those impacted by the criminal justice system, so they can, “reach more people.” One service provider explained, “It takes mental health a long time to hire people and retain them. They have shortages in other parts of the system so they will get pulled over to the jail, that is really where a lot of the problem is.” Service providers continue to believe that with increased services and more service providers there should be an impact on recidivism.

These were some of the recommendations that emerged from discussions on reentry in a rural community. Hopefully sharing this will help bridge the disconnect between service providers and the currently and formerly incarcerated populations. Service providers interviewed shared that people with a criminal record may not always want help. On the contrary, the participants I interviewed within the criminal justice system all expressed not knowing what services exist and how to access them. I’m hopeful that providing the currently and formerly incarcerated information on the resources that exist to aide in their reintegration will be a step in the right direction.

People can take the information provided to them and begin to take the necessary steps to survive incarceration. If they can take some steps on their own perhaps some

service providers will be able to acknowledge that there are people out there who are ready for help. In addition, the people involved in the criminal justice system also felt that there are unrealistic expectations placed upon them to succeed. They can't find employment and housing due to the stigma of being involved in the criminal justice system. The greater community needs to take an active effort in supporting the people impacted by incarceration rather than placing blame on them and continuously punishing them. The community must be accountable in the process of creating more viable employment and housing opportunities so the formerly incarcerated can succeed. The formerly incarcerated also addressed that they are struggling to meet the requirements of their parole/probation officers. They can't find housing, employment, transportation, and they do not know what community resources exist, so they recidivate. This common experience needs to be addressed on a systemic level which means that the probation/parole system reevaluates their own laws and expectations so that the formerly incarcerated can succeed.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the literature as well as my research project there are many recommendations for successful reentry. It has now been established that, "...successful reintegration of former prisoners is one of the most formidable challenges facing society today," (National Research Council, 2008:26). There are many ways we as a community can address this challenge, and one of them is by developing more community support services. These services include counseling for all of those impacted by the criminal justice system. They can also include life skills, support with obtaining housing and employment, record expungement, and support for the entire family. The formerly and currently incarcerated also expressed the desire for more opportunities, but also the need to be viewed as a complete person, not just as someone who has committed a crime. Perhaps within the development of further reentry services there can be a holistic model put into place (Clear 2007; Holzer, Raphael, and Stoll 2006). A holistic model would look at the reintegrating individual as a whole person, who may need many supportive services. The new reentry center would look not only at the immediate needs of the individual, but also at his or her physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs.

Service providers will have to focus on reentry at the point of incarceration, and services should follow everyone into the community on the outside (Young, Faye, Taxman, and Byrne 2002). The support could range from but not be limited to: transportation assistance, employment support, housing assistance, ongoing counseling, legal support, and even support for the families impacted by having their loved one

incarcerated. Although reentry programs are not the end to mass incarceration, (Clear 2007), they are a step in the right direction to help people get their lives on track.

In addition to a holistic model, the formerly and currently incarcerated must be a part of the development of community reentry services. By including the voices of the currently and formerly incarcerated service providers are showing respect to this population. For the people who have been in and out of the system, they are the experts on how it can be improved. They are also disproportionately people of color, and when their voices are incorporated into the planning process communities are working to address their needs on a cultural level. When addressing the process of reentry undeniably issues of race and racism must be considered within the process (Richie 2001).

The people impacted by incarceration are experts in their own lives. They know what is best for them because they have lived through the experience of incarceration. The recommendations provided by the people impacted by incarceration should take precedent over any recommendation made by a service provider. There are a few ways service providers can collaborate with people that have been incarcerated. Service providers can ask the people impacted by incarceration what they need to be successful. They can also invite them to the table to make their own recommendations. This can happen anytime there is a stakeholder discussion that addresses the needs of the currently and formerly incarcerated. Through this reciprocity, the people impacted by incarceration will hopefully feel valued in the process. They will also be given the chance to be seen as human beings that have been impacted by incarceration. I believe that when someone can

get to know someone that has been impacted by incarceration that are able to break down any existing stereotypes they may have had. Collaboration can also ease the strain for service providers that feel stretched thin by the limited resources. In response to the time and resource constraints identified by service providers, I developed a reentry resource guide (see appendices). This reentry guide is intended to not only help service providers but also the formerly and currently incarcerated. I gathered existing resource guides addressing community resources throughout the Humboldt County area and assembled a guide that is specific for those within the criminal justice system. This same guide was also translated into Spanish. I submitted the resource guides to the Humboldt County Probation Department, Police Departments within Humboldt County, and I also continue to utilize the resource guide in my meetings with the currently incarcerated.

Once I developed the resource guides, I began volunteering at the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. My volunteer experience allowed me to implement the recommendations for successful reintegration within the jail. I began by volunteering weekly and answering newly developed request slips. These request slips are filled out by the currently incarcerated to ask for more support during the reentry process. I answer the request slips, and arrange meetings with the requestor to collaboratively plan for release. We make case plans together that are led by the currently incarcerated. They identify their goals during incarceration as well as after release. After our meeting, I gather the materials they request, so that they are better prepared for release. Some of the materials include: DMV applications/waivers, CalFresh forms, housing applications, SSI materials, employment applications, and so much more. I now have a small team of volunteers

helping me each week. These volunteers are students from Humboldt State University, as well as community members who want to give back and those impacted by the cycle of the criminal justice system.

In addition to the weekly reentry planning meetings, I have also helped to develop work certificates. The work certificates are awarded to the currently incarcerated who have held a job during their incarceration. They sign in during each shift, complete their task (laundry duty, and kitchen work are some examples), and they are awarded a certificate. Hopefully these certificates will aid in helping the currently incarcerated get a job upon release. In my Community Action Research course, my research team and I submitted a small grant to the Humboldt Area Foundation. We were awarded funding to buy materials to create the work certificates as well as pay for the cost of printing the resource guides.

The opportunities to develop a resource guide as well as work certificates have helped me earn my new position as the Inmate Programs Coordinator in the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. This position was previously filled several years ago, but was cut after the former Inmate Programs Coordinator retired. Since my hire date in February 2017, I have been able to implement several other recommendations identified in my research project. This spring we will have parenting classes within the jail, as well as Native American spiritual services. We are also working to strengthen our relationship with Child Welfare Services. The hope is that the currently incarcerated will be able to connect with their caseworker to check on the wellbeing of their children, as well as

report on any resources they are using while incarcerated to make the case for improving their lives.

Many participants in this research project discussed our community as a barrier to successful reintegration. Our isolated rural community can aide in perpetuating the stigma that exists around formerly incarcerated people. To combat this stigma, I helped coordinate the 2nd annual Reentry Fair. This event takes places within the Humboldt County Correctional Facility. The Humboldt County Sherriff's Office partnered with the Employment Training Division to bring employers and service providers inside the jail. Our hope is to help the currently incarcerated line up employment opportunities, and services they may need during incarceration, so they have a plan upon release. Some of the participating employers shared that the formerly incarcerated are some of the best hires. The participating service providers had positive feedback. They were happy to help implement Calfresh, Medi-Cal, college classes, childcare, and Alcohol and Drug services during incarceration to support reintegration upon release. Some service providers like Express Employment Professionals, suggested that the Reentry Fair should occur four times a year, so that more people are able to feel the support of their community. Events like the Reentry Fair help break down the barrier that exists for people within the criminal justice system. It shows that the currently incarcerated do indeed want resources and support, and that the community is willing to support their reintegration.

Although the Reentry Fair is a start to educating the community and service providers about the need to support people within the criminal justice system, we still

need many more conversations surrounding reentry. This could occur in the form of trainings for service providers, as well as community symposiums.

A new initiative taking place within Humboldt County is: The Second Chance Program. This program provides employers financial work incentives for hiring someone with a criminal record. The social capital generated by this initiative could help provide opportunities for the reintegrating individual (Maruna and Immarigeon 2011). Perhaps this initial step will also foster trust between the community and the formerly incarcerated. The opportunity to hire a formerly incarcerated person, and hear his or her story could help transform the mind and heart of even one individual.

Reentry is more than just overcoming stigma, employment, and housing barriers. Reentry is about creating a community that provides collaborative support for service providers, the currently and formerly incarcerated, and the families impacted by the criminal justice system. The jail is a part of our community, and the sooner we understand that, the sooner we can work to support those effected by the cycle of the criminal justice system. Finally, it is important to consider that reentry is not the end all be all solution to addressing flaws in our criminal justice system. Reentry cannot fix the inherent structural racism within the criminal justice system, nor can it be the answer to the affordable housing crisis. Reentry is not going to stop crime or violence altogether, nor will it end recidivism. Reentry is a strategy to support the currently and formerly incarcerated.

REFERENCES

- Abarbanel, Sara, Angela McCray, Kathryn McCann Newhall, and Jessica Snyder. 2013. "Realigning the Revolving Door: An Analysis of California Counties' AB 109 2011-2012 Implementation Plans."
- Agan, Amanda and Sonja Starr. 2016. "Ban the Box, Criminal Records, and Statistical Discrimination: A Field Experiment." *Becker Friedman Institute for Research in Economics*.
- Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Ohio Street: New Press.
- Anderson, Elijah. 2008. *Against the Wall: Poor, Young, Black and Male*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- American Civil Liberties Union. 2017. "Ending Modern-Day Debtors' Prisons." *American Civil Liberties Union*. Retrieved May 12, 2017. (<https://www.aclu.org/feature/ending-modern-day-debtors-prisons>).
- Aukerman, Miriam. 2003. "Legal Strategies to Reduce Recidivism and Promote the Success of Ex-Offender." *Michigan Criminal Law Annual Journal* 1(1).
- Austin, James. 2001. "Prisoner Reentry: Current Trends, Practices, and Issues." *Crime & Delinquency* 47(3):314-34.
- Avenue, Human Rights Watch |. 350 Fifth, 34th Floor | New York, and NY 10118-3299 USA | t 1.212.290.4700. 2004. "No Second Chance." *Human Rights Watch*.
- Bahr, S.J., Davis, C., & Ward, C. 2012. The process of offender reintegration: Perceptions of what helps prisoners reenter society. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 13(4), 446-469.
- Blessing, Carol, Thomas P. Golden and Antonio Ruiz-Quintanilla. 2008. *Community Living for Inmates*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations
- Blitz, Cynthia, Nancy Wolff, Ko-Yu Pan, and Wendy Pogorzelski. 2005. "Gender-Specific Behavioral Health and Community Release Patterns Among New Jersey Prison Inmates: Implications for Treatment and Community Reentry." *American Journal of Public Health* 95(10).

- Blumstein, Alfred. 2014. "Racial Disproportionality in Prison." *Race and Social Problems* 187–93.
- Brady, Emily. 2013. *Humboldt: Life on America's Marijuana Frontier*. Grand Central Publishing.
- Brewer, R. M. and N. A. Heitzeg. 2008. "The Racialization of Crime and Punishment: Criminal Justice, Color-Blind Racism, and the Political Economy of the Prison Industrial Complex." *American Behavioral Scientist* 51(5):625–44.
- Brooks, L., Visher, C. A., & Naser, R. L. 2006. *Community Residents' Perceptions of Prisoner Reentry in Selected Cleveland Neighborhoods*. Washington D.C.: Justice Policy Center.
- Bushway, Shawn, Michael A. Stoll, and David F. Weiman. 2007. *Barriers to Reentry. The Labor Market for Released Prisoners in Post-Industrial America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Byrd, Renee M. 2016. "Punishment's Twin": Theorizing Prisoner Reentry for a Politics of Abolition." *Social Justice* 43(1):1–22.
- Cnaan, R.A., Draine, J., Frazier, B., & Sinha, J.W. 2008. "Ex-prisoners 'Re-entry: An Emerging Frontier and Social Work Challenge. *Journal of Policy Practice*, 7(2-3): 178-191.
- Caterina, Roman and Travis Jeremey. 2004. *Taking Stock: Housing, Homelessness, and Prisoner Reentry*. Urban Institute Justice Policy Center.
- Clear, Todd. 2007. "Communities, Coercive Mobility, and Public Safety." *Imprisoning Communities: How Mass Incarceration Makes Disadvantaged Neighborhoods Worse*.
- Clear, Todd R., Dina R. Rose, Elin Waring, and Kristen Scully. 2003. "Coercive Mobility and Crime: A Preliminary Examination of Concentrated Incarceration and Social Disorganization." *Justice Quarterly* 20:33-64.
- Clear, Todd, Dina R. Rose, and Judith A. Ryder. 2001. "Incarceration and the Community: The Problem of Removing and Returning Offenders." *Crime and Delinquency* 47(3): 335-351.

- Crutchfield, Robert D., and Gregory A. Weeks. 2015. "The Effects of Mass Incarceration on Communities of Color." *Issues in Science and Technology* 32(1).
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2015. *Black feminist thought: knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. New York: Routledge.
- Covington, Stephanie. 2008. "Women and Addiction: A Trauma-Informed Approach." *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 40(5).
- Davis, Angela Y. 2010. *Are prisons obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Dennis, Deborah, Gretchen Locke, and Jill Khadduri. 2007. *Toward Understanding Homelessness: The 2007 National Symposium on Homelessness Research*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Dodge, Mary and Mark. Pogrebin. 2001. "Collateral Costs of Imprisonment for Women: Complications of Reintegration." *The Prison Journal* 81(1):42–54.
- Donnermeyer, Joseph and Walter DeKeseredy. 2014. *Rural Criminology*. New York, New York: Routledge.
- Dunn, Erin and Marina Grabchuk. 2010. "Background Checks and Social Effects: Contemporary Residential Tenant-Screening Problems in Washington State." *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 9(1).
- Faulkner, Jessie. 1996. New Jail. *Times Standard*. April 19th 1996. A1-A3.
- Forrest, Ray and Ade Kearns. 2001. "Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighborhood." *Urban Studies*. 38(12): 2125-2143.
- Fredericksen, Allyson and Desiree Omli. 2016. *Jobs After Jail: Ending the Prison to Poverty Pipeline*. Alliance for a Just Society.
- Freudenburg, Willam R. 1986. "The Density of Acquaintanceship: An Overlooked Variable in Community Research?" *The American Journal of Sociology* 92 (1): 27-63.
- Freudenberg, Nicholas, Jessie Daniels, Martha Crum, Tiffany Perkins, and Beth E. Richie. 2005. "Coming Home from Jail: The Social and Health Consequences of Community Reentry for Women, Male Adolescents, and Their Families and Communities." *American Journal of Public Health* 95(10):1725–36.

- Garland, Brett, Eric J. Wodhal, and Julie Mayfield. 2011. "Prisoner Reentry in a Small Metropolitan Community: Obstacles and Policy Recommendations." *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 22(1): 90-110.
- Gonzalez, Jennifer M. Reingle and Nadine M. Connell. 2014. "Mental Health of Prisoners: Identifying Barriers to Mental Health Treatment and Medication Continuity." *American Journal of Public Health* 104(12):2328-33.
- Greenson, Thadeus. 2015. A Running Start. County nabs \$20 million in state funds for new transitional jail facility. *North Coast Journal*. November 19 2015. 1-6.
- Hardcastle, David A., Patricia R Powers, and Stanley Wenocur. 2011. *Community practice: Theories and skills for social workers*. Oxford University Press.
- Harrison, Paige and Allen Beck. 2006. "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2005." *US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs*, May, 1-13.
- Hattery Angela and Earl Smith. 2010. *Prisoner reentry and social capital*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Hatzenbuehler, Mark, Katherine Keyes, Ava Hamilton, Monica Uddin, and Sandro Galea. 2015. "The Collateral Damage of Mass Incarceration: Risk of Psychiatric Morbidity Among Nonincarcerated Residents of High-Incarceration Neighborhoods." *US National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health* 105(1):138-43.
- Hipp, John R., Joan Petersilia, and Susan Turner. 2010. "Parolee Recidivism in California: The Effect of Neighborhood Context and Social Service Agency Characteristics." *Criminology* 48:(4) 947-979.
- Hirschi, Travis. 2004. *Self-Control and Crime*. New York, New York: Guilford Press.
- Holliday, Adrian. 2016. *Doing and writing qualitative research*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Holtfreter, Kristy, Michael Reisig, and Merry Morash. 2004. "Poverty, State Capital, and Recidivism among Women Offenders." *Criminology and Public Policy* 3(2):185-208.
- Holzer, Harry J., Steven Raphael, and Michael A. Stoll. 2006. "Will Employers Hire Former Offenders? Employer Preferences, Background Checks, and Their Determinants." *Imprisoning America: The Social Effects of Mass Incarceration*. New York: Russell Sage.

- Irwin, John. 1985. *Jail Managing the Underclass in American Society*. University of California Press.
- Jung, Hyunzee, Solveig Spjeldnes, and Hide Yamatani. 2010. "Recidivism and Survival Time: Racial Disparity among Jail Ex-Inmates." *Oxford University Press* 34(3):181–89.
- Kaeble, D. and Glaze, N. (2016). "Correctional Populations in the United States, 2015." Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics; Corrections: Key Facts at a Glance. <https://www.bjs.gov>
- Kessler, Daniels and Steven D. Levitt. 1999. "Using Sentence Enhancements to Distinguish between Deterrence and Incapacitation." *Journal of Law and Economics* 42(3):343-363
- Kubiak, Sheryl. 2004. "The Effects of PTSD on Treatment Adherence, Drug Relapse, and Criminal Recidivism in a Sample of Incarcerated Men and Women." *Research on Social Work Practice* 14(6):424–33.
- Kubrin, Charis E. and Eric A. Stewart. 2006. "Predicting Who Reoffends: The Neglected Role of Neighborhood Context in Recidivism Studies." *Criminology* 44(1):165–97
- Laaksonen-Craig, Susanna and Willam McKillop. 2003. *Forestry, Forest Industry and Forest Products Consumption in California*. University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.
- Lam, Helen, Harcourt, Mark. 2003. "The Use of Criminal Records in Employment Decisions: The Rights of Ex-offenders, Employers, and the Public." *Journal of Business Ethics*. 47: 237.
- Lauritsen, Janet, Karen Heimer, and James Lynch. 2009. "Trends in the Gender Gap in Violent Offending: New Evidence from the National Crime Victimization Survey." *American Society of Criminology* 47.
- Lattimore, Pamela K. 2007. "The Challenge of Reentry." *Corrections Today* 69:88-91.
- Lee, Barrett, Kimberly Tyler, and James Wright. 2010. "The New Homelessness Revisited." *Annual Rev Sociology* 36(1):501–21.
- Lin, Ann Chih. and David R. Harris. 2010. *The colors of poverty: why racial and ethnic disparities persist*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

- Lochner, Kimberly A., Ichiro Kawachi, Robert T. Brennan, and Stephen L. Buka. 2003. "Social capital and neighborhood mortality rates in Chicago." *Social Science & Medicine* 56(8):1797–1805.
- Lockie, Stewart, and L. Bourke. 2001. *Rurality bites: the social and environmental transformation of rural Australia*. Annandale: Pluto Press.
- Lofstrom, Magnus, Stephen Raphael, and Ryken Grattet. 2014. "Is Public Safety Realignment Reducing Recidivism in California?" *Public Policy Institute of California*.
- Lum, Kristian, Samarth Swarup, Stephen Eudbank, and James Hawdon. 2014. "The Contagious Nature of Imprisonment: An Agent-Based Model to Explain Racial Disparities in Incarceration Rates." *The Royal Society Publishing* 11(98).
- Luther, James B., Erica S. Reichert, Evan D. Holloway, Alexis M. Roth, and Matthew C. Aalsma. 2011. "An Exploration of Community Reentry Needs and Services for Prisoners: A Focus on Care to Limit Return to High-Risk Behavior." *AIDS Patient Care and STDs* 25(8):475–81.
- Lynch, James and William Sabol. 2001. *Prisoner Reentry Perspective*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute.
- Maruna, Shadd and Russell Immarigeon. 2011. *After crime and punishment: pathways to offender reintegration*. London: Routledge.
- Mauer, Marc. 2004. "Thinking About Prison and Its Impact in the Twenty-First Century." *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law* 2(607).
- McCampbell, Susan. 2006. "Gender-Responsive Strategies Project: Jail Applications." *U.S. Department of Justice*.
- McNeil, Dale, Renee Binder, and Jo Robinson. 2005. "Incarceration Associated with Homelessness, Mental Disorder, and Co-Occuring Substance Abuse." *Psychiatric Services* 56(7):840–46.
- Mellow, Jeff, Debbie Mukamal, Stefen LoBuglio, Amy Solomon, and Jenny Osborne. 2008. *The Jail Administrator's Toolkit: For Reentry*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute.
- Metraux, Stephen and Dennis Culhane. 2004. "Homeless Shelter Use and Reincarceration Following Prison Release: Assessing the Risk." *Journal of Criminology and Public Policy* 3(2).

- Morani, Nicole. M., Nora Wikoff, Donald M. Lindhorst, and Shelia Bratton. 2011. "A Description of the Self-Identified Needs, Service Expectations, and Social Outcomes of Participants of a Prisoner-Reentry Program." *Prison Journal* 91(3):347-365
- Morenoff, Jeffrey D., Robert J. Sampson, and Stephen W. Raudenbush. "Neighborhood Inequality, Collective Efficacy, and the Spatial Dynamics Of Urban Violence*." *Criminology* 39, no. 3 (2001): 517-58.
- Newman, Donald. 1958. "Research Interviewing in Prison." *Journal of Law and Criminology* 49(2):1-7.
- New York Civil Liberties Union. 2017. "Stop-and-Frisk Data." *New York Civil Liberties Union*. Retrieved May 15, 2017 (<https://www.nyclu.org/en/stop-and-frisk-data>).
- Ohmer, M. L. (2008). "The relationship between members' perceptions of their neighborhood organization and their involvement and perceived benefits from participation." *Journal of Community Psychology*, 36: 851-870
- Opsal, Tara. 2012. "Livin' on the Straights': Identity, Desistance, and Work among Women Post- Incarceration." *Sociological Inquiry* 82(3):378-403.
- Osher, Fred, Henry Steadman, and Barr Heather. 2003. "A Best Practice Approach to Community Reentry from Jails for Inmates With Co-Occurring Disorders: The Apic Model." *Crime & Delinquency* 49(1).
- Pager, Devah. 2009. *Marked: race, crime, and finding work in an era of mass incarceration*. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press.
- Pasko, Lisa. 2013. *The female offender: girls, women, and crime*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Patton, Michael. 2002. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. 3rd ed. Sage Publications.
- Petersilia, Joan. 2003. *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Petteruti, Amanda and Nastassia Walsh. 2008. *Jailing Communities: the impact of jail expansion and effective public safety strategies*. Washington, D.C: Justice Policy Institute.

- Pryor, Marie. 2010. "The unintended effects of prisoner reentry policy and the marginalization of urban communities." *Dialectical Anthropology* 34(4):513–17.
- Richie, Beth. 2001. "Challenges Incarcerated Women Face as They Return to Their Communities: Findings from Life History Interviews." *Crime & Delinquency* 47(3).
- Reiman, Jeffrey H. and Paul Leighton. 2017. *The rich get richer and the poor get prison: ideology, class, and criminal justice*. New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis
- Reinharz, Shulamit and Uri Lowental. 1979. "Group dynamics in community health teams." *Journal of Community Psychology*. 7(2):104-110.
- Richards, Stephen C. and Jeffrey Ian Ross. 2003. "A Convict Perspective On The Classification Of Prisoners." *Criminology Public Policy* 2(2):243–52.
- Roman, John and Aaron Chafin. 2006. *Does It Pay to Invest in Reentry Programs for Jail Inmates?* Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Rose, Dina and Todd Clear. 1998. "Incarceration, Social Capital, and Crime: Implications for Social Disorganization Theory." *Criminology* 36(3):441–80.
- Laub, John H. and Robert J. Sampson. 2001. "Understanding Desistance from Crime." *Crime and Justice* 28:1–69.
- Sampson, Robert J. 2011. *The Community*. In *Crime and Public Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sampson, Robert and Stephen Raudenbush. 2004. "Seeing Disorder: Neighborhood Stigma and the Social Construction of Broken Windows." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 67(4):319–42.
- Seiter, Richard P. and Karen R. Kadela. 2003. "Prisoner Reentry: What Works, What Does Not, and What Is Promising." *Crime & Delinquency* 49(3):360–88.
- Shaw, Clifford and Henry MacKay. 1969. *Juvenile delinquency and urban areas*. London: Routledge.
- Solomon, Amy. 2012. "In Search of a Job: Criminal Records as Barriers to Employment." *NIJ Journal* 270:42–51.

- Taxman, Faye S., Douglas Young, and James M. Byrne. 2004. "With Eyes Wide Open: Formalizing Community and Social Control Intervention in Offender Reintegration Programs." Pp. 233-260 in *After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration*, edited by Shadd Maruna and Russ Immarigeon. Portland, OR: Willan
- The U.S. Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs. Bureau of Justice Statistics. *The Federal Bureau of Prison Inmate Release*. 2013. <http://www.bjs.gov>
- Thompkins, Douglas E. 2010. The Expanding Prisoner Reentry Industry. *Dialectical Anthropology* 34:589-604.
- Travis, Jeremy. 2002. "Invisible Punishment: An Instrument of Social Exclusion." *Urban Institute*.
- Travis, Jeremy and Joan Petersilia. 2001. "Reentry Reconsidered: A New Look at an Old Question." *Crime and Delinquency* 47: 291-313.
- Tsai, Tyjen and Scommegna Paola. 2012. "U.S. Has the World's Highest Incarceration Rate." *Publication Reference Bureau*. 20: 1-7.
- Travis, Jeremy and Bruce Western. 2014. *The growth of incarceration in the United States: exploring causes and consequences*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.
- Toro, Paul A. 2007. "Toward an International Understanding of Homelessness." *Journal of Social Issues* 63(3):461-81.
- Turney, Kristin. 2014. "Stress Proliferation across Generations? Examining the Relationship between Parental Incarceration and Childhood Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 55(3):302-19.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2010. *Quick Facts Humboldt County*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved Nov 15 2016. (<http://www.census.gov/quickfacts>).
- Van Kirk, Susie. 1999. *Humboldt County: A Briefest Histories*. Eureka, CA: Humboldt County Historical Society.
- Visher, Christy and Jeremy Travis. 2003. "Transitions from Prison to Community: Understanding Individual Pathways." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29(1):89-113.

- Wacquant, Loic. 2001. "Deadly Symbiosis: When Ghetto and Prison Meet and Mesh." *Punishment and Society*. 3(1):95-133.
- Warren, Patricia and William Bales. 2011. "The Imprisonment Penalty for Young Black and Hispanic Males." *Journal of Crime and Delinquency* 49(1).
- Weisheit, Ralph and Brownstein, Henry. 2016. "Drug Production in The Rural Context." 23-33. J. F. Donnermeyer. New York, NY. USA: Routledge.
- Weisheit, Ralph and Wells, Edward. (2006.) "Deadly Violence in the Heartland." *Comparing Homicide Patterns in Nonmetropolitan and Metropolitan Counties*. 9(1): 55-80.
- West, Heather and William J. Sabol. (2008). "Prisoners in 2007." Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- White, Michael D., Jessica Saunders, Christopher Fisher, and Jeff Mellow. 2012. "Exploring Inmate Reentry in a Local Jail Setting: Implications for Outreach, Service Use, and Recidivism." *Crime & Delinquency* 58(1):124-46.
- Winters, Robert C., Julie L. Globokar, and Cliff Roberson. 2015. *An introduction to crime and crime causation*. Boca Raton: CRC Press.
- Wright, Emily, Patricia Van Voorhis, Emily Sailsbury, and Ashley Bauman. 2012. "Gender-Responsive Lessons Learned and Policy Implications for Women in Prison: A Review." *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 39(12):1612-32.
- Young, Douglas W., Faye S. Taxman, and James M. Byrne. 2002. *Engaging the community in offender reentry*. College Park, MD: Bureau of Governmental Research.
- Zhang, Sheldon, Robert Roberts, and Valerie Callanan. 2006. "Preventing Parolees From Returning to Prison Through Community-Based Reintegration." *Sage Publication* 52(4):551-71.

APPENDICES

Interview Schedule – Currently Incarcerated

1. I'd like to begin is to find out from you guy's what sort, if any, programs have you been offered or have you heard of while you've been here?
2. Did you find the resources helpful? If yes or no, in what way?
3. What would you like to see?
4. What are your concerns about being released? Or potential challenges you think you'll face upon release?
5. What support do you have on the outside?
6. What do you think it'll take for you not to return?

Interview Schedule –Formerly Incarcerated

1. How were you prepared for the probation system and requirements?
2. What relationships had positive effects on your success?
3. What factors helped you with reentry? What factors hindered you?
4. To what degree have you felt judgement for your conviction?
5. How do you feel you've been treated since you've been released from jail/prison?
6. How has being in jail changed your life?

Interview Schedule – Service Providers

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your experiences working with inmates or ex-offenders?
 - a. In what capacity do you work with this population?
2. What do you see as being the main barriers to successful reintegration for this population?
 - . So let me make sure I understood you correctly...
3. How do you identify the needs of this population?
4. How are your programs specifically helping this population reintegrate?
 - . Can you tell me a little bit more about...
5. Who do you see using the programs available most?
 - . Why do you think that may be?
6. How could your position affect the accessibility and use of the services you provide?
 - . Can you explain a little bit more about...
7. Are you able to work with any other service providers in the county?
 - . If yes, how are you able to collaborate?

Greetings,

We are SHATTER (Students of Humboldt Advocating Total Transformative & Effective Reintegration), a collective of Humboldt State University students enrolled in a Community Action Research course. We are focusing our semester project on identifying the needs of persons that are released or will shortly be released from the Humboldt County Correctional Facility (HCCF). We will be working with Lt. Marco Luna of HCCF to conduct focus groups with current and former inmates pertaining to services/resources being offered during their residence and after.

We are requesting your participation in our research project, because of the service(s) you provide this population. We want to gather a wide perspective on the phenomenon of reentry. **We are extending this invitation to select service providers to have a collective focus group held in Eureka at the Humboldt County Probation Department at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 7.** Snacks will be provided.

We ask that participants be prepared to engage in a dialogue about the services they are offering, as well as areas that can be improved. *Please R.S.V.P. by email to vp24@humboldt.edu by Thursday, March 31 to secure your participation in our integral research project.* If for some reason you can't attend, our team would be more than willing to accommodate your schedule and set up a personal interview with you. We truly value your input in this research and look forward with collaborating with you

Invite to Participate for the formerly incarcerated

You have been invited to participate in a study regarding your experiences with the reintegration process ex-offenders in Humboldt County. We are students at Humboldt State University, interviewing current offenders, ex-offenders, and service providers concerning existing services, and identifying what services can be developed to aid in the reentry process.

We would like to do an interview with you over the phone during the weeks of: April 7-18 2016. This interview will last up to one hour. There will be (8) questions and the topics will range from: Your experiences with the corrections process, services known and/or used, and what your input in the development of future services.

Your information will be used to guide and support reintegration services, and will leave a thoughtful and lasting impact on our community. Our team can ensure confidentiality through deleting transcripts of our conversations, as well as changing your name into a pseudonym to protect your identity. Once again, we truly appreciate your time and hope to hear back from you by April 2, 2016. To set up a time to complete our phone interview. You can R.S.V.P. by replying to this email.

Thanks again and we look forward to working with you,

SHATTER

(Student of Humboldt Advocating for Total Transformative and Effective Reintegration)