

# **CRJ 204 1700: Criminal Justice and the Urban Community**

**SPRING 2021**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays from 5:30 – 6:45 pm in Zoom**

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# Agenda

<b>Class session 24:  Th 4/29</b>	<b>Alternatives to the criminal justice system as a solution to social problems</b>  <b>READ:</b> Austria, R. & Peterson, J. (2017). Credible Messenger Mentoring for Justice-Involved Youth. The Pinkerton Papers.
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# Looking ahead

<b>Class session 25:</b> <b>Tu 5/4</b>	<b>Film in Zoom class: Restorative Justice</b>
<b>Class session 26:</b> <b>Th 5/6</b>	<b>Final research paper workshop in class: Peer review of drafts</b> <b>Final paper DRAFT due in Blackboard by 11:59 pm</b>
<b>Class session 27:</b> <b>Tu 5/11</b>	<b>Final exam review session in Zoom class</b>
<b>Class session 28:</b> <b>Th 5/13</b>	<b>Final exam review session in Zoom class</b>



# Where were we?

## Resilience in the Bronx

- The birthplace of hip-hop, electric boogie, and break dancing. South Bronx neighborhoods also started to organize to demand better housing and opportunities.
- South Bronx community organizing (agitate about winnable issue, then tackle more challenging issues)
- The [built environment](#), implemented through policy, impacts urban life (environmental justice)

## South Bronx Unite: Environmental Racism



# Alternatives to the criminal justice system as a solution to social problems

- Punishment doesn't work with everyone
- If 6 out of 10 people who leave prison return to prison within 3 years (recidivism), then clearly incapacitation and punishment are not really working as deterrents for the majority of people in the system
- We also see a disproportion of Black and Latino youth in the system: "[School to prison pipeline](#)"
- Some youth and adults are more defiant than others; there are many reasons for this defiance, but threats and punishment do not diminish it; it usually makes it worse

## School-to-prison pipeline



# Credible Messenger Mentoring

- “a transformative group mentoring intervention for young adults in the justice system.”
- an approach with great promise not only to disrupt the tragic spiral of incarceration and recidivism that traps so many young people but also to strengthen communities disproportionately impacted by mass incarceration
- “...men and women who were themselves justice-involved are hired to engage young people on their own terms in structured and intentional relationships.”
- **Credible** = believable: young people find them trustworthy and far more persuasive than motivational speakers or even the best-intentioned social workers
- Benefits to young people, mentors, community, and public safety



# Credible messengers

Young people ensnared in the justice system often fail to engage with services and opportunities.

For many, neither threats of punishment nor appeals to opportunity make an impact.

What takes hold is a kind of “institutionalized oppositional culture,” a reaction to a history of prejudice and discrimination that makes meaningful participation in social and civic institutions problematic, if not impossible.

Despite their hopes and dreams, many young people find their aspirations overwhelmed by these negative messages.

Young people desperately need to hear a different message.

# Credible Messenger Justice Center



# Alternatives to the criminal justice system as a solution to social problems

- New York City: Arches Transformative Mentoring Program - a curriculum-based group mentoring intervention using paid credible messenger mentors
- Shows a 50% decrease in felony arrests for those in the program
- Professional training at the New School for Social Research
- Successful at engaging some of the most *hard-to-engage youth* (institutionalized oppositional culture); part of a process of growth and healing; accountability and support

## Justice in transition: New York City





# Attendance

- <https://forms.gle/odsD3hoPydnzDpBi9>

# Cure Violence: Public health approach



# Chicago: Ceasefire



## Boston: Roca, Inc.





**NYC: Change is possible and happening!**



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