

# Culture and Globalization

*Prisons I*  
*Economies and Prisons*  
October 31, 2012



# US Prison Facts

- Between 1980 and 2008, the US prison population quadrupled, from 500,000 to 2.3 million.
- 1 out of every 143 Americans was in jail or prison in 2002.
- The US has 5% of the world's population and 25% of the world's prisoners.
- The US is the most incarcerating nation that has ever existed.
- African Americans and Hispanics make up about 25% of the US population and 58% of the prison population.
- Whites use drugs at 5 times the rate of African Americans; African Americans are imprisoned at 10 times the rate of Whites for drug crimes.
- Corrections costs about \$70 billion annually.

# Prison Industrial Complex (PIC)

What does this term mean?

# Prison Industrial Complex (PIC)

- Eisenhower warned against the "military industrial complex" - what happens to war when profit becomes a motive
  - The example of uranium mining in Navajo country
- To discuss a PIC is to ask about private gains (of both public and private prisons) and how this might drive social policy

# Prisons and Crime

Does prison expansion correlate with an increase in crime?

What are three-strikes laws and mandatory minimums?

Do prisons deter or prevent crime?

# Criminalization and Race

In the post-1960s era

- the image of welfare gets racialized
- welfare entitlements are rolled back
- radical social movements (especially Black and Brown power movements) are dismantled
- rhetoric of "personal responsibility" replaces Keynesian idea of social responsibility

# Prisons and Economics

How do prisons deal with the economic crises of globalization?

# Accumulation and Crisis

Gilmore argues that the expansion of the prison system in the US is a response to four crises of accumulation in the context of globalization:  
surpluses of

- finance capital
- land
- labor
- state capacity



# Global Flows and Prisons

How do the articles on Arizona and Australia relate to Gilmore's article?

How can we think about the economic function of immigration in the US?

**Do we need prisons?**