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## EXPRESSIONS OF PUNISHMENT: EMOTIONS, IDENTITIES AND LIVED EXPERIENCES IN ENGLISH PRISONS

**Dr Anastasia Chamberlen**

Who are we punishing today, and why? What's it like to experience imprisonment? Is prison the best response to crimes? What are the alternatives? What effects and consequences does punishment have on those we punish, and on those in whose name we punish?

*Expressions of Punishment explores prisoners' experiences of the criminal justice system in light of the current prison crisis in England and Wales. Given that we have the largest prison population in Western Europe, and that there have been significant increases in prisoner self-harm and suicides in recent times, this project encourages participants to consider what life inside prison is like.*

It invites them to engage with questions about prison's effectiveness and long-term consequences, and to consider how our contemporary allure for punishment challenges possibilities for social justice.

Dr Anastasia Chamberlen has examined the lived experiences of imprisonment, especially those of women prisoners. Her work underscores the importance of understanding how incarceration affects inmates physically as well as mentally, and shapes their identities during and after incarceration. Research conducted by Dr Chamberlen has revealed how prisons, although constantly in crisis, are promoted as necessary and valuable institutions, limiting our ability to think seriously about alternatives to this system. *The Production of Truth, Justice and History* invites participants to engage with expressions of punishment in a diversity of ways.

Visitors can meet and talk with former prisoners, who will share their stories in a Human Library (curated by David Kendall in collaboration with Safe Ground, New Leaf Initiative and the Howard League); take part in an interactive theatrical exercise about the future of the criminal justice system in the UK, facilitated by Face Up Theatre Company and Rideout (Creative Arts for Rehabilitation); and participate in a table top game, *The Probationary*, that illustrates the challenges of navigating the probation process.

Anastasia Chamberlen is a criminologist and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology. She conducts research into the sociology of punishment and prisons, with a focus on feminist theory and the study of emotions, embodiment and health.

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