



Incarceration in America: Immigration Detention

On May 11 and 12, CAPA hosted its sixth Incarceration in America Conference, featuring speakers from the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, the National Immigrant Justice Center, the National Immigrant Law Center, the Florence Project, the Vera Institute of Justice, the ACLU Immigrant Protection Project, the School of the Americas Watch, and the Anti-Recidivism Coalition. Panelists gathered to discuss three major topics around migrant rights during Trump's administration: general trends in immigration enforcement, private prisons, and local government and NGO involvement.

During the panel featuring general trends in immigration enforcement, the panelists emphasized the importance of narrative shifts. Increasingly, migrants are being deported and removed from the US in the center of the country, not just at the border. The "border" definition has also increased to include land area up to 100 miles from the physical border. Obama was dubbed the "Deporter-in-Chief" and the legacy and narrative around deportation he started has only increased under the current administration. Trump has only intensified the nation's negative attitude toward immigrants. Panelists highlighted such bias against immigrants in Arizona, where proximity to the US-Mexico border proliferates anti-immigration sentiment. ICE agents patrol hospitals and ask to see the immigration papers of everyone they meet, especially those of People of Color. ICE has

even pulled over an ambulance that was carrying a child in need of emergency medical services in order to detain the child's parents. The anti-immigrant culture is slightly less aggressive in New England, where many people feel sympathy for immigrants, but are bound by the law and feel they cannot implement change.



The next panel centered around immigration and private prisons, which further highlighted the aggressive criminalization of immigration. Private prisons make a profit of \$90 million each year, and immigration arrests increase such profits. Immigration plays a major role in the issue of mass incarceration. The conditions in prisons and detention centers are similar: poor drinking water, no medical services for children or pregnant women, and lights are always on in order to disorient detainees. Indeed, many organizations have requested that the UN Special Rapporteur for Torture inspect detention centers to check their quality. Detention centers are also highly confusing for immigrants, who often are detained without any information. Immigration is a *civil* offense, *not criminal*, so they are not given lawyers or read the Miranda Rights. Accordingly, a Legal Orientation Program was set up to provide detained immigrants with vital information about their cases. Corey Lazar, from the Vera Institute of Justice, remarked that "People are in detention centers, just sitting in jail, not knowing why. Lawyers go in to give basic legal information. Not to represent them, because the government doesn't allow that. They just give them orientation information, and this may be their only chance to get it." This legal information becomes vital if they want to win their cases. Representation is even more important: without representation, immigrants win only 4% of their cases, with representation, they win 48% of the time.

The conference concluded with information about local government and NGO activism. The National Immigrant Law Center has started a variety of safe schools and sanctuary businesses. They mobilize communities to deny ICE jurisdiction in businesses, schools, hospitals, and other entities within the community. Groups such as this one lead trainings to spread information about

strategies to resist ICE officers and protect employees' fourth amendment rights not to be arrested without a warrant. Much of ICE's power is multiplied by the efforts of local and state governments. Without their active support, ICE would become significantly less dangerous to immigrants.

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

For more events, visit the [CAPA Website](#)

May 23 | [Screening of "Milford Graves Full Mantis"](#) | CAPA Symposium | 8:30-10:30 PM

Q&A held after the screening. Milford Graves Full Mantis is a portrait of renowned percussionist Milford Graves, exploring his kaleidoscopic creativity and relentless curiosity. Graves has performed internationally since 1964, both as a soloist and in ensembles with such legends as Albert Ayler, Giuseppi Logan and Sonny Sharrock. He is widely considered to be a founding pioneer of avant-garde jazz, and he remains one of the most influential living figures in the evolution of the form.

CAPA Projects: Senior Work

Ash Haywood & Fiona McGovern

While drawing on larger women of color feminisms, the Healing Collective seeks to create a sacred and protected space focused on the historical traumas, perspectives, and practices of Black women and our specific experiences at Bennington College.



We seek to establish methods of healing and survival through music rehearsals and dinners, culminating in a large gathering and performance, as well as a resource library available physically and digitally through Crossett Library that engages multiple modes of Black women's praxis.



Nam Phuong Thi Doan

Trao is born from the love for knowledge sharing and community convening. Having recognized a disconnect between different populations, a lack of community gathering space, and social isolation in Bennington,

Emily O’ Donnell and I founded Trao: Bennington Skillshare Initiative as a community-based, cross-generational, and women-driven skillsharing platform in Future Studio, Fall 2017. In Vietnamese, “trao” means to pass on, to give, or to exchange, especially as an endearing act between family members. It’s an activity through which a community of knowledge-lovers can be formed, creativity sparked, and social inclusivity fostered. Through need-catered and themed workshops, Trao creates an open forum in which the members of the community engage in collective learning and social exchange across different age groups and backgrounds. Our premise is that the participants do not have to be experts, just enthusiastic and open to learning and sharing knowledge with others. Through skillsharing workshops, Trao creates a community of knowledge and art lovers, and sparks conversations between different groups of people in Bennington town. [website](#) • [facebook](#) • [instagram](#) • [article](#)

Melodi Var Öngle

I study social sciences, music, and public action, with a focus in music for social change. My advanced project is called “Songs Across Boundaries,” After a brutal clash in Cyprus, the country was divided



between Greek and Turkish factions. I interviewed Cypriots from both sides about their experiences and converted six of their stories into original songs: three from the Turkish Cypriot community, and three from the Greek Cypriot community. I will compose additional songs this summer. The most gratifying part of this project was to see my sources’ reactions when they listened to the songs I composed from their stories. There were also challenging aspects, especially listening to the interviewees’ stories of war. This summer, with the support of the Davis Projects for Peace grant, I plan to give concerts in Cyprus, especially in the buffer zone. I want to facilitate a space where communities can come together in a safe and welcoming environment, learn each other’s songs, and create deeper bonds. On the international scale, I hope to create deeper awareness about the conflict in Cyprus by recording and sharing these songs. As a Cypriot, myself, this project is meaningful because I believe stories play an important role in conveying people’s lived experiences, and the emotional resonance of music makes the stories

more memorable. Music can help people realize there are many different stories about this conflict, and increase respect for other cultures.



Liam McRae

I'm working with the Office of Buildings & Grounds to centralize Bennington's energy use, facilities performance, and efficiency improvement data, so B&G can develop a long-term Sustainability Master Plan for the

College. For half of FWT, we did a survey of leading asset management and building monitoring solutions, ultimately determining that the external services we wanted were beyond our current budget. Instead, I'm developing an Excel-based method to store our incoming energy use data, track efficiency improvements, and visualize the performance of campus buildings. The aim is to identify which buildings are the most energy intensive and which improvements might be most fruitful, so we can work these goals into a long-term plan.



The CAPA Newsletter is a student-run project with the mission of developing the CAPA community.

We want to share the amazing work that our friends and coworkers are producing. Each issue will include features on students and faculty members with inspiring projects, CAPA classes tackling important issues, and upcoming events and opportunities.

We want your feedback! If you have any suggestions to make this newsletter something that's truly beneficial to you [let us know](#).

Thanks for a great term everyone! We'll see you in the Fall.
