

THE SQUARE ONE PROJECT
ROUNDTABLE ON THE FUTURE OF JUSTICE POLICY
EXAMINING JUSTICE REFORM AND THE SOCIAL CONTRACT
IN THE UNITED STATES:
IMPLICATIONS FOR
JUSTICE POLICY AND PRACTICE

Zoom meeting

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MS. HUFFMAN: Let's get started. Hello,
3 everyone. It is great to see you all. Welcome back to
4 our fourth roundtable session of the Square One project.

5 It is wonderful to see you all here again and
6 we are really looking forward to continuing our
7 conversation together. We had a great discussion last
8 week. And I think it has been on a lot of folks' mind
9 since then, and so really looking forward to moving ahead.

10 Before we get started, I have a few updates for
11 all of you. First, a reminder that we have a three-week
12 break before we will reconvene again for our final session
13 on September 16.

14 We designed the timing this way for this series
15 of meetings, in part, because many of us will be adjusting
16 to new fall schedules, school schedules for our families,
17 for ourselves, and many of those whom we hope will be
18 joining us for that as observers will also be adjusting to
19 new fall schedules. And so we wanted to wait until folks
20 got through the first week or two of September to
21 reconvene.

22 So these next few weeks will give us all time
23 to get prepared, get into that schedule, and then have
24 time to kind of ruminate on the ideas we have been
25 discussing here, these past several weeks, and that we

1 will be talking about today.

2 When we gather again in September, we will be
3 focused on our aspirations for what comes next.
4 Aspirations for the new social contract. And we'll
5 continue to thread our thoughts into this tapestry of
6 ideas that we have been developing together over the past
7 month.

8 So during those few weeks, we ask that you
9 think about the things that we have been talking about.
10 We ask that you read Danielle Allen's amazing paper on the
11 principle of association, a history of the principle of
12 association alongside the principle of alienation, and how
13 that can shed light on what a shift in justice policy and
14 practice should actually accomplish for society.

15 So please come ready to put that into the
16 context of everything that we have learned and generated
17 here. And in the meantime, we will continue to be in
18 communication via Slack. It has been great to see folks
19 continuing to join there, and we hope that you will
20 continue to engage in that way.

21 Also, we wanted to mention that if you haven't
22 already received one, you will be receiving the biweekly
23 Square One Spotlight every other Friday. It is a short
24 email newsletter that goes to all of our Square One
25 family, our executive session and roundtable participants.

1 And it features the work of all of you.

2 We keep a lookout for events, for news
3 coverage, for exciting things that you all are doing and
4 accomplishing, and compile into that format to share it
5 out to all of you. But we also invite you, if you have
6 something going on, and you would like to forward it to us
7 for inclusion in that newsletter, please feel free to do
8 that, at any point. And we will be happy to share it out
9 with all of your Square One colleagues.

10 Last thing on the September meeting that is
11 coming up, a reminder that the final session, unlike these
12 where we have been able to gather together, and while we
13 are recording the sessions, they haven't been
14 livestreamed. That last session will be livestreamed on
15 YouTube, and we hope that we will be joined by hundreds of
16 observers for that discussion.

17 We will be sharing the Eventbrite link for
18 that, and a social media kit for all of you all. It is
19 going to include a short video promotion that features
20 these discussions, and our wonderful technology.

21 And video producer Michael Kleiman at MediaTank
22 has put together a clip that just, you won't believe how
23 exciting he has been able to make Zoom boxes look, in
24 generating sort of a summary of our discussion so far.
25 And an invitation for folks to join us for the next

1 conversation. So be on the lookout for all of that.

2 So again, we won't be gathering for three
3 weeks. But we will be looking forward to seeing everyone
4 then. And hope that you will invite your networks to come
5 and join us for that discussion as well.

6 So with that, welcome to everyone. I see more
7 folks joining in. Great.

8 An overview of our time together today. Today,
9 we are going to be continuing our discussion of what the
10 components of a new social contract might be. We have
11 terrific papers from Bruce Western and Vivian Nixon to get
12 us started. And so we are going to follow up -- a sort of
13 a flow really similar to what we did last week.

14 We will open up hearing from Bruce on the
15 relevance of poverty and economic mobility in the
16 discussion of justice reform. We have an opportunity for
17 quick clarifying questions for him, if anyone has any.

18 And then, we will move directly into hearing
19 from Vivian, who will offer her thoughts on the relevance
20 of access to education in this conversation. Quick
21 clarifying questions for her, and then we will move into
22 the group discussion that will carry us through most of
23 our time together today.

24 Because Bruce is leading us off with his paper,
25 we have invited Jeremy to listen to the discussion and

1 provide us with a short wrap up at the end. And I will be
2 playing the role of facilitator, as I did last week.

3 So as we join in this discussion, again, I
4 encourage you all to keep our past discussions in mind:
5 the thoughts and questions that emerged last week, and
6 that have been on your mind since then. Last week, we
7 talked about housing and healthcare as needs that people
8 have. But also as systems and industries that are,
9 themselves, powerful actors within society.

10 We talked about how we can avoid
11 remarginalizing people from bringing the problems of our
12 existing structures along with us into a new social
13 contract, into new ideas, and a new Square One. And we
14 talked about incrementalism, and how it relates to our
15 work, how it relates to the idea of a foundational
16 rethinking of justice.

17 Is it a strategy? Is it a goal? Is it a
18 timeline? What is the difference between change coming
19 incrementally versus incremental change, or is there one?

20 And finally, we talked a lot about what it
21 means to dream big. This was something that our Square
22 One colleague Matt Desmond had mentioned during the event
23 that happened in the context of the Democratic National
24 Convention. Encouraging us to dream big, and how do we
25 think about, as Courtney said, not just what is better

1 than where we are now, but what really is the best we can
2 do. What are we really working towards?

3 So with that, just a huge welcome, again, to
4 everyone. We will turn to Bruce and let him kick us off.

5 A reminder to everyone: just when you are ready to get
6 into the conversation, once we get to the stage of being
7 able to talk, you will raise your hand in the chat, as you
8 have before. And those of us on the host side of things
9 will be able to see those hands raised and be able to put
10 you into the queue in order.

11 And we also always have available to people the
12 insistent wave. The "I have something that is
13 particularly relevant in this very moment, and don't want
14 to lose it." And that is the physical wave here, so that
15 I can see you, and can bring you into the conversation
16 that way.

17 And lastly, please keep your video on when you
18 can. Just because that is part of the way that we are
19 recording this and making it most user-friendly for those
20 who are going to be watching afterwards. But I know we do
21 have a couple of folks who, for logistical or other
22 reasons are joining by phone, or at least, sometimes have
23 to go offscreen briefly. So we certainly understand about
24 that, too.

25 So with that, let's get going. It is just

1 great to see you guys. Bruce, we will hand it over to
2 you, and let you get started. And then, turn to Vivian.

3 Bruce.

4 MR. WESTERN: Great. Well, good afternoon,
5 everyone, and thanks for the chance to talk about this
6 work. This paper that I circulated is incredibly
7 provisional.

8 And I guess, really over the last 25 years, I
9 have been writing about, thinking about, researching the
10 relationship between social and economic inequality on the
11 one hand, and processes of punishment on the other. Over
12 the last ten years, I have been doing a whole bunch of
13 different kinds of field studies that -- in different
14 localities, going into prison a lot, talking to people who
15 are incarcerated, or going into communities that are
16 experiencing high incarceration rates, and talking to
17 formerly incarcerated people.

18 And what this paper tries to do is say
19 something about what I see as this intimate connection
20 between incarceration and poverty. And you know, if we
21 look at the formal features of the criminal law, and the
22 formal features of prisons and jails, nowhere it seems to
23 me is it recognized that these are fundamentally poor
24 people's institutions that are designed for the control
25 and punishment of low-income communities and the people

1 that live in them.

2 So I am trying to sort of make sense of all of
3 this, through all of these different field studies. And I
4 will just hit -- I meant to start my clock there. I will
5 just hit my four main empirical conclusions.

6 I wish I could say I had, sort of, some
7 systematic argument that was running through all of this.

8 But I am definitely not there yet. These are more just
9 empirical observations that I've made from these different
10 field studies.

11 So the first one, you know, I was going to
12 Australia, to the top end of Australia, for a number of
13 years and doing field work up there. Going into prison
14 there and talking to formerly incarcerated people. Very
15 different setting, a very different policy regime from the
16 United States.

17 Much less punitive. And yet, rates of
18 incarceration in Aboriginal communities in the top end are
19 very similar to rates of incarceration in African American
20 communities in the United States.

21 So what was going on there, the very poor
22 communities where the rates of incarceration was very
23 high, but poverty was multidimensional. And I think that,
24 for me, this was important in understanding the
25 relationship between poverty and incarceration.

1 What does that mean to say that it was
2 multidimensional? Well, people were dealing with a whole
3 variety of problems that went beyond just trying to live
4 in a household on a very low income. Notably, violence,
5 particularly family violence, was very much in evidence in
6 the field sites I was visiting.

7 Untreated substance use problems were very,
8 very common in the communities I was visiting, too. And
9 in the Aboriginal communities, at the top end, this mostly
10 took the form of alcohol dependence.

11 Poverty was very, very spatially concentrated.
12 There was deep racial segregation in the communities I
13 was visiting. And, of course, a long history of racial
14 marginalization through the historical experience of white
15 settlement, very insecure housing.

16 So a number of these things, right, even though
17 this setting was completely different from the American
18 setting, this multidimensional poverty, I think, is not
19 completely unfamiliar for us who are more steeped in the
20 American setting. So that is point one.

21 Point two, this is an observation from a field
22 experiment we are conducting in Oklahoma City. Oklahoma
23 has, I think, still the highest incarceration rate of the
24 50 states. A very red state.

25 We were studying fines and fees. Going through

1 a misdemeanor court in Oklahoma City costs the defendants
2 about \$1,600, once you add up the court fees, the
3 prosecution fees, the probation fees that are levied on
4 people who are moving through the misdemeanor courts.
5 Very poor people in the misdemeanor courts in Oklahoma
6 City.

7 So point two, there was no safety net. And I
8 have done a lot of field work in New York City and in
9 Massachusetts. Food stamps, Medicaid coverage was very
10 common in the Northeast, and very important for the
11 process of reentry. None of this was really in evidence
12 in Oklahoma.

13 So in the place in which incarceration is
14 highest in the United States, there is really hardly any
15 safety net by Northeastern standards. Little healthcare,
16 apart from the emergency room. Very, very insecure
17 housing -- no one had any publicly supported housing.

18 Third thing, and this comes from a jail study
19 we did in New York. And here, this was a quantitative
20 study. And we were trying to understand the footprint of
21 the jail.

22 And so much research in the field was focused
23 on the prison as an institution, but of course the
24 footprint of the jail is vastly larger. Six hundred
25 thousand people go into prison each year, but about 10

1 million people go to jail each year.

2 New York City's jail system is very, very
3 small. It has the fourth lowest jail incarceration rate
4 of major cities in the United States. 26 percent, we
5 estimate, of all Black men in New York City have been to
6 jail at one time, at least, by the age of 38. And that is
7 in the lowest incarceration rate in the country. In poor
8 neighborhoods, it is about 35 percent.

9 So one in three Black men in poor neighborhoods
10 in New York City, the city with the lowest incarceration
11 rate in the country -- one in three Black men have been to
12 jail. So even though there are some success stories in
13 the country now, the footprint of the criminal justice
14 system remains remarkably heavy.

15 Final thing, we were doing field research on
16 solitary confinement, and going into solitary confinement
17 unit in a maximum-security prison in Pennsylvania. Very
18 large racial disparities, very large disparities by mental
19 health status. So people with serious mental illness,
20 which means psychotic conditions, schizophrenia,
21 schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder had very, very
22 high rates of solitary confinement in that system.

23 You combine these two things, and Black men in
24 Pennsylvania prisons, if they have serious mental illness,
25 are at very, very high risk of solitary confinement. And

1 the duration of solitary confinement for those men is
2 around 30 days, so double the maximum standard,
3 international standard under the Mandela rules. So not
4 only is the system creating disparities that we are
5 familiar with, but the experience -- the severity of the
6 experience of incarceration is also experienced
7 disparately.

8 So these are a set of observations about the
9 links between socioeconomic disadvantage and the severity
10 of the penal experience. But for all this, there are
11 definitely points of disruption in the system, off-ramps,
12 and points of resilience.

13 Social policy made big difference in Australia.
14 Old women in those communities were fundamentally
15 important points of social stability for people who had
16 been incarcerated. And I have seen that in other field
17 settings, as well.

18 In Oklahoma City, charitable relief was really
19 important. We have talked a lot about community
20 empowerment already in this meeting. And I would like to
21 talk more about non-state sources of support and
22 resistance in the face of an overbearing criminal justice
23 system.

24 In New York City, how did that jail
25 incarceration rate get so low? Massive social

1 mobilization has advocated against jail incarceration in
2 New York, to a point where a policy decision was taken to
3 close the jail, in fact. So that case underlines to me
4 the importance of social mobilization.

5 In Pennsylvania, in the many interviews we did
6 in solitary confinement, human resilience, the power of
7 human agency in the face of what seemed to me to be
8 crushing, absolutely crushing, conditions of penal
9 confinement were remarkable. And it reminded me of, you
10 know, the energy, the creativity, the human brilliance
11 that persists even in the face of significant repression.

12 I end the paper by saying, I wonder if our
13 criminal justice institutions are much more brittle than
14 they appear. And they are brittle, perhaps, because they
15 are in a profound legitimacy crisis. The stated mission
16 is to keep communities safe, but of course, they cause
17 tremendous harm, and they lack legitimacy as a result.

18 And so I sort of end with a question. Can all
19 of these points of disruption and resistance somehow be
20 drawn together to make transformational change?

21 So that is what I got. I wish it were a little
22 more coherent, but that is where I landed.

23 MS. HUFFMAN: Bruce, thank you. That was a
24 lot. And that was really incredibly helpful. And you
25 know, really bringing home the inseparability of these

1 issues, and these questions from each other.

2 Before we turn to Vivian, does anyone have any
3 quick clarifying questions for Bruce? We will have a
4 chance to talk more fully. But if there is anything that
5 folks would just like clarification on?

6 (No response.)

7 MS. HUFFMAN: Great. Okay. Well, with that,
8 then, Vivian, we will turn to you to hear your latest
9 thinking on the role of education in all of this.

10 (No response.)

11 MS. HUFFMAN: I think you are still on mute,
12 Vivian.

13 (Pause.)

14 MS. NIXON: There we go. Thank you. It is
15 good to see everybody. Thanks for your paper, Bruce.

16 So I don't pretend that this paper solves any
17 problems, or even has any answers, but it does articulate
18 what I think I am continuing to learn, as I do this work,
19 about the ways in which we compartmentalize education into
20 these buckets. And then, also, have preconceptions about
21 what the goals of education are. And those goals are
22 different, depending upon who is receiving the education.

23 And it is very much in draft form. Because I
24 know that there is a story there that needs to be told
25 about the ways in which we somehow know, as a society,

1 because we have spent lots of resources and time studying
2 educational outcomes for a reason.

3 And we have devoted billions of dollars into
4 constructing institutions of higher learning that
5 absolutely attach such a brand to people, based on where
6 they got their credentials from, that it changes the
7 impact of their entire lives, and the trajectory of their
8 entire lives. Whether they got into that institution
9 because of a legacy agreement, or whether they got into it
10 because they are really brilliant and thoughtful, and want
11 to change the world, right.

12 So we invest as Americans, I think as a --
13 Western culture in general, invest a lot in education for
14 a reason. And we have ascribed a value to it, a very high
15 value. Yet, it is extremely difficult for certain people
16 to access education at almost every level, which includes
17 really high-quality public education from, you know, pre-
18 Kindergarten all the way through advanced degrees.

19 And why is that? I have my theories. And I
20 have little nuggets that I try to point to in the paper,
21 that are really far apart from each other. And I know
22 there is a lot of information in between those nuggets
23 that I need to find, to connect those dots. But I believe
24 that there is a connection.

25 That what we do know about education, is that

1 when it is achieved at a certain level, and when a certain
2 type of education is promoted, people begin to have an
3 ability to argue against structures that impact them in
4 different ways. And they begin to think about the world
5 in different ways, and to see themselves and their own
6 thinking as part of a solution. And have the confidence
7 to articulate that.

8 And so rather than me talk about a really quite
9 simple essay that doesn't need a whole lot of explanation,
10 I tried to find something that kind of took it out of the
11 cerebral frame for a minute, and put it into more of a
12 spiritual frame, an emotional frame. Where, we have seen
13 evidence of that type of brilliance change the way
14 generations of people have thought about issues of
15 incarceration.

16 And I have a clip that is exactly three
17 minutes. And I have talked for exactly two minutes. So I
18 will be within my time.

19 MS. HUFFMAN: You are good.

20 MS. NIXON: And if I can get share-screen
21 permissions, I think I can share this clip. And it might
22 promote a discussion that is based on my paper. Which is,
23 again, clearly just about my own experience, and an idea
24 that I am trying to explore in a much deeper way. So if
25 somebody could give me permission to share my screen.

1 MS. HUFFMAN: Yes. Vivian, I think you are now
2 the co-host also, so that should --

3 MS. NIXON: Okay. I will try to find this
4 clip. I should have had it ready, but I didn't.

5 (Pause.)

6 MS. NIXON: Here we go.

7 (Whereupon, a short video was played.)

8 MS. NIXON: Was I sharing?

9 MS. HUFFMAN: No. But we could hear it. So we
10 could -- that was -- we got the information.

11 MS. NIXON: Okay. Good. Then, I will continue
12 to play it that way. All right. Because I couldn't hear
13 you guys.

14 (Whereupon, a short video was played.)

15 MS. NIXON: So in my view, when a person is
16 educated to that degree, that they can find the
17 wherewithal to inspire a nation, and to articulate a
18 history that is in many ways a shared and common history,
19 and in other ways, a completely different history, that is
20 power.

21 And because education creates that kind of
22 power, it is the least invested in solution when we have
23 these conversations about our justice system, which I
24 believe is the closest thing we have to the beginnings of
25 structural racism through the institution of chattel

1 slavery in this country. And that is it.

2 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Vivian. Thanks for
3 that. And I am glad we were able to hear all of that.
4 Before we open up our discussion, just again, does anyone
5 have any clarifying questions or any sort of specific
6 follow ups for Vivian on what she just shared?

7 (No response.)

8 MS. HUFFMAN: Okay. Great. Well, then in that
9 case, we will move into our conversation. Welcome, Chas.
10 And I see others. Welcome, Emily. Great to have you
11 guys here. We will move into our discussion.

12 And I will just remind folks that you can get
13 into the queue by raising your hand, clicking on the
14 participants tab below, and raising your hand. And you
15 will show up in order.

16 Again, feel free to use the insistent wave.
17 And we will be able to have a conversation together. So
18 with that, the floor is open. And Jorge, you are up
19 first.

20 MR. RENAUD: Yes. Hi. Vivian, I want to thank
21 you for that -- Bruce, also for your paper, but Vivian's
22 especially.

23 I was -- just a quick anecdote, I think, that
24 might illustrate some of the -- especially the people who
25 have the power, in fact, to extend or to allow education

1 in prison systems. Maybe not those that are the ones that
2 result in degrees or certificates, but it is the ones that
3 actually provide some sort of educational foundation,
4 right.

5 TDC -- the Texas Department of Criminal Justice
6 about, I want to say, eight or nine years ago, a few
7 sessions ago, when I first started working, actually going
8 to the Capitol and pushing legislation, had cut like,
9 1,500 seats at the Wyndham School District. And hardly
10 any uproar whatsoever, of course. But the people who had
11 come out of prison, who were involved with trying to
12 transform that system, knew the importance of that.

13 And we went to them. And we proposed something
14 along the lines of peer-to-peer education, right. They
15 had already allowed and encouraged some sort of peer-to-
16 peer education when it came to talking about STDs, when
17 they are talking about how to tell other individuals who
18 are incarcerated about PREA, and what to do if you're in
19 PREA and some of the other things.

20 And I brought to them a study that had been
21 done, I want to say, in Tennessee, where they had lifted
22 people who were never going to get out of prison, and what
23 prison in fact, had done to them. That it wasn't the goal
24 of accomplishing -- of getting a certificate. Again, of
25 getting a degree or something, but the actual

1 participation in some sort of education that gave you the
2 foundation to have some sort of intellectual discourse,
3 right.

4 And how I proposed to them -- I showed them how
5 that had brought an incredible decrease in institutional
6 violations, specifically, violence on staffers. And of
7 course -- and I came to them with a full slate of
8 individuals who I knew who had been -- they had been out,
9 like, four years at the time, who could teach quite a few
10 subjects, right.

11 And I gave them a structure. I gave them
12 everything. And of course, they came back with the idea
13 that it would just be used as a way for individuals who
14 were in gangs to -- whatever excuses TDCJ wants to use.
15 Whatever excuses that that sort of system wants to use, to
16 not allow individuals who are incarcerated to get any sort
17 of education, right.

18 And of course, part of it was the fact that --
19 what knowledge can one individual who is incarcerated
20 actually give another one? And of course, any knowledge
21 that matters has to come from someone like y'all, right.
22 It has to come from the outside. Right. Because we don't
23 have the capability, the wherewithal, the education, the
24 conversational skills, whatever, the communication skills
25 to impart anything worthwhile, right.

1 So I think that is more, sometimes, of a
2 barrier, and something that needs to be overcome -- that
3 we need to overcome, is that idea that we are all a bunch
4 of shaven-head, tattooed idiots. Yes. Sorry. I can get
5 off that soapbox now.

6 Thank you, Vivian.

7 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Jorge. Thanks a lot.
8 You are bringing up questions that we are also seeing
9 echoed in the chat.

10 Which reminds me to remind folks, if you would
11 like to put anything in the chat to the full group, that
12 seemed to actually work really well last week. It was
13 great to have folks' thoughts. So feel free to do that.

14 And now, we will turn to Aisha. And then,
15 David Garland. Aisha.

16 MS. MCWEAY: Hi, everybody. So thank you, both
17 Bruce and Vivian, for your papers. It popped a ton of
18 thoughts in my head that I wanted to engage with in this
19 discussion. But I am going to limit it to three, and the
20 three do not go together.

21 So my first thought, your language Bruce,
22 around -- in the paper, you talked about the criminal
23 justice system not being this crime control institution,
24 but a poverty trap. And I just, I would really like to
25 engage in that discussion as we think about the social

1 contract and what it is, going forward.

2 Because that is something that very much
3 resonated with me. And I would just want to amplify and
4 prop up that, as a reality for the clients that we work
5 with, that I see -- or clients that I have seen for the
6 last decade plus, throughout my career as a public
7 defender.

8 The second non-sequitur, is for me, in reading
9 both papers, there was this wrestling for me, or taking
10 to -- so Bruce talked about the space that charitable
11 organizations fill in -- who are trying to fill some of
12 those gaps in social safety nets, in service provision
13 within -- he used Oklahoma as an example, and Oklahoma
14 City, specifically.

15 And I know there are some sort of funders or
16 foundation folks on this call. So I say this with all
17 respect to you all, but I went down the rabbit hole in
18 reading these papers, of how -- as someone who is funded
19 and supported by a very generous foundation, the -- also
20 damage that foundations do, in propping up systems that
21 are problematic.

22 And as someone who benefits from that, as the
23 executive director of an organization, I still have to
24 name it, right. And in reading the papers, it just
25 highlights to me. I name it all the time, but I also need

1 to name it in this space.

2 And for us to wrestle with who gets to be --
3 who gets to solve the problems, and who should be at those
4 tables. And I think it ties into something Jorge was just
5 mentioning, of whose expertise or experience is worthy in
6 whose eyes.

7 And so that ties into my third point, which was
8 tied to Vivian's paper, and this way in which we look at
9 education. Again, as an organization that has -- that
10 hires, you know, lawyers and advocates, and investigators
11 from different spaces.

12 The idea that, to do this work well, that you
13 would be better qualified to do this work with a degree
14 from Harvard or a degree from Columbia, or a degree from
15 any specific place is something that I actually push back
16 against. I don't think that it ties at all to whether you
17 can do this work well. It really has no bearing.

18 And so I think there is a space in which we
19 amplify -- we prop up expertise in areas that really don't
20 tie to the work that we are doing. And it is really
21 important.

22 It is not to say that being able to obtain a
23 prestigious degree is not something that folks should
24 strive for. I went to Vanderbilt. I did that
25 intentionally, as a strategic move. So I say that with

1 all acknowledgment.

2 But when we think about who should -- who holds
3 expertise. Who holds -- who can educate in these issues,
4 around these issues, I think we are really disconnected
5 from some of -- even as we sort of sit in some spaces like
6 this one right here.

7 Like, we are a highly, I think, educated group,
8 predominantly. And I think that there are real -- there
9 has to be real push of expanding our mind of who should be
10 at the table, and whose expertise really is expertise.

11 And so I will sort of conclude with this idea.

12 In our organization, we had a fellow who was funded
13 through a funder for the past year. And the entire goal
14 of his project, was sort of tied to what Bruce talks
15 about, is these gaps, identifying what are the gaps in the
16 social safety nets in Tulsa.

17 Like, how do people actually access or not
18 access the resources that exist or don't exist. What does
19 it actually look like, when you walk into these spaces?

20 And one of the things that resonated with --
21 that we learned from that experience. And he spent a year
22 doing this. So he visited over 150 different locations
23 more than once and engaged.

24 And what we found, is that there is a space in
25 which providers only want to help the people they deem

1 worthy. And only want to help the people that they
2 believe is -- it will be a success. And success is often
3 determined by funders. And I think that they are -- all
4 of those things have to be addressed if we are even going
5 to be able to wrestle with this.

6 And so I will conclude there. I made my three
7 points. And I would just say that I really enjoyed both
8 papers. Thank you.

9 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Aisha. Thank you so
10 much for all of that. That question of, who is at the
11 table? Who is making decisions? You know, what is the
12 purpose of education, and what is that for? How do we
13 value it?

14 All of those things are so closely connected.
15 And I appreciate you tapping into Bruce's point about the
16 poverty trap, and the relationship between people living
17 in poverty and the justice system.

18 So we will continue with our discussion. Folks
19 should jump into the queue. Up next is David, and then
20 will be followed by Ananya, and Kristian. David?

21 MR. GARLAND: Thanks. So I am going to follow
22 up on Aisha's point about criminal justice as a poverty
23 trap.

24 But I just wanted to say not only did I enjoy
25 reading Vivian's paper, but I enjoyed listening to the

1 clip about the FBI's description of Angela Davis. I, half
2 an hour ago, finished reading Angela Davis' book, *Are*
3 *Prisons Obsolete?* So I kind of think we have heard a very
4 different version than wanted and dangerous, and an armed
5 criminal that couldn't be too closely confined.

6 So Aisha pointed out that in Bruce's paper,
7 there is a characterization of criminal justice as a
8 poverty trap. And that is obviously right.

9 And one issue that springs to mind is, are we
10 talking about American criminal justice, or criminal
11 justice as such? And it is usually, and probably,
12 criminal justice everywhere is a poverty trap. And that
13 one of the things that characterizes America's mass
14 incarceration and huge penal state is just the nature of
15 poverty in this particular country, as compared to others.

16 So one of the really striking features of
17 Bruce's paper was that he was describing in Australian
18 northern territories, the safety net that is experienced
19 by the men who are being released from prison there. That
20 they each have healthcare as a right. They each have
21 access to public housing, not all of them -- accessing
22 public housing is available, and they each have \$600 a
23 month provision.

24 And that, contrasted with Oklahoma or large
25 parts of this USA, really is so shocking in a way.

1 Because Australia is not an especially generous welfare
2 state. This is not Norway, or Sweden.

3 This is, you know, another liberal market-
4 oriented welfare state like Britain or Canada, like the
5 USA. So just, it shows the extent to which the USA is
6 kind of in a league of its own, amongst the liberal
7 democratic nations, when it comes to impoverishment and
8 criminal justice.

9 I wanted to raise a question that might be --
10 my interest, some of us might be academic, in which case,
11 let's drop it. But one of the other ways that, in Bruce's
12 paper, criminal justice is described is, you say at one
13 point, at its core, criminal justice is a type of state-
14 organized violence, right.

15 And that is a kind of characterization that we
16 are kind of familiar with. And often you see like,
17 interpersonal violence and crime, and state violence and
18 punishment as equivalent in some kind of way. And I kind
19 of wonder about that, whether it is rhetorically or
20 analytically the right way of describing it.

21 I mean, I certainly think policing,
22 imprisonment, criminal justice generally are ways of
23 exercising legal compulsion. There is no question about
24 that. They exercise state power. State power is
25 compulsory, not optional. Not just a suggestion.

1 It is ultimately backed up by violence. That
2 is its, you know, distinguishing characteristic. But
3 legal compulsion is not always violence in the sense that
4 we mean it. In fact, one of the things that we want to
5 do, much of the time, is to minimize the extent to which
6 the police and legal compulsion, or the prison and legal
7 compulsion are violent.

8 We want to distinguish between what it is they
9 do, and the extent to which they do it violently. Which
10 is when they are, I think, doing it in a way that we
11 should minimize, and if possible, prohibit.

12 So I just wondered whether I am shying away
13 from what is a powerful rhetorical description, or whether
14 it would be useful to make that contrast between legal
15 compulsion that criminal justice -- you know, that is its
16 stock and trade -- and violence, which is when American
17 criminal justice is too often beyond the bounds of legally
18 acceptable behavior.

19 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, David. Putting more
20 questions on the table for the group. We are going to
21 turn to Kristian and follow her with Gabriel. And then,
22 Elizabeth Hinton.

23 And we will do what we did last week. In a few
24 minutes, we will kind of give a little pause, and let
25 Vivian and Bruce have a minute to jump in and respond to

1 what they are hearing as well, before we complete our
2 discussion.

3 So Kristian?

4 MS. CABALLERO: Yes. I just want to first
5 thank [audio skip]. Can you hear me?

6 MS. HUFFMAN: Yes. Yes, go ahead.

7 MS. CABALLERO: First, thank both of you for
8 these papers, very insightful, as usual. I guess the only
9 thing that I would want to add is that I think we are
10 pretty -- especially for those of us on this call. We are
11 pretty familiar with a lot of the issues and how they
12 intersect, and how it does feed into this cycle of
13 poverty.

14 But I think, even more so, looking at the
15 discriminatory practices of how we keep people in, you
16 know, those vicious cycles. And addressing, you know, the
17 various barriers, and removing those barriers.

18 So for example, I know as far as the
19 organization that I work with, Texas Appleseed, one of the
20 many things that we try to address is like, payday loans.

21 Here in Texas, it is extremely problematic. And a lot of
22 those businesses are specially placed in, you know,
23 neighborhoods of color.

24 And you know, you are looking at interest rates
25 of 500 percent or more. There is also the reality that

1 you know, credit background checks prevent people from
2 getting loans, and housing, among other things, even jobs,
3 you know. Taking a closer look at those kinds of
4 policies, and trying to remove those barriers that are
5 continuously discriminating, you know, against people, and
6 continuing putting them in the position that they are in.

7 And I would say that, you know, in addition to
8 all the financial institutions and various institutions
9 that discriminate against people, and continue to
10 perpetuate that vicious cycle, I would say education for
11 sure is kind of, you know, part of that. The beginning
12 stages of discriminating against people, you know. Not
13 only giving them -- limiting the access that they have to
14 quality education, and higher education.

15 But even when it comes to employment, right.
16 More and more, we are seeing requirements for, at the very
17 least, a Bachelors degree, if not higher. And you know,
18 valuing that more so than the personal experience that
19 people might have, especially, if let's say they do work
20 in the field of politics and community organizing and
21 policy.

22 You know, speaking from experience, I can say
23 that I have come across many people in the community that
24 don't have degrees, that haven't had the privilege to not
25 only seek higher education, but complete it, for various

1 obstacles and barriers that present themselves. But that
2 doesn't speak to the knowledge and the personal expertise
3 that they have, and the value that they have, that they
4 bring to the table.

5 And so I think we need to change that system,
6 and that social contract overall, of how much we are
7 valuing these scholastic degrees over human and personal
8 experience. Because at some point, we have to value that,
9 if not equal to, more so.

10 MS. HUFFMAN: Thanks, Kristian. My apologies,
11 I misspoke a moment ago. We are actually going to go next
12 to Ananya, and then Gabe, you will be coming after Ananya.

13 So with that, Ananya.

14 MS. ROY: Thank you, Katharine. And thank you,
15 Bruce and Vivian, for these papers. My comments build on
16 the comments that have already been made. And so two
17 comments: one to Bruce, and one for Vivian.

18 So Bruce, I really appreciate that the paper
19 focuses on the relationship between poverty and the
20 criminal justice system. I think one key site at which
21 poverty is entangled with policing and criminalization is,
22 in fact, relief and welfare.

23 So if we are thinking about the distinctive
24 characteristics of the U.S., and its forms of settler
25 capitalism, it is quite clear that the welfare state has

1 always been a site of intense racialized differentiation,
2 exclusion, and policing in the way that welfare recipients
3 are subject to certain forms of intrusive control that
4 others are not. And this also applies to the sort of
5 relief, charitable relief, philanthropic relief that are
6 noted in the paper.

7 And this [audio skip] important comments made
8 by Aisha, that what we have now is the so-called shadow
9 state, a nonprofit industrial complex funded by
10 philanthropy. And the wealth of philanthropy, of course,
11 comes very much from the forms of extraction and
12 exploitation that we have been talking about.

13 And often, the nonprofit industrial complex
14 funded by philanthropy replicates the kinds of policing
15 and differentiation that the welfare system has kept in
16 place. So I am also very interested in that relationship,
17 which, to me, runs alongside the forms of discrimination
18 and disadvantage that you mention in the paper.

19 And then, for Vivian. I am so glad you raised
20 this question of education. I want to echo some of the
21 comments that have been made here. So on the one hand, we
22 are clearly part of a meritocratic system where having a
23 college degree makes a difference in terms of one's
24 economic life chances in the U.S.

25 But on the other hand, the question of

1 education, an education that leads to building power and
2 making change might be something else. And you know, in
3 the work that I do at the Institute on Inequality and
4 Democracy, and our accompaniment of social movement, I
5 have always said that the best theorists and the most
6 inspiring intellectuals I know are movement leaders and
7 those who head community organizations.

8 But what is interesting about those processes
9 of political education that go on in Skid Row in Los
10 Angeles or in East Los Angeles, in the tenant movements, I
11 have learned over time that it is not that our citationalary
12 structures are different. It is not that I am reading
13 Fanon and that they are not, it is not that I am reading
14 Foucault and they are not. I think they are reading Fanon
15 and Foucault more carefully than we are, as academics.

16 So there is that piece of what political
17 education does, and what the traditions of political
18 education are, whether it be in Black power and Black
19 liberation movements or others. And I think it is really
20 important for us to be able to have that conversation. It
21 is inspiring to have that conversation.

22 But I also want to raise this question of the
23 institutions within which education happen. So I am
24 committed to being a scholar and teacher in the public
25 university. But I am also acutely aware that the public

1 university can be an institution of harm and exclusion.
2 We uphold that meritocracy that I talked about.

3 So I am also very interested in how education
4 then takes place in different institutions that might not,
5 in fact, be playing this role in upholding the status quo.

6 And of course, the work for those who are academics is
7 precisely to imagine and build a different kind of
8 university.

9 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Ananya. Gabe, let's
10 turn to you.

11 MR. SALGUERO: I want to echo all the good
12 words, to Bruce and to Vivian, and all your good work. I
13 think a few things that have stuck out to me.

14 And one is, both our theory of change, and our
15 theory of pedagogy. And I think that part of what I hear
16 in both presentations is, what are the philosophical and,
17 in my case, theological underpinnings on who has the
18 capacity to learn and who has the capacity to teach.

19 I kind of heard my -- James Cone, who was my
20 thesis advisor, in my ear, quoting Paolo Freire, right,
21 *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. And that the kind of
22 underpinning here is, education as transmission, vis a
23 vis, educational transformation.

24 So I think what I would like to hear more of,
25 and I [audio skip] much more unpacked in the papers is,

1 how do -- if we are talking about Square One, how do we
2 speak to the philosophical and theological underpinnings
3 of what it means to be human, and who has the capacity to
4 learn and teach.

5 I think the second thing is, we talk about the
6 *Sitz im Leben*, or the locus of learning. I think Ananya
7 spoke to that a little bit. There is kind of these high
8 academic institutions, Vivian and others.

9 But what are the alternate places of learning,
10 where we are reading Foucault *mas de cerca*, or more
11 closely -- or reading Derrida or Levinas. You know, and
12 this is particularly interesting to me, because my father
13 has an eighth-grade education, but was incarcerated for
14 many years.

15 And then, when he came out, and he started
16 rehab programs, and reentry programs. And it was
17 fascinating that I, who did PhD work, didn't know half the
18 stuff he knew from his life experience. And was able to
19 empower, he worked mostly with men, but also with formerly
20 incarcerated women.

21 He had a lot more to learn. So I was more the
22 student, than I am the teacher. And I have a graduate
23 degree, and he has an eighth-grade education. And so I
24 think that as we speak to these alternate places of
25 learning, and teaching -- I think I want to say learning

1 and teaching, both.

2 And the last thing is, what is our fundamental
3 philosophical assumption about education and
4 incarceration? They are places of what? They are places
5 of learning. They are places of transformation. They are
6 places of punishment.

7 And I lived in Newark for a long time.
8 Shoutout to Fatimah. And my sons went to a public charter
9 school. I was offended by the assumptions on how they
10 thought Latina, Latino and African American children could
11 learn. Hyper-militarized, hyper-punitive.

12 We got into some choice words, as far as a
13 Reverend can use choice words, with the educational
14 system. And there are some fundamental assumptions about,
15 in theology, *imago dei*. In other language, what it means
16 to be human.

17 There is a fundamental philosophical
18 anthropology, or theological anthropology that creates
19 these systems of incarceration: of jail, of education, on
20 who can learn, who can teach. And thank you, Vivian, for
21 the Angela Davis clip; I think that is what brought it to
22 light. And I think that as we begin to create
23 institutions or deconstruct institutions, that those
24 questions need to be at the forefront.

25 The last thing I want to talk about is

1 religious education, as I have heard it much in a
2 convention that is happening in these days. What is the
3 assumption, this from a pastor who had a public charter in
4 an economically challenged context.

5 What is our assumption about these places of
6 learning, and these children and teachers that are in that
7 system? So there is a lot to say there. But thank you,
8 Vivian. Thank you, Bruce.

9 I should say this. The largest school in the
10 church where I pastor is about a mile and a half from the
11 largest jail, from the church where I pastor. And it is
12 interesting to see how many of those students end up in
13 that jail.

14 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Gabe. Thank you very
15 much. We are going to turn to Elizabeth next. Folks
16 should jump in the queue if you have thoughts to share.

17 We are getting a lot of questions on the table
18 here, about our assumptions about learning, about
19 teaching, about decision making, about replicating
20 institutions, and about the relationship between poverty
21 and all of these things. So I encourage folks to raise
22 your hands and jump in, too.

23 Elizabeth, over to you.

24 MS. HINTON: First, Vivian and Bruce, thank you
25 again, just to echo what others have said, for two really

1 important and thought-provoking papers to add to a number
2 of other really important and thought-provoking papers
3 that we have had. I have a lot to say.

4 I first just want to pick up on something that
5 Gabe raised on education and incarceration. I have done a
6 lot of work on these issues. And one of the things I
7 discovered in doing archival work on prison education is
8 that in the post war period, the Ford Foundation actually,
9 based on the model of Norfolk Prison in Massachusetts, had
10 devised plans to basically start a prison university.

11 They wanted to build a prison that really
12 looked like a college, and that offered classes, and a
13 really robust learning experience for the people on the
14 inside. And that plan didn't come to fruition, obviously,
15 although the Ford Foundation, as many, I am sure, of you
16 know, are very involved in prison education programs in
17 San Quentin prison. And there are all kinds of
18 problematic strings attached to the funding of those
19 programs.

20 But you know, this allows us to think about
21 like, what -- and I actually posed this in a *New York*
22 *Times* piece I wrote a few years ago. Like, what if we did
23 turn prisons into colleges? What if we you know, did
24 think differently about what the purpose and functions of
25 those institutions could be?

1 So thank you for that comment, Gabriel, and the
2 paper, Vivian, because that really brought that out for
3 me. So I want to think about -- I guess we have been
4 talking a lot about kind of who gets taught, and
5 meritocracy, and who has access to certain elite
6 institutions.

7 But I think another really important question
8 that Vivian's paper raises is, what gets taught. And this
9 -- Angela Davis in that clip is saying, like people don't
10 understand.

11 People don't know about the kinds of violence
12 that happened in Birmingham. Why her father needed to arm
13 himself, in order to protect his family. And that this
14 miseducation or obscuring the deep roots of structural
15 racism and injustice has led to many of the problems
16 that -- or has fostered many of the problems that we have
17 been talking about, and that Angela Davis herself was
18 confronting.

19 And I think, you know, this could -- I am not
20 going to make these links seamlessly. But I want to try
21 to think about this education as a process, and education
22 as a vehicle for societal transformation in the context of
23 how Bruce ended his talk, which was posing a question that
24 I hope that we take up. Which is that, especially in our
25 own moment, can disruption and resistance be drawn

1 together to make change?

2 And that question, coupled with Vivian's paper
3 and presentation made me think about Bryan Stevenson's
4 work where he, or at least a lot of what he advocates.
5 Which is that, we need to have a kind of reckoning with
6 our history, and that the first step towards any kind of
7 major transformation is going to be coming to terms with
8 the history of racial oppression, slavery, and genocide in
9 the U.S.

10 And one of the things that he advocates is, you
11 know, based on sub-African models and Germany, where you
12 know, he basically says like, nobody should visit the
13 American South without being made aware constantly of the
14 very important impact of slavery in shaping social
15 relations and power and oppression. And so I am kind of
16 just, like, rambling here.

17 But I guess I want to think about in terms of,
18 you know, all of us coming together in pursuit of
19 imagining or coming back to square one and imagining a
20 different kind of system, the role that education for
21 everyone, for our entire society, and a reckoning with our
22 history in the way that Bryan Stevenson is talking about
23 -- what role that plays.

24 Like, can we -- are we going to be able to
25 realize or build popular support or political will for the

1 kinds of transformations I know that we are all trying to
2 bring about, absent the kind of education that Angela
3 Davis and Bryan Stevenson are talking about, right.
4 Education as a process of national healing, and as a
5 vehicle for a larger kind of social change.

6 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Elizabeth. I am
7 trying to take my own notes while I am tracking the queue
8 here. Thank you very much for that.

9 You know, you are just reminding me of a friend
10 who did research on prison towns, and what sort of
11 develops politically in prison towns. And one of the
12 things that really stuck with me from that was an
13 interview she did with a local elected official, who was
14 talking about their having gotten a prison in a sort of a
15 rural county.

16 And he said, you know, we would have loved to
17 have had a community college instead, but they weren't
18 giving out money for community colleges. They were giving
19 out money for prisons.

20 And it just -- it's such a stark tradeoff in
21 that situation, anyway. It is really striking. So Dona
22 is up next, and then Deanna.

23 And folks should continue to get in the queue.

24 In a minute here, Vivian and Bruce, we'll pause and give
25 you all a couple of minutes each to respond to what you

1 are hearing, and offer any thoughts, as we are getting
2 close to sort of halfway through our discussion time.

3 But first, Dona, and then Deanna.

4 MS. MURPHEY: Thanks to Bruce and Vivian again
5 for your papers. I thought they were wonderful, and a lot
6 of food for thought. I had a couple of comments to make
7 in this conversation.

8 One was about education. And I also agree with
9 many of the people here who have spoken already, that it
10 is important to think about education as a process. I
11 think, fundamentally, we should be thinking about the
12 importance of teaching what exposes societal discomfort,
13 because I think that is the only thing that creates the
14 opportunity for learning and for change.

15 And that is not usually how we think about
16 teaching. I don't think that we are meaning to make
17 people uncomfortable. But I really think that if we
18 expect education to be a vehicle by which we create
19 change, we have to think of it in that way.

20 I think I had mentioned before that run for
21 local office, for school board, actually, in Pearland,
22 Texas. And one of my platform issues, which I think, I
23 had never heard of anybody running on an issue like this.

24 I mean, among the other issues which I think were maybe
25 more normal, which was a mental health platform.

1 And I talked a bit about whole child health.
2 So apart from you know, academic, cognitive, what is it?
3 Helping children develop in the cognitive domain, we also
4 should invest in social and emotional learning, that it
5 should be happening in our schools.

6 So those things, I think, are more normal
7 platform issues. I also mentioned that it is really
8 critical for children to understand. And this is not just
9 children, I think people in general should understand what
10 it means to be a participant in society, right. And to
11 not just be consuming.

12 And I had phrased this as like active
13 citizenship. Now, I feel kind of uncomfortable with that
14 language, because I think that kind of language is maybe
15 exclusionary for people who are not citizens, which was
16 not the intention there.

17 But the idea that, you know, each of us has a
18 role to play in making the community around ourselves
19 better than it is. And we -- our responsibility as
20 learners is to learn about the vehicles by which we can
21 change the problems that we see in our communities. And
22 as teachers, to teach people, you know, the power
23 structures that exist, and the ways in which you can
24 engage.

25 And I don't think people are doing this. In

1 Texas, we've really disinvested, historically, in civic
2 education. I think what education exists there happens in
3 maybe government classes. It really should happen in
4 every subject. It should happen in English. It should
5 happen in science.

6 It should happen in every subject, because it
7 is something that touches everything. And I think our
8 understanding of each of the subjects is much more
9 relevant when you talk about how it matters in creating
10 change.

11 And the other thing I wanted to share also, is
12 that, when we talk about who matters in terms of experts,
13 and people who have experience, who I personally consider
14 experts in their own lives, in the lives of people in
15 their communities. And I think maybe it is more than
16 talking about [audio skip] -- I think we should talk about
17 maybe domain specific knowledge, or roles, perspectives,
18 right, to bear on different problems.

19 I think then we can maybe value the
20 contribution that each of us potentially can make. And
21 some of us come with multiple perspectives, right.
22 Multiple identities. You know, yes. We are parts of
23 multiple communities.

24 And then, I think also, this is something that
25 comes up for me very often, in the work that I do. The

1 reason for which I am here, which is for Doctors for
2 America, is this idea that there are certain people who,
3 yes, are more relevant, I guess, in providing expert
4 knowledge in certain domains, right.

5 And I think that while that is true to some
6 extent, like, I think physicians for instance are going to
7 have really relevant insights in terms of healthcare. But
8 I also think that people who consume healthcare, right,
9 who are the patients, have very, very relevant insights.

10 I think when we come into this with, like, I am
11 an expert because I have this pedigree, or because I have
12 this professional you know, community, and training, that
13 should be tempered with the idea that to be real allies, I
14 think we should be, first of all, very much in
15 conversation with the other people who are part of that,
16 whatever issue that you are discussing, right. And I also
17 think that, yes, that we should be doing our work in
18 service to the people who are movement builders and
19 movement building in general.

20 MS. HUFFMAN: Thanks, Dona. We are going to
21 turn to Deanna. And then we will pause for a moment and
22 turn back to Bruce and Vivian. And if each of you all
23 could just take just a couple of minutes to jump in.

24 Encourage others to get in the queue. And
25 especially if you haven't spoken yet, please raise your

1 hand. We would love to hear from you.

2 So with that, Deanna.

3 MS. VAN BUREN: Thank you, Katharine. And
4 thank you, Vivian, and Bruce, for the papers and the
5 presentations. I was -- I have been thinking about a
6 couple of things, both on the education piece, and then as
7 it relates to Bruce's work around the trauma piece.

8 But my entree into doing a lot of this work was
9 teaching a design studio in Chester Prison. Very, very
10 segregated in Pennsylvania. And it was an inside-out
11 program. And as the class gathered around, all of the
12 incarcerated students were Black men and all of the
13 outside students from the local university were white
14 women.

15 And the stark contrast of that condition. I
16 was also teaching at Harvard at the time. And going from
17 working with those students to coming into the
18 institution, there is something that just became
19 illuminated to me, both in terms of the types of
20 intelligence that we were working with, but also the
21 amount of co-learning that was happening amongst all of
22 these folks.

23 And it sort of started to shift the way that I
24 practiced. And that we also understood together that the
25 built environment looked a certain way, that the built

1 environment was structurally racist. That it had built
2 for poverty, and it was intentional.

3 And this sort of illumination of that, within
4 the context of these groups of Black and white students,
5 was quite a revelation, and helped me to understand that
6 this was a missing piece of understanding. The way that
7 our schools and prisons and homes and communities get
8 built was completely outside of everyone's education, all
9 of us.

10 So I have been just curious about the concept
11 of co-learning and co-learning models. We have been
12 exploring that in communities, in teaching in prisons and
13 jails and universities around the country, as we do the
14 work.

15 It has been working quite well, and starting to
16 hire systems-impacted folks to work with around
17 development as they learn about real estate development
18 and architecture, as we learn a lot from them about the
19 system, the experience, this life, that there is just sort
20 of this shared knowledge, is helping us to solve problems.

21 So it has been something I am very passionate
22 about, and want to think through more, on how to do it.
23 And trying to sort of be a bridge between the academy, and
24 urging them to teach differently, and think differently
25 about how it looks, but also working in community with the

1 information and the wisdom that they have. And to be able
2 to bridge some of that. So curious about how we do that
3 and do that at impact -- that scale.

4 The second co-piece that I have been
5 experimenting with is co-counseling and thinking through
6 therapeutic modalities. But I am very interested in
7 trauma and trauma healing.

8 When I hear folks that wreak the violence, when
9 I hear drug and alcohol addiction, my mind always goes to,
10 like, what is the underlying trauma that is causing
11 behaviors, and for us to be in so much pain, right. You
12 know, people are in severe pain.

13 And then people will have more traumatic
14 experiences, and [audio skip] -- the DNA of that. Right.

15 So we are looking at a lineage of pain and trauma. If we
16 don't address -- it is very hard for me to see about any
17 of these system changes going to [audio skip]. So always
18 curious about, Bruce, if that had been part of your
19 research, in looking at that. And how does trauma play
20 into thinking through our [audio skip] of our social
21 contracts?

22 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Deanna. Thanks a lot.

23 That is the perfect segue to hear from Bruce and Vivian
24 for a minute. And then, after that, just so you will
25 know, we will hear from Danielle and Fatimah. And others,

1 feel free to jump in the queue as well.

2 Bruce, Vivian, who would like to go first?

3 MR. WESTERN: Do you want to go?

4 MS. NIXON: Sure. Thank you, everybody, for
5 your comments. I think the things that I just want to
6 reinforce is that, yes, what I am really concerned more
7 about is the type of education that people are allowed to
8 have access to, to the point of being so prescriptive in
9 some cases.

10 Especially when people are in confinement in
11 the prison, that there are decisions made about what type
12 of education people can have access to, that are based,
13 for me, that have direct connections to this fixed
14 classification of the Black body as production, as cheap
15 labor. And even the education programs that are most
16 accepted within the prison settings lead to that.

17 And when I look back over the history of
18 resistance to oppression that is related to chattel
19 slavery and its relationship to capitalism, the
20 suppression of education has -- there has always been an
21 element of that in that process, whether it was state-
22 based laws preventing slaves from being educated, whether
23 it was people becoming educated under their own steam,
24 under their own power, and changing the world anyway.

25 I mean, the first generation of African

1 American men especially, and some women, who were able to
2 get educated, mostly in northern schools, changed the
3 world in fundamental ways. And then, the next time we saw
4 that happen, it really did come out of marginalized
5 communities: the Black Panthers, the Black Muslim
6 movement, largely self-educated in prisons, who used a
7 political education and indeed were reading very political
8 things.

9 And interpreting them in ways that they can't
10 be taught in the traditional institutions and applying
11 that to building real power in communities. And the
12 response to that was a concerted attempt to shut it down.

13 And on the flip side of that, you had a much
14 more traditional type of education that was received by
15 Thurgood Marshall and Martin Luther King. And that whole
16 generation of very educated leaders who were also building
17 a different type of power, but that was also shut down.
18 All the way up through Attica. I mean, this is a
19 repetitive thing. A particular type of education is not
20 permitted.

21 And so those connections are what is important
22 to me. How do we break the barrier of separating people
23 from that type of education? Who can be the providers of
24 that type of education?

25 Where are the spaces where that can happen,

1 despite the fact that the systems that are in control of
2 our criminal justice system certainly aren't going to be
3 the ones to invest in that type of education. Because it
4 is against their own interests, if they want to remain
5 what they are.

6 And that is what I have been trying to get at.
7 All of your comments make sense to me. It is knitting it
8 all together that -- and making a convincing argument that
9 building power amongst people who we have, I guess,
10 decided are too dangerous to have power.

11 How do we change that narrative? How do we say
12 that, actually, power doesn't make these folks more
13 dangerous? They actually make them more effective in
14 creating the kind of transformational change that needs to
15 happen at the very level of the community.

16 This even goes back to Elizabeth's work about,
17 you know, when there was some real investment in
18 eliminating poverty. That investment included increasing
19 access to every type of education, including the type of
20 education of that was transformative. And that all went
21 away when folks realized it was helping to build power.

22 MS. HUFFMAN: Thanks, Vivian. Yes. We just
23 were talking about education that builds power among those
24 considered too dangerous to have power, and how it is yet
25 another tool in the control toolbox.

1 Bruce, turn to you for a second, and then we'll
2 go to Danielle.

3 MR. WESTERN: Yes. This is an incredibly rich
4 conversation. I am just -- I'm blown away by how dialed
5 in people are to this conversation.

6 So I hear us talking about three institutions,
7 three big institutions. And it is the criminal justice
8 system, there's the education system, and the welfare
9 system.

10 And in different ways, we've all observed that
11 in their functioning day to day now, they are reproducing
12 inequality. They are sustaining poverty and social
13 exclusion. But we can see in each of these institutions,
14 radically reformulated, real emancipatory potential,
15 right.

16 And this is what I -- how I read Vivian's
17 paper. She is sort of struggling between the emancipatory
18 potential of education on the one hand and the way in
19 which it has functioned to maintain a social hierarchy on
20 the other.

21 And it is sort of -- the whole conversation
22 raises a question for me. So what does this emancipatory
23 potential look like in all of these institutions:
24 welfare, education, and criminal justice. And how do we
25 get there? And I think there are -- were distinct from

1 the conversation.

2 We haven't talked so much about, you know,
3 welfare institutions. And we did a deeper dive last week.

4 But you know, Vivian's giving us a picture in her account
5 of what this emancipatory education looks like. It
6 expands voice, right.

7 You know, more people's lived experience is
8 reflected in education, particularly voices that have been
9 silenced through oppression. So it expands voice and it
10 thereby expands vision. If people who have been kept out
11 of the conversation are now at the table, they are
12 bringing a different kind of vision.

13 And I think there is a real humanistic
14 understanding of what this education -- the potential of
15 it. And I hear it as celebrating, you know, human
16 capacity for love and creativity.

17 What is the emancipatory potential of welfare
18 institutions? Sort of a high level of material well-being
19 that is unconditional on judgments about moral status.
20 And this is, I think, Ananya's point about how welfare
21 systems and charity reproduce inequality so often, because
22 they are imprinted with ideas of moral desert.

23 And I think -- and so what is the emancipatory
24 potential of a radically reformulated system of justice?
25 For me, I think -- and this goes to David's question --

1 for me, it is about non-violence, right. Whatever
2 institutions are in the alternative, they are radically
3 non-violent and minimize the harms to the body and mind.

4 How do we get there? I think we have been
5 talking about this in many, many different ways. And
6 there are practical implications. It is not super
7 abstract.

8 And we have talked about expanding voice,
9 expanding the table, bringing different people to the
10 table. Opening up spaces that have been very closed.
11 Making institutions -- elite institutions much more
12 porous. Entertaining a variety, varieties of expertise.

13 I like Dona's formulation of domain specific
14 knowledge, and Deanna's ideas about co-learning. I have
15 had the same experience in prison classrooms as well. NCI
16 Norfolk, actually, was one of them that Elizabeth was
17 talking about.

18 And this is a democratic move, I think, right.
19 Expanding the tent, making the institution more porous,
20 accepting a plurality in forms of expertise. And this is
21 something, you know, we can do.

22 This is immediately accessible to us in the
23 work that we are doing right now. So it is not sort of
24 pie in the sky abstract.

25 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Bruce. Thanks, Bruce

1 and Vivian, both of you. So we are going to turn back to
2 our queue and invite folks in.

3 Just to give everyone sort of a time check of
4 where we are. We are going to continue our discussion
5 together until about five or six minutes after the hour.
6 And then, we will turn to Jeremy for a bit of a wrap up on
7 things.

8 So the queue right now, Danielle, Fatimah,
9 Eddie, Marcia, and Kimá and Hedy are in the queue. I
10 would encourage folks who would like to get in the queue
11 to please do so.

12 Again, especially if you haven't spoken.
13 Welcome your hand up. But if you have spoken, you can put
14 your hand up, too, just be mindful of time.

15 So with that, turning to you, Danielle.

16 MS. ALLEN: Thanks a lot. I mean, this is just
17 such rich material and thinking. I'm grateful to be
18 learning from it. I think, I am going to say something
19 that may be a repeat of things others have said, so I
20 apologize. But of course, one is always trying to connect
21 this to one's own frames of reference.

22 I heard something of a kind of paradox in
23 Bruce's paper, and Vivian's and the relationship between
24 them. So I hear Bruce telling us a story about brutal
25 institutions without legitimacy, and, you know, moments of

1 agency and resilience. And I see Vivian telling us a
2 story about, you know, the real power that can be
3 harnessed for transformation through preparatory
4 education.

5 And I think both of these things are true. But
6 so then, the paradox that has to be explained is, why, if
7 institutions are brittle, and we also know what the
8 resources of transformation are, we are stuck, okay. And
9 so I want to put something on the table about the
10 stuckness part.

11 And I think this connects to the points that
12 have been made about trauma. But I think that one has to
13 recognize that for so many, experience of the criminal
14 justice system is really an experience of bare survival,
15 right. Like, you are literally just trying to survive.

16 You all know this. I am not telling you
17 anything you don't know. And you can spend so many years
18 just trying to survive that you lose all the years that
19 you might have put into working on transformation. And I
20 thought that part of the story just isn't -- we are not
21 saying that part loud enough, yet.

22 And there is a funny way which it connects to
23 education, because I have to agree with everything Vivian
24 said and wrote. And yet, I also know that so often, the
25 way people present education in this context, it is about

1 -- you know, it is really about deferred gratification.
2 It is about what happens after a course of education, a
3 long pathway.

4 And I do feel like we have a dynamic in the
5 criminal justice system where people who are incarcerated
6 are over and over again asked to engage in kind of
7 projects of self-refashioning that take decades. And it
8 takes a hell of a lot of energy to do that work. And all
9 of that energy is energy lost from a project of collective
10 transformation.

11 So I don't know exactly what to do with that.
12 But I do think that that is the reason that we have brutal
13 institutions. And we know what the sources of agency are,
14 and resilience.

15 But those same sources of energy and resilience
16 and agency, you know, have been necessarily harnessed to a
17 project of [audio skip]. And so it is like, interrupting
18 that dynamic, I think, is a thing we need to figure out
19 how to do.

20 (Pause.)

21 MS. NIXON: Yeah. I want to respond to that.
22 Can I respond to that?

23 MS. HUFFMAN: Yes. We will consider that an
24 urgent wave. Go ahead.

25 MS. NIXON: You know, Danielle, thank you for

1 that. Because it is just like, something just clicked for
2 me. So you know, I have been doing this work for a really
3 long time.

4 And the resistance to the idea of the kind of
5 investment that an organization like mine is willing to
6 make in a person immediately upon extraction from this
7 place of confinement, where they manage to be lucky enough
8 to get exposed to education, and realize that it was not
9 just transformative for their own lives.

10 I have not met one person who did not
11 understand that it wasn't just about them being better
12 prepared to get a job, but who understood that if they
13 were able to pursue this newfound resource of education,
14 that they could change things that bothered them about
15 their communities, and about their own lives. But no
16 vehicle exists to tolerate that kind of long-term
17 investment, because it is not the individual that
18 necessarily wants instant gratification.

19 The individual wants to be able to survive in
20 the meantime. But I have seen women invest five, seven,
21 eight years in education while working minimum wage jobs,
22 because the education was more important. And they didn't
23 have that need for instant gratification to make a lot of
24 money.

25 What they had was a need to feel powerful and

1 to have influence in the world. And it was worth the
2 wait. It was worth working the minimum wage job, and
3 going to school at night, and still taking care of the
4 kids.

5 So I think the problem with instant
6 gratification is kind of on the other side of the table.
7 And how are we willing to invest in people.

8 MS. ALLEN: I hope that, I want to say I
9 recognize kind of what you are saying, Vivian, about where
10 people's spirits are. So I hope I didn't come across
11 otherwise.

12 MS. NIXON: No, you didn't.

13 MS. ALLEN: Okay.

14 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you. Thank you both.
15 Fatimah, let's turn to you. Do you have thoughts
16 following on that, and or otherwise?

17 MS. DREIER: Yes. This is a very powerful,
18 emotional thing, conversation. So I just want to thank
19 you, Vivian, for opening this up. And so forgive me.

20 This is working through a lot of thoughts right
21 now. Dona, I want to build on something you mentioned
22 about children and reflecting on my own childhood.

23 So I started fourth grade living in a homeless
24 shelter. And thinking about the ways in which school was
25 part of a surveillance system that both -- and I was aware

1 of it, right. So it is not only that my father being in
2 and out of prison, and my only access to him was through
3 supervision by law enforcement.

4 But that -- the threat or the idea that my
5 mother could also be taken away from me, through foster
6 care, through all those systems. And education, school
7 actually being the site of it. And also, the expectation
8 to learn, and to do all these things that other kids do.

9 So the trauma is not only those events, but
10 also the way that the expectation that school has to quash
11 a child's natural response to bumping up against these
12 systems, and the impact of structural racism. And, oh,
13 Vivian, you so voiced the -- just this open-hearted desire
14 in my neighborhood for the kids to be educated.

15 For you to somehow grab hold of the most
16 precious thing you can have, which is education, and to go
17 to college, right. Only to -- and this is actually, you
18 know, my grandmother was a janitor at the college that my
19 brother went to, right. Was the janitor, mopping the
20 floors. And but being like, keep going, right.

21 Like, education is valued. And so where does
22 disruption, where does this, like, movement of getting
23 out, escaping, surviving meet with the opportunity to
24 actually -- this is the trauma piece, the unlocking. I
25 don't even want to call it healing.

1 It is the witnessing. The witnessing of
2 trauma, to unravel the lived experience in the context of
3 education to activate that political action, the political
4 education. There is, like, a word I want, which is both
5 about that unraveling of the witnessing of a trauma, the
6 healing that is available, and the opportunity for
7 political action. The opportunity to leverage that, to
8 hold it, to nurture it, the speaking of it.

9 And this is where, I think, language itself is
10 implicated. The violence of -- and you know, I spent a
11 little bit of time at the Center of Applied Linguistics.
12 The conversation about Ebonics, African American
13 vernacular English, you know, literacy itself; that we are
14 not even -- our dialect, our words aren't even valued.

15 You know, to have to learn standard English as
16 an access to. And there are programs that provide an
17 acknowledgment of the dialect of African American
18 vernacular English. And then, you know, sure. You can
19 use that.

20 So I did some research on mother tongue
21 education. And the power it has, not only cognitively for
22 children, to access to other languages. Right, we can be
23 monolingual, but -- excuse me, multilingual.

24 But that fact, the violence of not even having
25 access to that, as access to our own understanding of our

1 culture, our history. The beauty of our dialect is
2 nowhere in the conversation about how education can be
3 unlocked for us, alongside the healing. Alongside the
4 witnessing. Alongside the political education.

5 So I wanted to just offer that up. And so much
6 more to share. But I will stop there.

7 MS. HUFFMAN: Fatimah, thank you for that. And
8 thanks to -- it has been true throughout. But
9 particularly in this recent exchange, thanks to everyone
10 for how much of your full selves you are bringing into
11 this conversation.

12 So we are going to -- we have a -- we are going
13 to do a quick little shift in our queue. Just because of
14 a couple of folks who are going to have to jump off
15 shortly.

16 So we are going to turn next to Hedy, with an
17 H. And then, to Eddie with an E. And then, we will turn
18 to Marcia, Kimá, Courtney, and Kristian and Heather are
19 all in our queue right now.

20 We are getting close to time. We still have
21 time. So folks should say your piece, but just be a
22 little mindful.

23 And if you do want to get in the queue, please
24 do go ahead and do it, so that we can plan accordingly.
25 So with that, I will turn to Hedy with an H.

1 MS. LEE: Hi. Thanks for doing that. And
2 hopefully, my daughter Zora won't make a cameo in the
3 back. I don't have childcare today. I am sorry --

4 MS. HUFFMAN: Welcome. Who does?

5 MS. LEE: -- our video off. Anyway, so my
6 comments also are going to echo or build on others.
7 Particularly Ananya's comments, and some of Elizabeth's
8 comments. I am really thinking about the role of
9 universities in this process.

10 You know, we referred to PEP programs. But how
11 do we grapple with the fact that we function and thrive in
12 racist institutions? And you know, I know that. And I
13 don't often process it.

14 I had a colleague who was a professor of
15 surgery at Wash U. Mostly -- most of their work was
16 working with gunshot victims, and a lot of work around
17 trauma. And abruptly left the University.

18 And I texted them, and said, why did you leave?

19 And they said, because this institution is racist. And I
20 can't do what I am doing. I can't work with communities
21 and be a genuine person, being part of the Wash U. system.

22 And it kind of stung, because you know, she
23 said that, but I am still here. And I am still doing
24 this. And I am still in the PEP program. And I am still
25 -- and so I just -- I wonder, you know, how do we grapple

1 with that.

2 How do we function, knowing that we are in
3 institutions that are racist. And as has been said, many
4 who have not grappled with the histories of racial
5 violence, however you want to define violence, in terms of
6 connections to slavery, profit from slavery, et cetera.
7 Functioning on stolen lands.

8 We can say that, but what are we doing about
9 it? And so I don't really have an answer to the question.

10 But I think it is something, for those of us who function
11 in institutions, how do we rationalize that and move
12 forward, and do our work?

13 You know, anyway. So again, I don't have an
14 answer. But it is just something I was thinking about, as
15 I listen to many of you.

16 And even the ways we also evaluate students,
17 and their progress and success. I think -- so what
18 Fatimah said, and others have too, how do we decide
19 when -- even when an student tells their story, you know,
20 what story gets the A. How do they have to write it. How
21 do they have to say it.

22 I think these are really important questions we
23 have to think about. Not just as faculty in PEP programs,
24 but even in universities with students who have -- are
25 connected to individuals who have incarcerated family

1 members, et cetera. I will stop there.

2 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Hedy. Thanks a lot.
3 And if -- Eddie, if you don't mind actually? Sorry to do
4 this one more time. We are going to move Marcia up next,
5 and then you, Eddie.

6 So that we can again, just to try to capture
7 everyone before people have to jump. So, sorry, Eddie. I
8 hope that is okay.

9 Marcia, you are up, if you are still on.

10 MS. RINCON-GALLARDO: My goodness, thank you.
11 I didn't mean to do that. I said I would just jump off.
12 I have been multitasking, everybody. We just released our
13 national report yesterday. And still addressing a lot of
14 press. But this particular conversation hits home, very
15 dearly to me.

16 It reminds me of my ex-mother-in-law Lydia
17 Vegarín [phonetic], an Indigenous woman, Native American
18 woman from Bolivia, who knew Paulo Freire and taught me at
19 a very young age, at my young politization period of
20 popular education, and how it was utilized throughout
21 South America, Central America, Mexico, and how it has
22 come to the United States.

23 And so having said that, I am going to frame my
24 questions around education, power, resistance, and then,
25 self-actualization. Mostly because, when we think about

1 education, for myself and the work that I do, mostly in
2 the youth justice arena, we know that the education has
3 not really been here for our young people of color. That
4 in fact, it is the cradle-to-prison pipeline, school-to-
5 prison pipeline, the SROs. So on, and so forth.

6 All the reasons why our young people who want
7 to get an education and sit in classes that don't have any
8 material that reflect back who they are. And that don't
9 reflect our original histories. And so our young people
10 just get, you know, bored out of just wanting to be able
11 to see any ability of life that reflects them and their
12 stories.

13 And so when I think about then, education, I
14 think about what education. And there is wonderful
15 examples like, in Tucson, the Mexican American studies
16 that came out of ethnic studies and pushes for that. How
17 Arizona did away with ethnic studies. Because again, the
18 fear of power. You know, the fear that these people
19 getting taught ethnic studies was going to, you know, come
20 and undo the government structure of Arizona.

21 And so yes, then. Indeed, what is the
22 education we are offering to our young people? Do they
23 see themselves reflected? Do they see themselves as
24 powerful beings that have a word, have a say in terms of
25 what needs to be and change for them to be productive

1 citizens, well-being, healthy well-being.

2 And then, most importantly, about that power
3 piece of that. We actually -- even as we develop our own
4 narratives, that that is power, right. That if we don't
5 see ourselves reflected, that we can do our own
6 participatory acts of research, that we build our own
7 data. That we build our own histories, because it is not
8 being reflected back to us.

9 And so power in all of its being -- you know.
10 Who gets elected? Does it include non-citizens, and
11 actual residents who also pay into income tax. And then
12 more importantly, education power to provide, then, us for
13 resistance.

14 When I think about the youth justice system, I
15 think about how for 25 years, foundations really invested
16 big time into the systems. That, as they thought about
17 investing in leaders, they kept going back to people who
18 had already worked in the system.

19 And you would see retired judges, retired
20 probation chiefs, retired probation officers, retired law
21 enforcement. That they were the ones being invested in,
22 to be leaders within the field, to change the system. And
23 so where did it ever occur to anybody to invest in
24 formerly system-impacted young people, or their parents,
25 or their communities?

1 The great work being done by Tia Martinez
2 around school-to-prison pipelines is just invaluable as we
3 think about how, especially for our young boys, which are
4 the greatest percentage. But then our girls too, and our
5 gender expansive youth, very specifically -- so that,
6 getting then to self-actualization, that when we -- so for
7 us, a lot of the work that we have been doing is
8 developing our own curriculums.

9 Because when we think of formerly or directly
10 impacted young people, it is like, who is going to teach
11 them about the system, and the history of the system. And
12 going all the way back even before Europeans arrived in
13 this land to show that our ancestors didn't use cages to
14 hold our -- to change behavior.

15 And that in fact, by doing, giving that
16 lexicon, that vocabulary, to young people, then they can
17 set up policy tables, and be able to speak that language,
18 and be able to look at data. And be able to speak in ways
19 that inform what they want, and how they want it.

20 So this all kind of brought up this
21 conversation. I am thankful for it. We -- in our self-
22 actualization, we are having to do our own research.

23 So that is the purpose of our most recent
24 report. It is to speak up, loud and clear, that Latinx
25 youths are not counted, that we are invisible.

1 And that report is out. And I shared it with
2 Sukyi, so that you all can get it, maybe, in the next
3 couple of weeks. Thank you so much.

4 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Marcia. Thanks a lot.

5 And yes, that will -- you just did an advertisement for
6 The Spotlight for us. So we will be including it there.
7 And others of you should please also forward information
8 when you have it. And we would love to share it out.

9 Eddie, the floor is yours. Thank you for your
10 patience on that.

11 MR. BOCANEGRA: No worries. No worries,
12 Katharine. My girls are all downstairs watching TV, so I
13 am good.

14 Just a couple of remarks, based on what Bruce
15 shared. But also just like, in terms of what others were
16 sharing. So just -- I think about, I spent over 14 years
17 in prison, right.

18 So like 5,200 days I spent in prison. And I
19 would say that the best time of those 5,200 days was the
20 time that I was in isolation. I was in segregation.
21 Which was almost two years. And that was a time that I
22 actually got to read books without having to be concerned
23 about my safety, right.

24 But it wasn't until I took a sociology class,
25 an introduction to sociology, that I felt for the first

1 time, kind of this light bulb just kind of lit up for me.
2 Because for the first time, there was these, you know,
3 this jargon, right. This language, co-culture,
4 subculture. They really described things that I kind of
5 just felt and knew existed within the gang culture.

6 And so I say that just to point out a couple of
7 things, right. One, I agree. There is an appetite for
8 individuals to think about various texts and literature
9 out there that really appeals, right, to an individual
10 based on where they grew up and how they make sense of the
11 world, as well.

12 But I want to add a small caveat to that, that
13 was also brought up in this conversation. And that is a
14 sense of trauma. So what do I mean by that?

15 So I hire over 120 staff who do direct service.
16 And about 80 percent of the people that I have hired are
17 African American and they have very similar experiences to
18 the men that we work with. Meaning, they have been
19 involved in the systems as well. Some, ten, 20, 25 years,
20 both men and women.

21 And what I have learned about how we train and
22 develop a lot of our staff, is that you can't take kind of
23 a -- there is this model around adult learning for this
24 population. It requires a very different approach, a
25 different curriculum, a different support net and

1 different language, in many ways, right. Different
2 stories you want to incorporate in the way that you train
3 individuals.

4 And the same could be said for, you know,
5 academically, right. I remember, when I was in grad
6 school, I was at U of C. And I remember, I had a
7 professor named Robert Fairbanks who was an amazing, good
8 friend. And he was working a lot around substance abuse
9 in prison, and so on.

10 Anyway, long story short, there's 50 of us in a
11 class around policy. He made some really powerful remarks
12 that really bothered me. Really, really bothered me about
13 power, and institutions. Then after the class, I
14 approached him.

15 And I said, hey, Robert, you know, Mr.
16 Fairbanks, that what you said didn't sit well with me.
17 And he looked at me. He said, the comments that I shared,
18 Eddie, were actually directed to you.

19 He said, all this time, you think that power,
20 right, only comes at the community grass level, right.
21 Because one of his comments was, if you want to be part of
22 the community, you want to be part of community activism,
23 then you go to UIC, which is the university in Chicago, a
24 public school. U of C, being a private school.

25 And that is the comment that really kind of

1 bothered me, right, as a grassroots person. But really,
2 what he was singling out for me is that, you have already
3 done that. You have been there. You are now at this
4 table.

5 And you are able to influence people, right,
6 who are researching at this level, right. People who are
7 you know, part of a billion-dollar endowment, institution.
8 Now you get to bring that kind of mentality to change the
9 systems here.

10 And that is when it clicked for me. Because
11 right after that, I remember for a long time, I felt that
12 every time I get invited to somewhere. You know, I was
13 like, oh yes. I got invited to speak here by this
14 foundation, or this board, or whatever the case is. And I
15 didn't realize that really, what I was, was a token, in
16 many cases.

17 And I remember, I was going to a specific
18 foundation, which I won't mention. And they had a really
19 smart individual, who I was really impressed by the way he
20 articulated his thoughts and how he did his framework
21 around gangs. He wrote a book called, *Gang Leader for a*
22 *Day*, Sudhir Venkatesh.

23 And I remember hearing him and other, or
24 another researcher, right. Two PhD folks, and here I am.
25 Right. I am barely working on my master's degree. And

1 after hearing them talk so eloquently, I was like, damn.
2 These guys are good. I felt so disempowered there for a
3 minute.

4 And then, he says something. And then I
5 remember reading the book. And I said, actually, I don't
6 agree about some of the stuff you wrote in the book. And
7 I remember credentialing myself when I made my remarks.

8 And the way that I did so was by saying my
9 perspective about this work is informed by the fact that I
10 experienced both shootings, assaults, first homicide as a
11 young kid. Gangs at the age of 14. And then serving
12 prison you know, 14 years, coupled by my education, right.

13 And so on.

14 And for the first time, I actually, at that
15 moment, I felt like I took, you know, what was rightfully
16 mine. Which was this experience that even somebody with a
17 PhD can't speak to.

18 And so I say that because I want to raise what
19 Bruce had mentioned, right. And what Vivian also
20 mentioned as it relates to like, education and this
21 poverty trap that we constantly further create.

22 Even those with the best intentions in the
23 world. Because at the end of the day, you know, there's
24 this -- we can't provide direct service and kind of get
25 ourselves out of this mess that we are in right now. And

1 the policy changes that are happening need to be led by
2 the people who are mostly impacted by it, as well. And
3 that includes some research. And so there is also a fine
4 line.

5 And this is my last point. As someone who
6 supports six different organizations to provide the direct
7 service in urban Chicago, I would tell you that I am not
8 often pleased with the rigor of quality of service that I
9 see, with the nonprofit sector.

10 And what that tells me is that one way or
11 another, even when we have the best intentions, and we
12 hire the best people, we have to double down, triple down
13 in the way that we develop people. And I am meaning in
14 the way that we really think about training, facilitating,
15 education, right. The pathways that we need to create,
16 and what is really -- what is lifting up and validating.

17 And I believe, as it was pointed out in this
18 call, if the people were to lift experience, not only is
19 it cathartic for them, right. And healing for them, when
20 they are able to do direct service, or be involved in
21 change. But there is also a process.

22 And it is the process that we cannot lose,
23 right. It's like, what does it really take. What does
24 that process look like? What are the gaps of what we
25 don't know, and what we do know about that?

1 Because it is that process that would allow us,
2 right, the system that we are trying to create, to really
3 allow us to really make long systemic changes. Because
4 otherwise, you know, we are going to continue to pimp out
5 our communities.

6 We are going to continue -- and I apologize for
7 the language, but that is the way I see it. We are going
8 to continue to pimp out our staff, who are constantly
9 hired for a specific skillset, because they went to
10 prison, or because they have these networks in the
11 community, but there is no upward mobility.

12 And that is a damn shame, to be quite honest
13 with you. And that is something that I have been very
14 vocal about. And unfortunately, I don't see much change
15 happening there, to be quite honest with you.

16 MS. HUFFMAN: Eddie, thank you very much. That
17 was worth the wait. Thank you. So we are getting close
18 to the end of our time. We have four people in the queue.

19 And so we are going to turn to them, if folks
20 can give us -- if you are able to give us an extra couple
21 of minutes, we are going to end close to on time, but we
22 will probably go over just a couple of minutes.

23 The four folks up are Kimá, Courtney, Heather,
24 and then Lynda, you will have the last word. And then, we
25 will turn to Jeremy for some quick wrap up. And we will

1 conclude our conversation for today.

2 So with that, I will turn to Kimá.

3 MS. TAYLOR: Great. Thanks. First, I really
4 do want to thank Bruce and Vivian for their papers, but
5 actually more so for their presentation. And it really
6 spoke to incredible humility and questioning in a way that
7 I think is the only way we are going to get to square one.

8 And the ability to say, these are some thoughts
9 I have. And I can't give you concrete answers is really
10 what our country needs, right. And so I appreciate that.

11 And I hope I can model it in my future endeavors.

12 But I do also want to thank them for their
13 conversations that went pre-justice system. A lot of
14 conversations are about how to improve the justice system
15 and beyond. And you know, these conversations really
16 spoke to how we treat people and how we think about
17 societies in a way that people don't go into that system
18 at all in first place.

19 And it brings me something to -- this brings me
20 to something that Gabe said, when he said that -- and I
21 wrote it down. There are fundamental assumptions about
22 our kids and people. And I think that that is so
23 important.

24 Because all of these systems, health,
25 education, welfare, you name it. We talk about them

1 having systemic racism, which is true. But what we really
2 don't talk about and is fundamentally true, is that people
3 do not believe that we are capable.

4 That we're -- people of color, myself, that we
5 are capable. That we are intelligent enough. That we
6 have the capacity. And that fundamentally allows them to
7 create systems that continue to discriminate and put us
8 into buckets of less than, and sometimes it is overt,
9 explicit racism.

10 Otherwise, other times, it is desire to keep
11 privilege, and it is something that Dona said, to not make
12 them feel uncomfortable. They don't want to have to think
13 about it, because they don't want to feel uncomfortable.
14 And so you need to keep your predetermined ideas about who
15 and what our kids and people are.

16 And it really, you know, speaks to me, Gabe.
17 Not only my own school experience, but even now, with my
18 kids. You are constantly having to fight, to say, no. My
19 daughter has a brain. This is what you did wrong.

20 And the amount of time and energy you spend at
21 school, while you are also spinning through all the other
22 things, in the space that you know that you are also
23 actually endangering your kids. Because they are like,
24 here comes that b, Kimá, again. Right.

25 And so it is just an interesting dynamic in the

1 sense of, we can talk about changing the system Square
2 One. But we are really talking about how to fundamentally
3 change the way people think about one another.

4 I don't have an answer. So I am going to take
5 my -- I don't have an answer. But until we talk about,
6 and deconstruct that, we are not going to get to square
7 one with any of the systems we would like to see.

8 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Kimá. Courtney, we
9 will turn to you.

10 MS. HOLDSWORTH: Thank you both for wonderful
11 papers. I am going to try not to repeat some of the
12 things that everybody else said. Kimá sort of took some
13 of the words out of my mouth, and so did Marcia.

14 In thinking about these two papers, the thing
15 that stuck out for me, in the paper and in your
16 presentation, were education is the thing that we invest
17 least in, in this country, in terms of thinking about
18 criminal justice solutions. That mental health and
19 solitary confinement were so closely knitted.

20 And ignorance protects the government, not the
21 people. So there were these sort of really poignant
22 things that made me think about the work that I do around
23 the school-to-prison pipeline, and the notion that we
24 don't really think about children as human, or as people.

25 And how some of the same things that happen in our

1 criminal justice system happen in the same way in our
2 schools.

3 So children who have mental health concerns are
4 also the kids that spend the most time in ISS, that are
5 suspended, that we see in court, over and over, and over
6 again. And how -- if we could in some way dismantle
7 structural racism and really invest in education, maybe
8 our conversations about criminal justice education would
9 look different.

10 If we were able to fix the problems on the root
11 end of education, so that we can be productive about -- if
12 someone makes a mistake in our community, and we want to
13 help that person not make that same mistake again, then we
14 have tools in place that can educate that person. Can
15 inspire that person, can change that person's life, and
16 really try and get away from this notion of punishment.
17 And really try and see the humanity.

18 But I think we first have to seek humanity with
19 our children.

20 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Courtney. Thank you
21 so much. So we are going to turn to Heather, and then to
22 Lynda.

23 If folks didn't -- if you have anything that is
24 sort of remaining in your head or heart that you would
25 like to share, please do put it into the chat, as Sukyi

1 reminded us before. That is all being captured as well.
2 And we will make sure to include that.

3 And then, we will turn to Jeremy. So Heather,
4 and then Lynda. Heather, go ahead.

5 MS. RICE-MINUS: I was just thinking, between
6 the papers, about -- Bruce, your paper brought out these
7 moments in quotes, of incredible resilience, and
8 connection to individuals' human dignity that you were
9 interviewing. Yes.

10 I think there was even, I am going to pull it
11 real quick, a quote that kind of gave me chills as I was
12 getting to your conclusion. You almost have to lose your
13 sense of humanity, because there is none.

14 And then, you know, those moments of people
15 recognizing their need for human dignity, I think. Maybe
16 because it is, as I think it was Danielle talking about
17 the survival mode folks are in, in a prison setting, you
18 are almost more in touch with the need for recognizing
19 human dignity and perhaps are able to tap into a sense of
20 resilience that those of us who haven't experienced that,
21 can't have.

22 And I think the way I was thinking of this, in
23 connection to Vivian's piece on education, and the value
24 of education. I also think about at prison fellowship, we
25 have our long standing -- this intensive program is called

1 the Academy, and there is curriculum that goes with it.

2 But I think one of, like, the core components
3 of it is community. We actually -- in the highest-level
4 Academy, the men and women live together. And they
5 practice what they learn together, and they talk together.

6 And I think, you know, in some of the higher
7 education programs in prisons I have been able to visit,
8 you can kind of see that same built sense of community.
9 And I wonder if these moments of human dignity, of
10 resilience, are actually fostered in a way that it is
11 maybe not even possible outside, because of that sense of
12 survival mode.

13 And this finding of a community that otherwise,
14 we would not be so tightly knit together. And it is
15 offering something that people so desperately need. And I
16 think that is why, you know, the inside-outside classes
17 that folks were talking about that exist now, and are
18 continuing to grow, are so important.

19 Because it allows students from the outside to
20 get a glimpse of that sense of community that allows for
21 learning, that I just don't think is otherwise possible.
22 And I just see this tension when we talk about our
23 programming in prison, or even higher education when I am
24 talking about trying to restore Pell Grants on Capitol
25 Hill, between, like, the link to trying to force making

1 the issue about linking it to a professional job or
2 trades, and getting at what Vivian was saying, how do we
3 craft an argument about the value of education in and of
4 itself.

5 And what it does for people internally, in
6 crafting competence, in crafting a sense of autonomy and
7 critical thinking. And that -- you know, my last point is
8 just how I think that is also linked to how we evaluate
9 the justice system. And metrics in the justice system are
10 something that is very interesting to me. We, you know,
11 use recidivism, which is essentially a failure rate, to
12 rank prisons.

13 And we are quite okay with, like, the high
14 failure rate that we get from them. And most often, our
15 programs, the question is, you know, what is your
16 recidivism rate? Or like, do your participants get a job?

17 And my colleague Jesse, who is actually a
18 graduate of our Academy program, and went on to get his
19 law degree after he was released, is leading up our
20 evaluation at prison fellowship of our Academy programs
21 now. And he is really working to kind of spin this idea
22 on its head of what we measure, and that we should
23 actually not just measure the things that are failures of
24 this system, did you commit a new crime.

25 But actually, the inputs. Things like grit,

1 and what people give back to their communities. And so he
2 is creating this citizenship measure, that I think is
3 truly unique.

4 And I think that, you know, that metric piece
5 and evaluation piece is also part of how we can craft a
6 narrative of the value of education in prison.

7 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Heather. Thank you so
8 much. And just, you have brought us full circle, back to
9 what Jorge started us off with, of the value of education
10 for people who are not going to be released, and how do we
11 talk about that. And so thanks for that.

12 So Lynda. Lynda, you are there.

13 MS. ZELLER: Yes. My internet is back.

14 MS. HUFFMAN: Great. Lynda, we will hand it
15 over to you. And then, we will wrap up. So go right
16 ahead.

17 MS. ZELLER: So what this conversation has done
18 for me has challenged me. That we are talking about
19 housing, or education, behavioral health, or trauma, all
20 of the things in Vivian and Bruce's paper, that to get to
21 square one, we both need disruptors as we have talked
22 about.

23 And also, we need more awareness of the shift
24 of power. And more leadership that has power to, very
25 deliberately and very consciously, acknowledge that change

1 in power, and embrace that power. And it feels to me
2 like, when I look back at all the justice reforms, or
3 health and justice reforms that have failed in my short
4 tenure, it has been the system in power sort of losing
5 sight of the change.

6 So for me, this conversation has just
7 reinforced that I need to pay a little more attention.
8 Whether it is philanthropy and challenging ourselves to
9 acknowledge the importance of shifting power so that
10 communities have maximum participation, to sustain those
11 disrupting, good disrupting changes.

12 There needs to be a sustained shift of power.
13 And that is tough. So thank you.

14 MS. HUFFMAN: Thank you, Lynda. Thanks a lot.
15 Thanks to everyone. And thanks for folks who are piping
16 in, in the chat as well.

17 So Jeremy. No small task. We turn to you to
18 give us a few minutes of wrap up here, on a lot of ground
19 that we have covered in a lot of different ways today. It
20 has just been incredible. So I will hand it over.

21 MR. TRAVIS: Well, thank you for that. My
22 goodness. What an amazing conversation. This is what
23 happens when smart, passionate people get together, not
24 once, but twice, and three times, and develop what we call
25 our tapestry of just ways of thinking about the social

1 contract.

2 I am going to be very brief. In part, because
3 we are over, but also, in part, because my head is
4 exploding. And there is so much that we have talked
5 about.

6 I want to just note, we want to, I think, hold
7 onto that Bruce started from his case studies, his sort of
8 topology of ways, of points of disruption, of methods of
9 disruption. And we just want to build that over time.

10 We have done this in our earlier sessions.
11 Talking about community organizing, about sort of
12 solidarity movements. About separation and abolition as
13 being points of disruption. Bruce adds the power of women
14 in community as his first point of disruption.

15 He added, interestingly, and where's -- I don't
16 know if Aisha is still here. I'll only critique of the
17 nonprofit and philanthropic world, we add to that, at
18 least from the Oklahoma experience, as having disrupt
19 potential.

20 And very importantly, again, consistent with
21 our discussion, social mobilization. What does movement
22 building look like, as a focus of disruption?

23 And then, the last one, which became, in an
24 interesting way, sort of the theme of our time together
25 today, was the notion of human resilience. So we talked a

1 lot about education. And we put so much, so many eggs in
2 this basket. It was fascinating. It kept getting bigger
3 and bigger, and fuller and fuller. And having more and
4 more potential for -- as a point of disruption.

5 On one level, we talked about education as
6 being a self-actualization, that educating individuals,
7 and we have had our own experiences with this, is a point
8 of self-actualization as a human being. Starting in, as
9 Fatimah said, in her fourth grade.

10 So that certainly is a point of disruption, if
11 education is as powerful as Vivian reminds us it is. In
12 the American mythology, and in reality, it is powerful.
13 We put a lot of other eggs in the education basket.

14 Remember that Vivian's paper started with
15 history. It started with the intent to deny enslaved
16 people the ability to self-actualize in that way. It was
17 a crime to teach the slave people to read, to bring them
18 into a school. So that was not just accidental. That was
19 an act of suppression and oppression.

20 So Vivian's biggest point, I think, is that
21 education, thinking about the educational enterprise
22 requires us to think about power. Not just at the
23 individual level, but at the societal level. So to think
24 that we have denied incarcerated people in particular, but
25 marginalized people more broadly, education means it's a

1 form of oppression. That denial is a form of oppression.

2 So to reverse that, education becomes a point
3 of -- a method of disruption. So remember, Danielle had
4 this wonderful moment, where she said, okay. There is a
5 paradox here. We have this stuck system, that we have
6 described over our last three sessions, where everything
7 is just so deeply embedded with this racism, this
8 capitalism.

9 This is our history, and is it also fragile?
10 Is it also what Bruce sort of thinks it might be, lacking
11 legitimacy? That is cause for hope. But what is going to
12 break it open? That is what Square One is all about.

13 That is what we are counting on everybody to
14 do. But know also that we had other hopes for the
15 educational enterprise. And I just want to name some of
16 them.

17 One was that as we think about who teaches and
18 who learns. Great discussion about the pedagogy of
19 education, about the pedagogy of the oppressed. It
20 becomes a way of broadening the social contract, to bring
21 voices, people, perspectives, uncredentialed perspectives,
22 but credentialed in their own way, into a discussion about
23 what are we going to do as our society. So it is
24 democratizing at a very fundamental level.

25 Broadening the scope, but asking the question,

1 what is the content? Whose history? Elizabeth said,
2 whose history gets taught? And who decides that? There
3 is a moment of power. Who decides that?

4 Vivian said, all of the curriculum is decided
5 by somebody else. Why is that so? So it is a point of
6 power sharing, democratization.

7 Elizabeth then took this to some other level
8 with a reference to Bryan Stevenson, which I love. It
9 was, is it possible that education is also a -- when we
10 think about what is taught, whose history is taught, it is
11 a process of reckoning. But this is a way for us to think
12 about bringing it to sort of right relationships: us, with
13 our own histories, as a country.

14 Is it a process of healing? I was fascinated
15 when you talked about the trauma, and how do we overcome
16 trauma? Again, I am going back to Fatimah's observation
17 about how she had to work through, as a fourth grader, all
18 of these difficult questions, and realize who was in
19 control. And deal with her own experience, there.

20 Is education a way of thinking about healing?
21 Reckoning at a national level, self-actualization at the
22 individual level. Power sharing, and actually empowering
23 those who are now marginalized, and giving to them, or
24 allowing them to take for themselves the power to imagine
25 a very different world.

1 So education becomes this fascinating way of
2 resolving Danielle's paradox, between being stuck, really
3 stuck, and trying to find points of disruption. And in
4 interesting ways, even though we had a critique. And I
5 will own it myself, as a former educator -- a critique of
6 the higher education system in America as being sort of
7 perpetuating racist sort of hierarchies and the like.

8 Is education, in some ways, the one that is
9 most accessible to us, as a point of disruption? Is it
10 more accessible than, what we talked about last time,
11 healthcare? Is it more accessible than housing as a point
12 of intervention?

13 So this note of optimism in this discussion,
14 notwithstanding the history that we were reminded of. And
15 notwithstanding the ways in which education continues to
16 support hierarchies, there is a note of optimism that if
17 -- just take this Ford Foundation notion of prisons as
18 being college campuses. And take the Black Panther
19 history, and other histories of education, being a way of
20 powering those to lead the resistance.

21 That is a very optimistic note to end on. So I
22 thank you all for taking us on an amazing journey that we
23 will pick up next week.

24 MS. HUFFMAN: Jeremy. Thank you for that.
25 Thank you so much. That was terrific. Terrific overview

1 of the path that we have traveled here together today.
2 And very much appreciated.

3 Thank you to all of you all for this
4 discussion. And just -- it has been incredible to be able
5 to listen and learn from all of you today. I am really
6 struck by our framing of this conversation as about the
7 social contract.

8 And you know, what are contracts about? They
9 are about value. They are about who is valuable, and in
10 what way. And how do we measure it. They are about
11 power, and how do we share power? And how do we divide
12 those amongst ourselves.

13 And it is just striking how these are the
14 themes that are coming in so powerfully in each of our
15 discussions, over our time together. So with that, we
16 will wrap up for the day.

17 Again, enormous thanks to all of you all.
18 Enormous thanks to Sukyi, and to the whole team that has
19 made today happen, and all of these days happen.

20 Again, you get a couple of Wednesdays off
21 before we all come together again. But we will be in
22 touch, continuously. Hopefully not annoyingly, but
23 continuously with additional information. With
24 information for you all to share with your networks, in
25 hopes that they can be invited into this conversation.

1 And I just would really encourage folks. I
2 have heard from several of you, over the course of this,
3 that you are processing, and you are thinking about these
4 things. Put all those processing thoughts into the chat,
5 on Slack, if you have a moment to do so.

6 Just help us continue this discussion and
7 sustain our connection until we are able to be together
8 again. So with that, again, thank you to all. And if
9 folks are able to stay on, you are very welcome.

10 We will shift to informal mode. But for those
11 who need to drop off, thanks. And we will look forward to
12 seeing you all again soon.

13 (Whereupon, at 6:28 p.m. EST, the meeting was
14 concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MEETING OF: The Square One Project

LOCATION: via Zoom

DATE: August 26, 2020

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages,
numbers 1 through 96, inclusive, are the true, accurate,
and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording
made by electronic recording by Latrice Porter.

DATE: September 1, 2020

/s/ Carol Bourgeois
(Transcriber)

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