

## Prison Industrial Complex Workshop

Created 3-31-15

for Toxic Soil Busters

[www.WorcesterRoots.org](http://www.WorcesterRoots.org)

### Materials Needed:

- Copies of 3 pages from [Critical Resistance's Toolkit](#): P 59 – 61
- 3 computers with internet access.

### 1. Introduction / Warm Up Activities (10 mins)

Theater of the oppressed games “bombs and shields” and “French Telephone/Do Nothing”

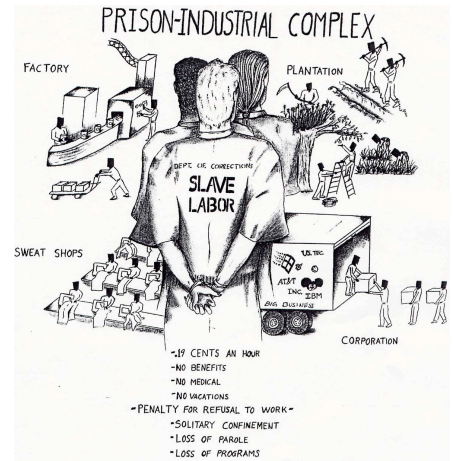
<http://organizingforpower.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/games-theater-of-oppressed.pdf>

#### *Bombs & Shields*

Group spread out around the room. Each person chooses one other person without making their choice known; that person is their Bomb. Then choose another person – that one is their shield. The aim of the game is to keep your shield between yourself and your bomb. There will be a lot of frantic movement to begin with and the facilitator can count down from 10 – 1 as the bomb is about to explode. On the command freeze, the facilitator goes around the group asking if people managed to keep their shield between themselves and their bomb.

#### *French Telephone (Do Nothing)*

Group stands in a circle. Each person is instructed to look at the person 4 along from him to his left (if the group is an uneven number). The group is instructed to “Do Nothing”. However, if the person he is watching makes any movement, he should copy that movement precisely. The leader can then instruct the group to copy any movements that are made and to make them more grotesque, much larger or more emotional (with more happiness, sadness etc.)



### 2. Terminology (25 mins)

Split into 3 groups by counting off.

Each group take a term: Prison Industrial Complex, Abolition, The State bring back a creative report to group (news report, poem, skit, drawing).

Discussion after each report back. For example after abolition report, discussion on “Can you envision a world without prisons?”.

### 3. Let's Find Out More Together about Prisons (35 mins)

- While still in same small groups, each group picks a topic (Ex. Food in prisons, Race and prisons, Gender and prisons).
- Groups have 15 minutes to investigate their topic online, sample websites:

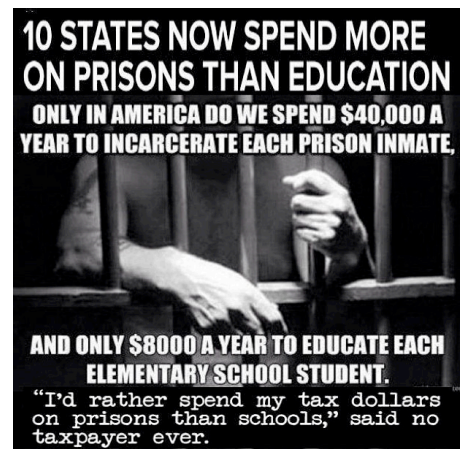
<http://c4ss.org/content/30340>

<http://criticalresistance.org>

<http://abolishprisons.org>

<http://www.blackandpink.org/prison-abolition-class/>

- Groups come up with list of 10-20 most amazing facts about their topic (save this list for later).
- Two Models (Forum Theater) in Cafeterias



#### *Two Models*

##### *First Model*

1. An issue/subject is agreed upon by the group.
2. 5 individuals are asked to come up on stage, one at a time, to present their idea of that issue. They do not see anyone else's representation
3. All 5 present their images on stage together. Audience members may wish to come and add further ideas.
4. The spect-actors/images are asked to begin to interrelate with one another to give a broader perspective of a society view of the issue.
5. If spect-actors are presenting images of being oppressed they are then asked by the joker to change their image to present the oppressor, and vice versa.

##### *Second Model*

1. An oppression is agreed upon by the group.
2. An individual creates an image of the oppression, sculpting spect-actors into a group image. This may then be discussed with the audience to agree upon the “Real Image” of this oppression.
3. The joker then asks the spect-actors within the image to change in order to represent an “Ideal Image” whereby the oppression is no longer there (try not to be too magic in this presentation)
4. Re-showing the original “Real Image” the Joker then asks the spect-actors to move in slow motion from the “Real Image” to the “Ideal Image” – this is the “Image of Possible Transition”. This may be modified throughout by audience members to make the transition as realistic as possible.

### 4. Evaluation

What is one take away from the workshop and one thing that could be done better next time.