

Prison Research Podcast



Prisons are too important to be understudied

Lack of information, logistical issues, and hesitancy by prison officials and IRB may make it challenging.

Create entry points

Sticky Issues

- Reflect on the emotional toll of bearing witness.
- Be prepared to face ethical issues.

- Use different methods - historical, legal, interview, and statistical data collection and analysis.
- Look for converging events – legal challenges, media attention, security concerns of prison officials.
- Network – attend meetings, volunteer.

TAKE-AWAYS

- ✓ Prison research has a set of unique challenges, but they are not insurmountable.
- ✓ The U.S. prison system is too big and too impactful to remain understudied.
- ✓ As more researchers look to add pixels to our image of U.S. prisons, they might keep in mind collaboration is key; and don't shy away from the sticky issues. Explore them. Keep exploring them.

Sources:

Reiter, K. (2014). Making windows in walls: Strategies for prison research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(4), 417-428.