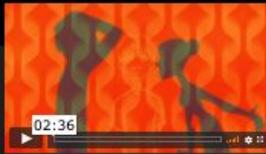
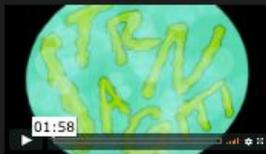
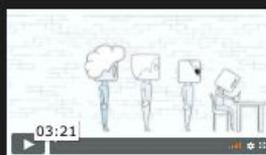


COMMUNICATION STUDIES

PRISON BA JOURNAL

 <p>02:25</p> <p>Finding Common Ground on ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Deon Whitmore Animated and Directed by 	 <p>02:36</p> <p>The Three Jewels: My Path to ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Ninh Nguyen Animated and Directed by 	 <p>02:18</p> <p>Developing Emotional Awaren...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Clifton Gibson Animated and Directed by
 <p>02:30</p> <p>A Lost Child Among Lost Peo...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Dara Yin Animated and Directed by Marco 	 <p>01:58</p> <p>Prison Horseplay: A Harassm...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Larry L. Torres Animated and Directed by 	 <p>03:30</p> <p>Family Views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Andrew Kirkinn Hinsa Directed and
 <p>01:47</p> <p>I'm Sensory Overload Behind ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Risala Rose-Aminitu Animated and Directed by 	 <p>02:54</p> <p>Being Reasonable About Unre...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Justin Hong Animated and Directed by Stephan 	 <p>02:01</p> <p>Love's Many Forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Dara Yin Animated and Directed by
 <p>02:03</p> <p>Healing Inside Prison: Shedd...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Jeff Ayers Animated and Directed by Phric 	 <p>02:21</p> <p>Does Interethnic Communicat...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Jimmie L. Gilmar Jr. Animated and Directed by 	 <p>03:21</p> <p>From Letters to Visits in Priso...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and Narrated by Thaisan Nissun Animated and Directed by



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by Cal State LA Animation Students

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/7155653>

 **creative commons**



2020, the Authors

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Call for new submissions

Editors' note

Cal State LA's Prison BA Program is supported by the commitments and values of many participants developing academic excellence and student success through collaborative projects between incarcerated students and campus students. This issue reflects our efforts to develop innovative teaching as we build grassroots community and cultural connections, while providing opportunities for the dissemination of voices for social justice. The enclosed writings are testimonies wrapped in communications theories, where individuals sift amongst their past traumas and examine painful moments through the lens of courage, vulnerability, and integrity.

This issue further highlights that people are the sum of their experiences and reveal an honest reflection of how they cope with the environmental traumas that they travel through. Each of these men have failed but have learned from their failures and used that wisdom to succeed. Each of them have lost and taken an incredible amount, and yet, they persevere and make amends because it is the best course for them, not because it is what others would have them do. Each of these men live with the stinging reality of hopelessness and incarcerated death, and yet, they never give in to it—they rise above their confinement in thought and spirit.

One major theme of the current issue is “building resilience: a trauma-informed approach.” The writings (with the exception of one) emerged from a course on health communication during fall 2019. At the time we did not know the world was on the cusp of a historic pandemic that within three months would result in a nationwide lockdown of the entire U.S. population followed by protests and uprisings against police brutality, racism, and a new urgency to rethink and reform our criminal justice system, our educational policies, and our economic policies. As a result, the writings addressing prison traumas and the need to build resilience

in the face of traumatizing prison conditions have gained a new resonance and relevance to the larger society facing the traumatic effects of living in the midst of a pandemic.

A few words about the health communication course from last fall that motivated the writings in this issue. Prison education can be restrictive in terms of options for using traditional methods to teach communication practices and skills. One alternative that helps to overcome these barriers is to incorporate a combination of “Teach-back” and performance methods into our curriculum. These strategies enable students to enact actual and ideal interactions between patients and healthcare providers. As a result, some students experienced an increase in their ability to understand, apply and practice communication concepts and skills, and to plan for and improve future interactions with healthcare providers. The classroom activities and students’ subsequent reflections generated richly detailed research data for analysis that enabled students to cultivate or develop a repertoire of communication skills to use in professional and every-day life encounters. The benefits and limits of the course can best be summed up in the following quote from one of the students: “I absolutely feel empowered- in a way. What I mean is, I now have a new tool to use when encountering our crazy medical system. However, I do not feel this system is equipped with carrying the weight of an effective, patient- centered practice. But that does not mean I shouldn’t try anyways, right!”

Insights like that indicate that not only are our students learning new coping mechanisms from CSULA professors but they also are applying them to everyday encounters reducing conflict in our communities. At the end of this journal you will be hard pressed not to admit that people incarcerated are better than their worst act, and in fact models of resilience.

Finally, In this issue we are proud to introduce the creative collaboration of Cal State LA’s animation students with Lancaster students in producing a series of animation documentaries based

on writings from the previous issues and an earlier issue of Colloquy. Prof Zachary Zezima, who taught the animation course will introduce these works on the following page.

-- *Clifton Gibson*

-- *Daniel Whitlow*

-- *Kamran Afary*

Introduction to animation documentaries

Zachary Zezima

In Spring 2019, students in my Animated Documentary class collaborated with Lancaster State Prison's BA Communication Studies students to bring their writings, reflections, memoirs, and poetry to life through the art of animation. These pieces of writing were already poignant and affecting on their own, but deserved a wider reach and audience. Students in my course read through past editions of this journal and chose pieces they most identified with. The authors of those chosen pieces then recorded themselves reciting their piece over the phone as Dr. Afary recorded. These recordings were used as narrations over the animated films, guiding the viewer through the story as the visuals added elements of the unseen and imagined. Some animation students were able to be in contact with their respective authors in order to gain more insight into how they wanted their stories to be told and portrayed. The final outcome was 14 short animated documentary films which amplified the voices of these incarcerated students, as well as illuminated and visualized the inner and outer lives of those within the modern prison system in the US.

Personally, I believe in empathy and taking time to understand other people's motivations and decision-making. In my experience it is rare to meet a person who does not deserve this small act of kindness. Many incarcerated people are victims themselves of either society, their own families, institutions, and larger systems of oppression, to name a few, and are imprisoned as punishment instead of rehabilitated. I and my students hope this project brings a sense of humanity to this population that is often lacking in general sentiment.

View them at vimeo.com/showcase/7155653

