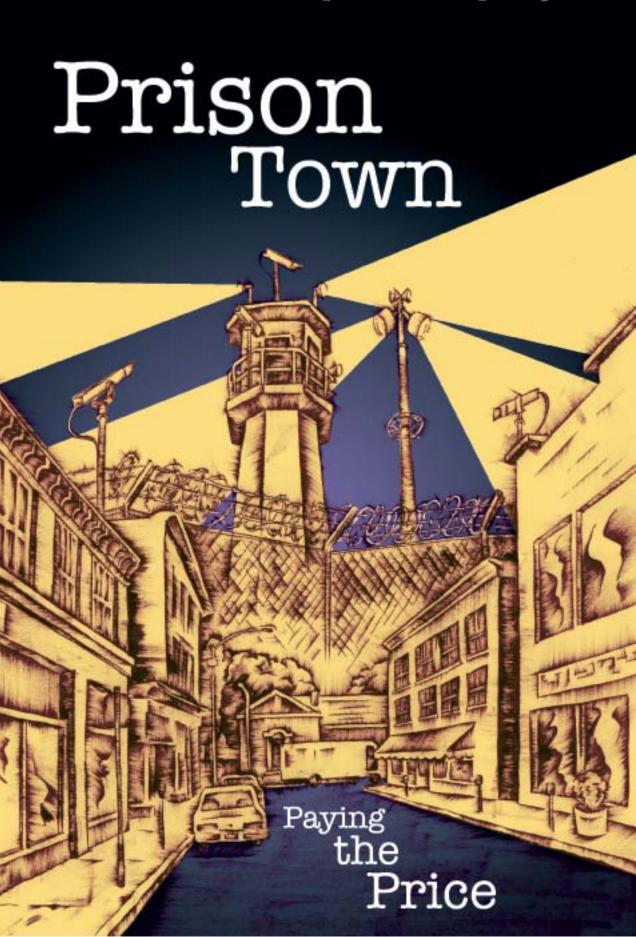
the real cost of prisons project[™]



www.realcostofprisons.org • info@realcostofprisons.org

Prison Town Paying the Price

Artist: Kevin Pyle • Writers: Kevin Pyle & Craig Gilmore

Real Cost of Financing and Siting of Prisons writer/presenter: Craig Gilmore

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The Real Cost of Prisons Project brings together prison/justice policy activists with political economists to create workshops and materials which explore both the immediate and long-term costs of mass incarceration on the individual, her/his family, community and the nation.

Two additional comic books are part of this series: *Prisoners of the War on Drugs* and *Prisoners of Hard Times: Women and Children.* If you would like copies of these comic books to assist your group in its organizing work, contact Lois Ahrens. Or you can go to www.realcostofprisons.org and download the entire series

This comic book can be downloaded free of charge from the Real Cost of Prisons website. Please credit the Real Cost of Prisons Project. Any reproduction requires written permission of the Real Cost of Prisons Project, except for small excerpts for review or publicity purposes.

The Real Cost of Prisons Project is an activity of The Sentencing Project, a Washington, DC based non-profit dedicated to reducing over-reliance on incarceration. The Real Cost of Prisons Project is supported by a grant from the Community Advocacy Project of the Open Society Institute.

THANK YOU

Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Tracy Huling, Peter Wagner, Eric Cadora, Todd Clear, Dina Rose, N.C. Christopher Couch, James Heinz, Marc Mauer, Malcolm Young, Raquiba LaBrie, William Johnston and Helena Huang.

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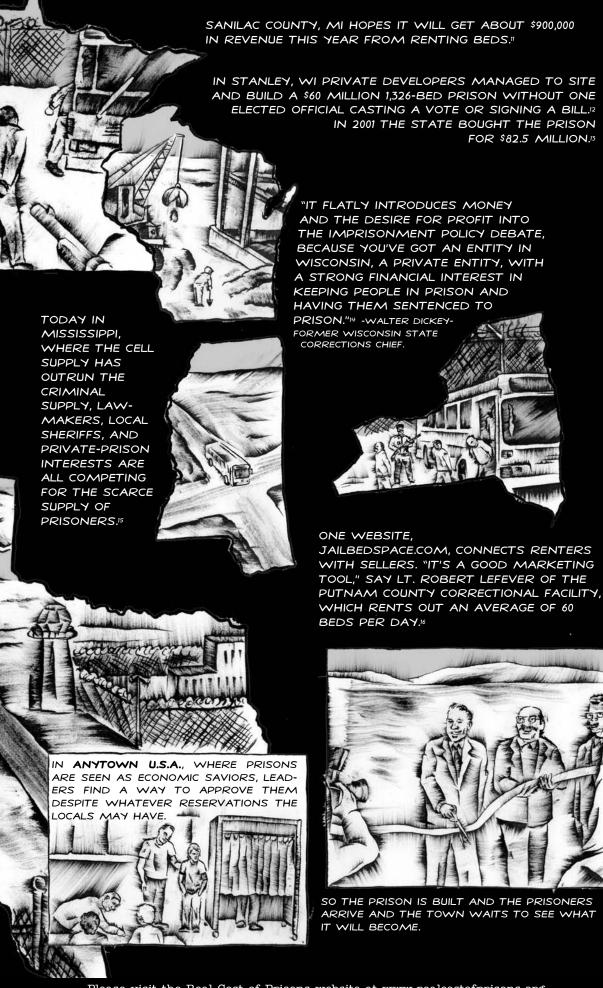


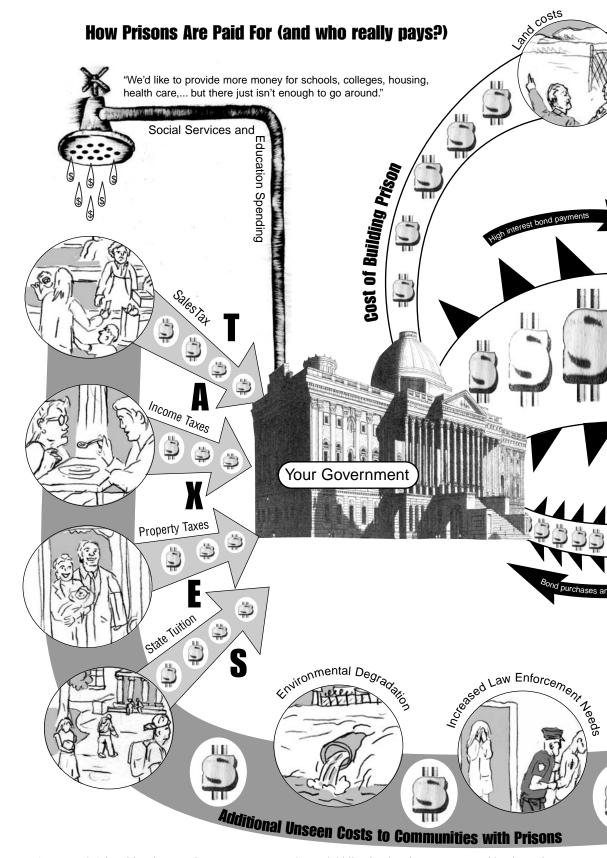


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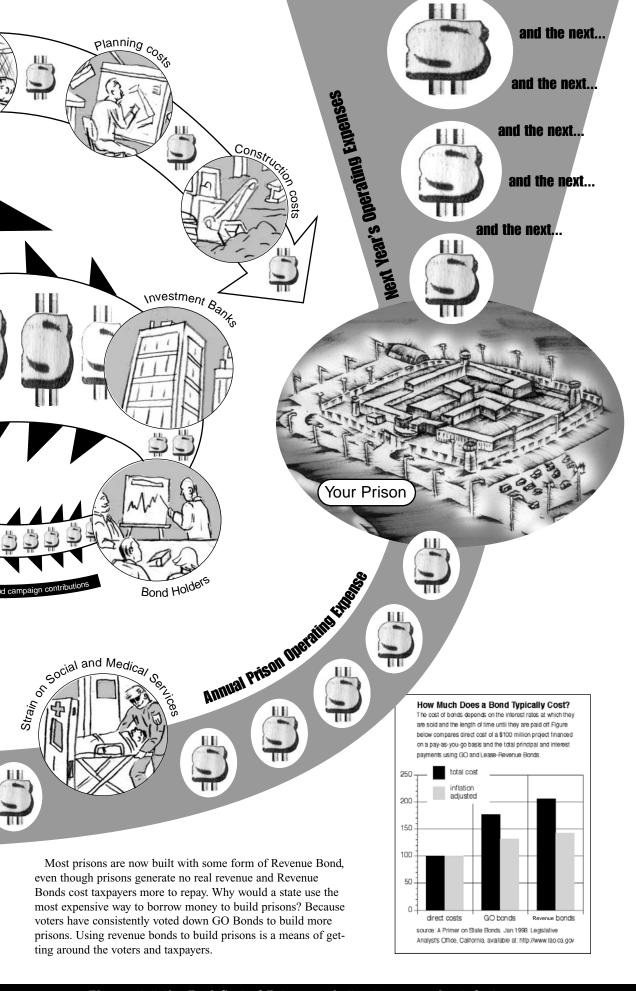
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What is a bond? A bond is a loan made to a government. Governments pay investment bankers to make the loan attractive ('structure the deal') and find lenders ('issue the bonds'). Governments then pay lenders ('bondholders') principal and interest on the loans.

Governments issue two broad categories of bond: General Obligation (GO) bonds and Revenue Bonds. General Obligation bonds are guaranteed by the taxing power of the state. Most GO Bonds require approval by the voters, and in many states by 2/3 of the voters. Revenue Bonds are designed to be paid off by revenues generated by the project being built, like highway tolls, bridge tolls, student tuition, etc.













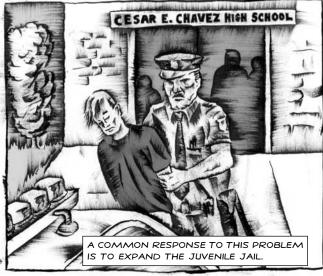
AFTER A PRISON WAS BUILT IN SUSANVILLE, CA, CAROL JELDNESS,A MEDIATOR FOR THE FAMILY COURT, SAW HER CASELOAD, MAINLY CHILD CUSTODY AND DIVORCE, JUMP FROM 167 TO 320 IN ONE YEAR.²⁴



"I SPENT 8 TO 16 HOURS A DAY IN SOLID BULLSHIT, "YOU HEAR CURSING ALL DAY, AND YOU COME HOME AND THAT'S ALL YOU THINK ABOUT. IT DID TRAGEDY ON MY FAMILY." - GUARD AT SUSANVILLE PRISON²⁵







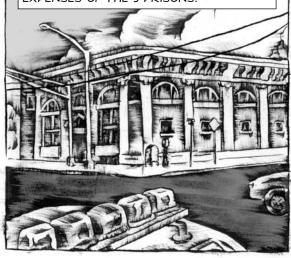
IN THE COMPETITION TO LURE PRISONS MANY RURAL TOWNS HAVE PUT THE INTERESTS OF THE PRISON BEFORE THE INTERESTS OF IT'S RESIDENTS.



REEVES COUNTY, TEXAS FOUND ITSELF SERVICING A BOND DEBT CLOSE TO \$ 1/2 MILLION A MONTH FOR THREE PRISONS THEY BUILT ON SPEC. WHEN THEY COULDN'T KEEP ONE OF THEM FILLED, THEY PAID \$62,000 A MONTH TO GEO GROUP, A PRIVATE PRISONS CORPORATION, TO FIND INMATES.



REEVES COUNTY STILL HAS TO SERVICE THAT DEBT AS WELL ALL THE OPERATING EXPENSES OF THE 3 PRISONS. 26



IN LAKEVIEW, OREGON A CONTRACT WITH THE PRISON SAYS THAT IN EVENT OF WATER SHORTAGES THE PRISON HAS PRIORITY 27



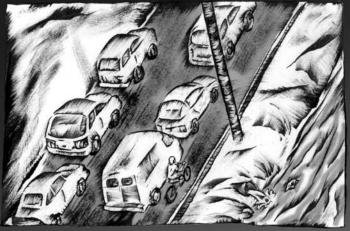
WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN A MAJOR ISSUE AT EVERY NEW PRISON WE HAVE BUILT."28-FORMER





PRISON TOWN, YOU WON'T BECOME A FORTUNE 500 COMPANY TOWN, OR AN INTERNET OR SOFTWARE COMPANY TOWN, OR EVEN A DIVERSE TOURISM AND COMPANY TOWN."29

SO NOW ANYTOWN, U.S.A. IS PRISON TOWN, U.S.A., LIKE THOUSANDS OF TOWNS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.





OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS, MOST PRISON TOWNS HAVE GROWN POORER AND MORE DESPERATE.



PRISONS ARE ANOTHER PROBLEM, NOT A SOLUTION.

WHAT IS UNKNOWABLE IS
WHAT THE PRISON WILL DO TO
THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF
THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE.

THOSE WHO CAN LEAVE

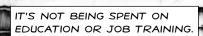
AND THOSE WHO CAN NOT. . .



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MILLION DOLLAR BLOCKS THERE ARE BLOCKS IN BROOKLYN, NY, THE MONEY IS NOT BEING SPENT AND OTHER PLACES, WHERE THE GOVERN-ON DRUG TREATMENT PROGRAMS. MENT IS SPENDING \$1 MILLION A YEAR.31 IT'S NOT BEING SPENT ON PRE-

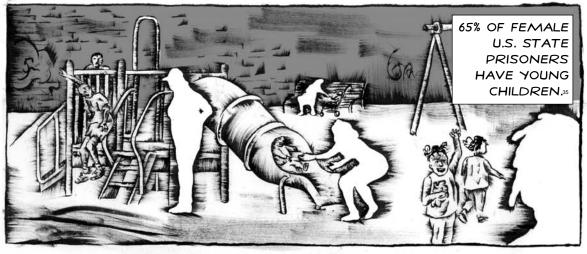
NATAL CARE OR HEALTH CARE.











87% OF PRIS-ONERS IN NEW YORK ARE CAGED MORE THAN 2 HOURS FROM NEW YORK CITY.®







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GLOSSARY

Coercive Migration: The movements of people from their neighborhoods, through the courts and jails to prison and back. The concentrations of large numbers of prisoners in certain rural prisons and the fact that their former homes are concentrated in relatively few neighborhoods of urban poverty leads to huge impacts for the urban neighborhoods who deal with constant turnover of their population and disrupt the unity of family and neighborhoods.

Community Reinvestment: The alternative to "Million Dollar Blocks." A program that redirects money spent on prisons to investment on the blocks where current or formerly incarcerated men and women live, spending money on health care, job training, education, drug treatment and other services instead of incarceration.

Corrections: (as in Department of Corrections) Term used with no apparent sense of irony to describe government departments in charge of prisons and the prison industry as a whole.

Criminalization: the process of making behaviors illegal or of radically increasing the severity of the punishment. Also used to describe the populations targeted by these policies, for example, the criminalization of the homeless or of Black youth.

Development Subsidies: the opposite of mitigation funds. Subsidies are money paid by local or state governments to attract or retain businesses. They can include city or state tax breaks, tax-advantaged financing, investment in roads, housing or transportation funds for industry employees. Such subsidies, often called "Corporate Welfare," rarely pay off for the

Industry of Last Resort: those industries who have trouble

finding host communities because they are unpleasant neighbors, for example: incinerators, prisons, concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), toxic waste dumps. Industries of last resort seek communities desperate for jobs and tax revenues and where they believe people will not exercise their political power. For example: poor rural communities and inner city neighborhoods.

Million DollarBlock: A city block in which the state is spending \$1,000,000 or more to incarcerate former residents or to supervise the formerly incarcerated.

Mitigation: state money paid to local governments to pay the costs of siting including extending roads, sewage pipes, increased use of courts, etc. Mitigation offered by the state is usually far short of the real costs to the host community, leaving them in a deeper financial hole.

Police State: (1) Any state or country that relies primarily on police and prisons to control some or all of the population. (2) A state dependent on fear to keep people in order. (3) A place in which 'safety' is defined narrowly as security from acts of random violence rather than, for example, freedom to drive a car and not be stopped and searched for no reason.

Prison Industrial Complex: (often PIC): an informal or formal alliance of government bureaucrats, politicians, private industry, bankers, real estate developers and labor leaders who push criminalization, harsher sentences, more police and prisons which increases their political power and/or private incomes.

Siting: (Host) The process in which a prison (or other industry) chooses a location and convinces that community to welcome it. The community in which the prison is built is called the "host."

FOOTNOTES

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- 27: Prison Siting Forces Lawsuit Against U.S. DOJ, Western Prison Project. 28: Stephen Raher, "Research Memo Re: Economic Impacts of Rural
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- 30: This chapter is heavyily indebted to the work of Dina R. Rose and Todd R. Clear, "From Prison to Home: The Effect of Incareration and Reentry on
- Children, Familes, and Communities," 12/01 31: Susan B. Tucker and Eric Cadora, "Justice Reinvestment," <u>Ideas for an</u> Open Society, vol.3 number 3, 11/03, pg2.
- 32: Peter Wagner, <u>The Prison Index</u>, 2003, pg. 27. 33: Tracy Huling, "Prisons as a Growth Industry in Rural America: An Exploratory Discussion of the Effects on Young African American Men in the Inner Cities." 05/15/99.
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- 37: Dina R.Rose and Todd R. Clear, "Incarceration, Reentry and Social Capital: Social Networks in the Balance," 2002.
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NATIONAL AVERAGE COST TO IMPRISON A PERSON FOR ONE YEAR: \$29,041

the cost of a cage

