

# SHAWN

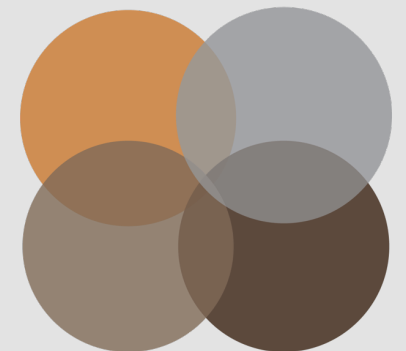
ACT Meeting, 09/21/23

**Amy B. Smoyer**

Associate Professor

Southern CT State University

NIDA/NIH 1R15DA056285-01, (PI Smoyer, Amy B.) Project Title: **Impact of COVID-19 Criminal-Legal Practices on HIV Risk among Women Who Use Drugs: A Multi-Methods Qualitative Exploration**, 05/01/2022 – 04/30/2025



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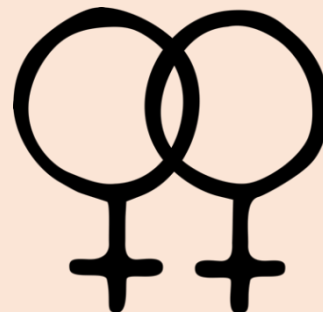
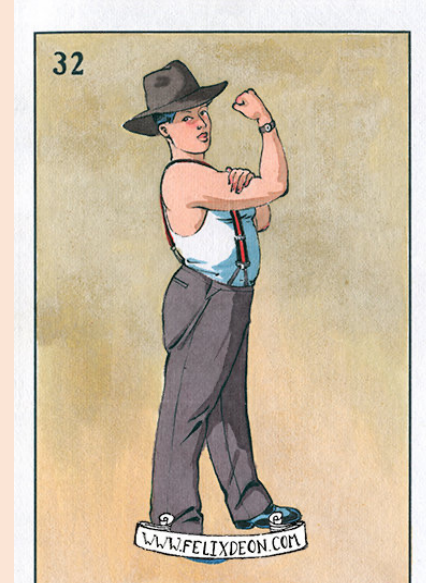
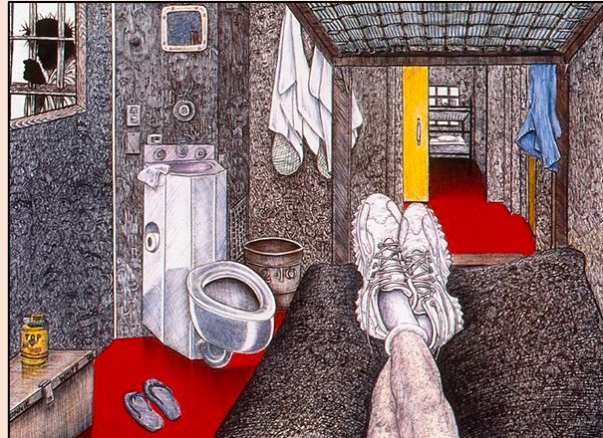
# Introductions





Southern Connecticut  
State University






Data collected in 2011 from 55 formerly incarcerated women in New Haven as part of SHARRPP, a NIH/NIHDA funded study (5R31DA025521-05). For more info: info@sharrpp.com


## WOMEN @ RE-ENTRY

NEW HAVEN


**70%** Have ever been homeless.




**23%** Were ever held in juvenile detention.




**71%** Have a child under age of 18.




**60%** Use city bus as primary form of transportation.




**59%** Report having been diagnosed with mental illness.




**37%** Have ever been married.



**30%** Identify as lesbian or bisexual.



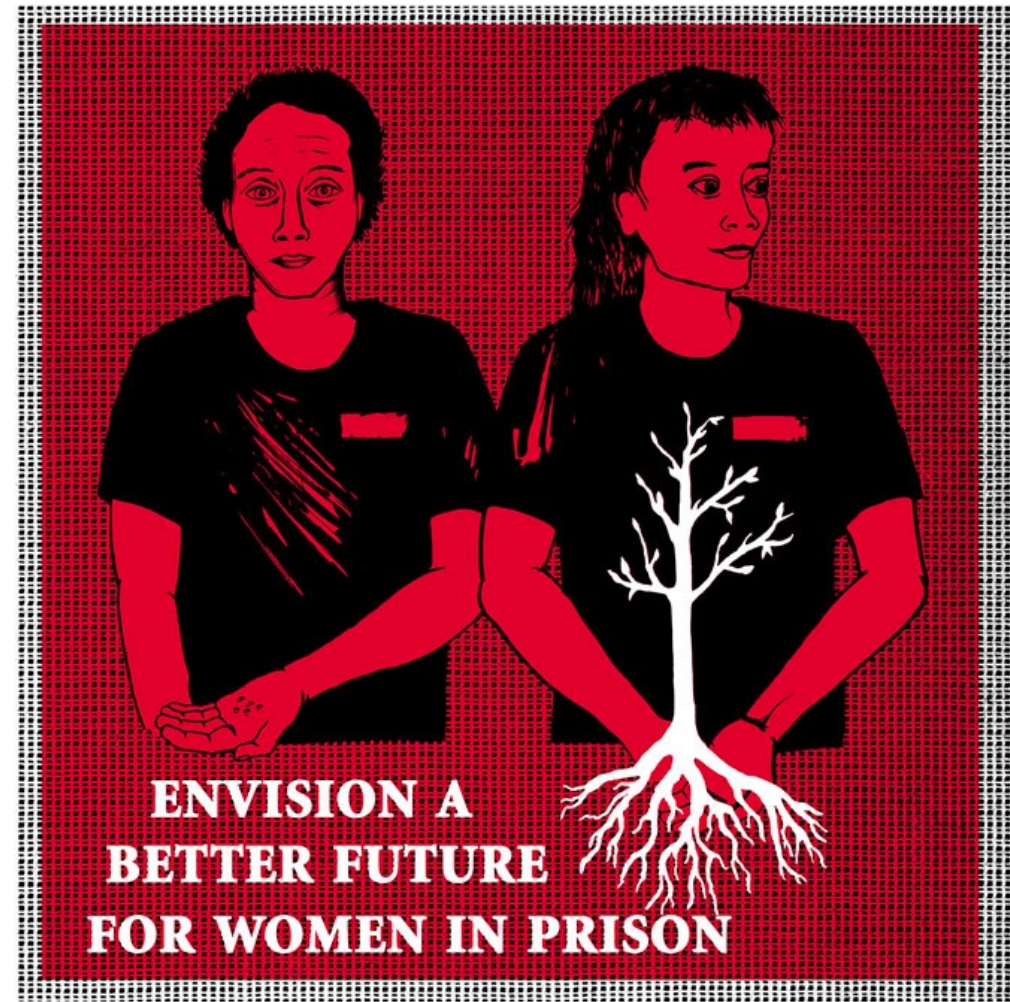
**28%** Have ever overdosed.



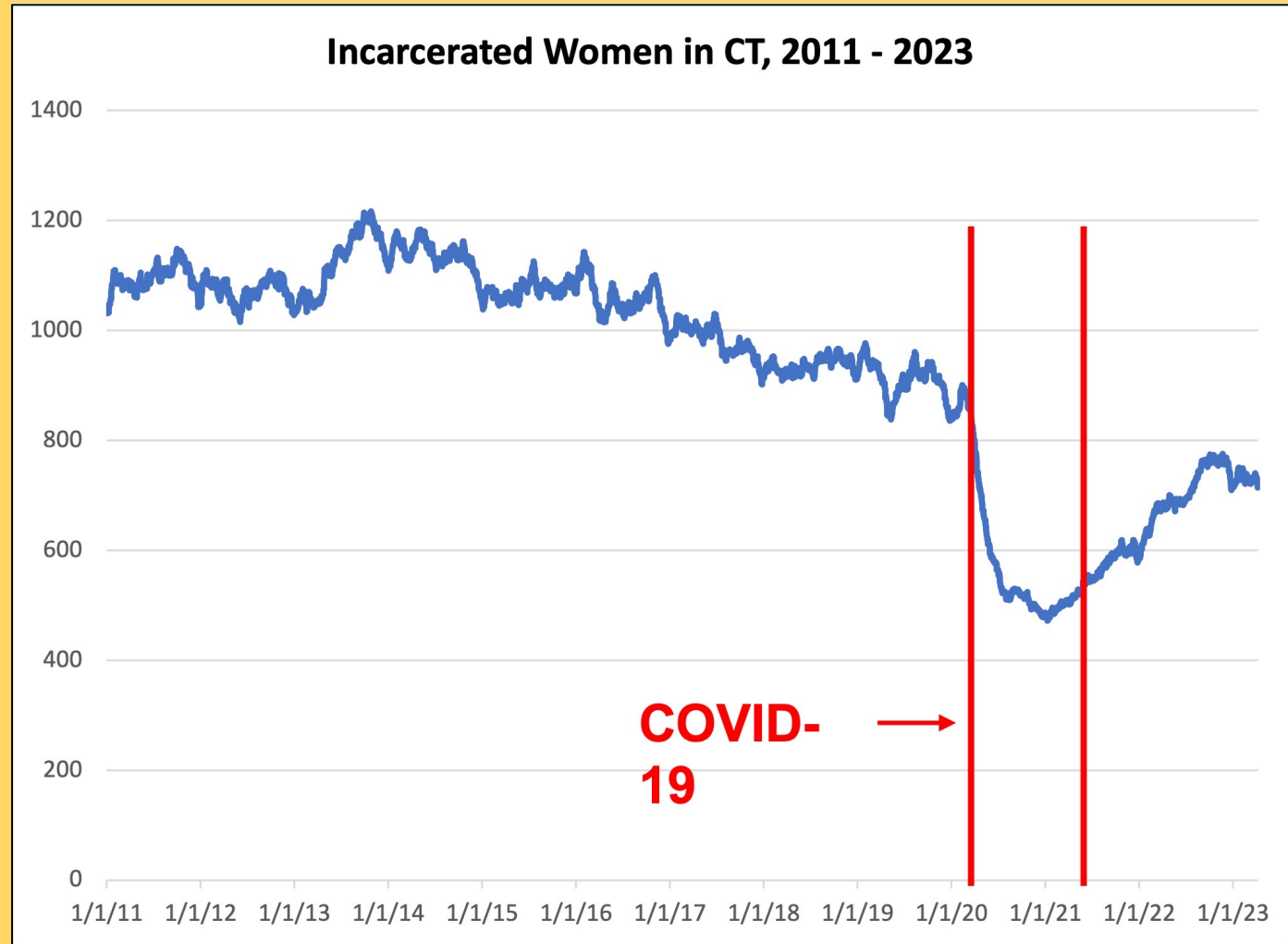
**The New Haven Women's Resettlement Working Group** is a group of formerly incarcerated people, community activists, academics, and service providers working together to support women during and after incarceration.

Join Us.  
[www.nhwrwg.blogspot.com](http://www.nhwrwg.blogspot.com)

# Reimagining Justice



The number of women incarcerated in CT dropped by 43% during COVID.



# Specific Aims

## RESEARCH QUESTION:

*What was the impact of COVID-19 shifts in criminal-legal practices on the HIV risk behaviors of justice-involved women who use drugs?*

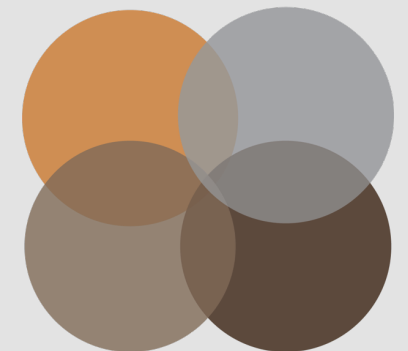
- **Specific Aim #1:** PROVIDE undergraduate students the opportunity to gain significant experience with community engaged research.
- **Specific Aim #2:** IDENTIFY the pre-COVID-19 HIV risk behaviors and protective factors of justice-involved women who use drugs.
- **Specific Aim #3:** DOCUMENT and ASSESS HIV risk during COVID-19 among justice-involved women who use drugs.

Shawn Lang





# The PhD Pipeline: Challenges & Urgency



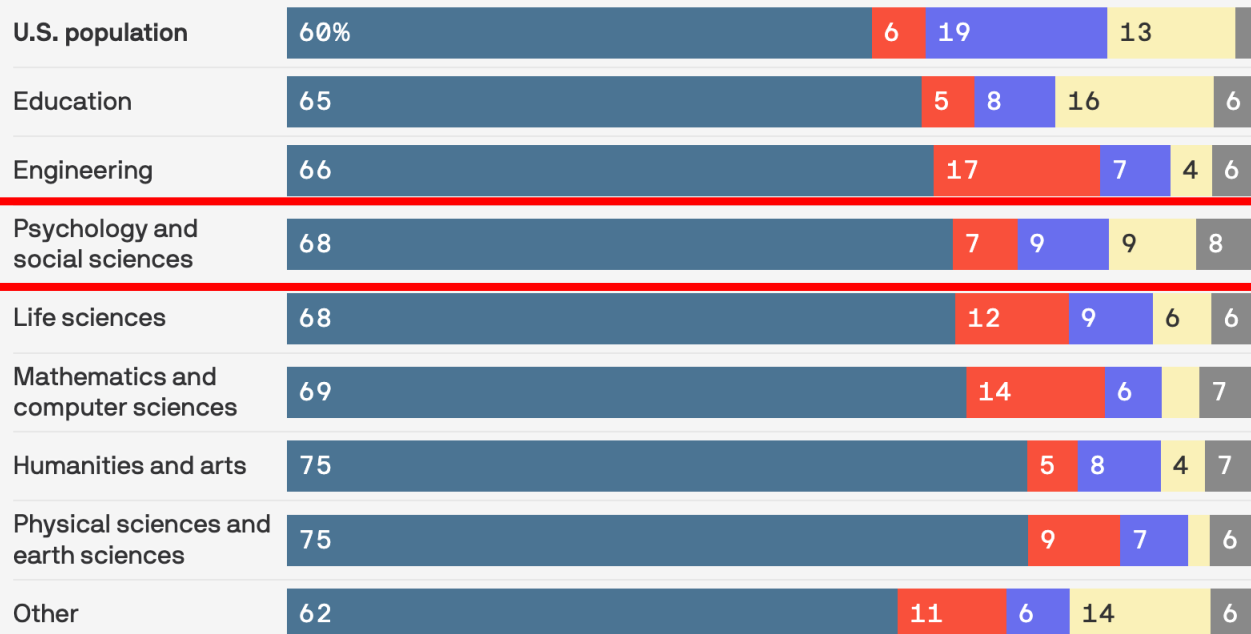
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# The Doctoral Degree Pipeline: Challenges

Lack of racial diversity among people with doctoral degrees.

### Doctoral degrees earned by race/ethnicity, 2019

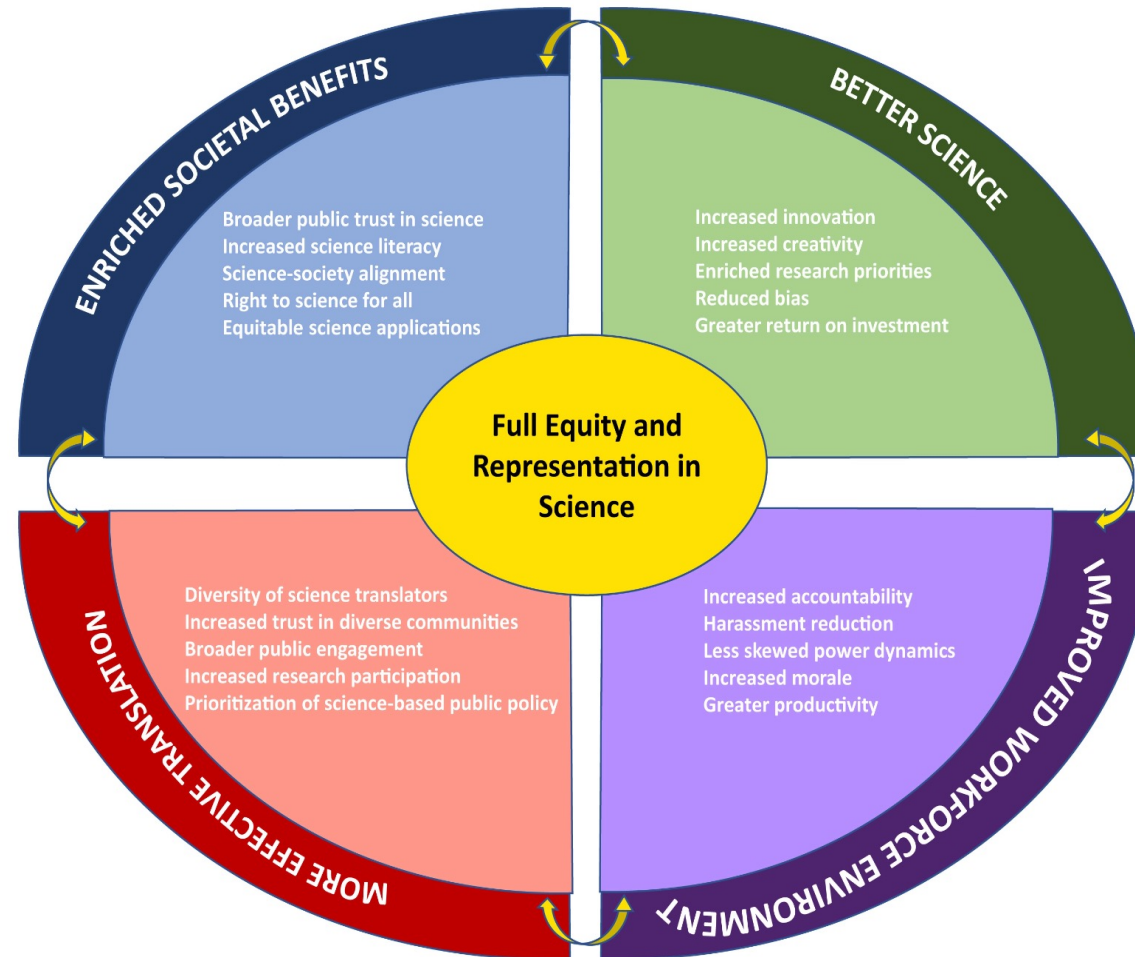
■ White ■ Asian ■ Hispanic or Latino ■ Black ■ Mixed or other



Data: [NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates](#), [U.S. Census Bureau](#); Chart: Connor Rothschild/Axios

# The Doctoral Degree Pipeline: Benefits of Equity & Representation

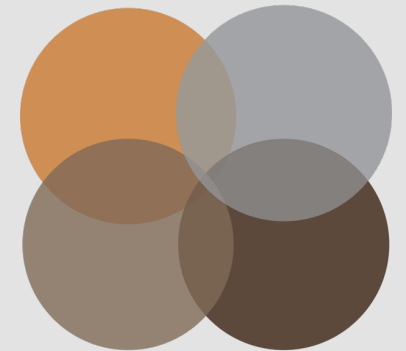
Fig. 1.



*Increased representativeness within the overall science system is central to improving science and societal benefits.*

Graves Jr, J. L., Kearney, M., Barabino, G., & Malcom, S. (2022). Inequality in science and the case for a new agenda. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 119(10), e2117831119.

# Engaging Undergraduates in Research



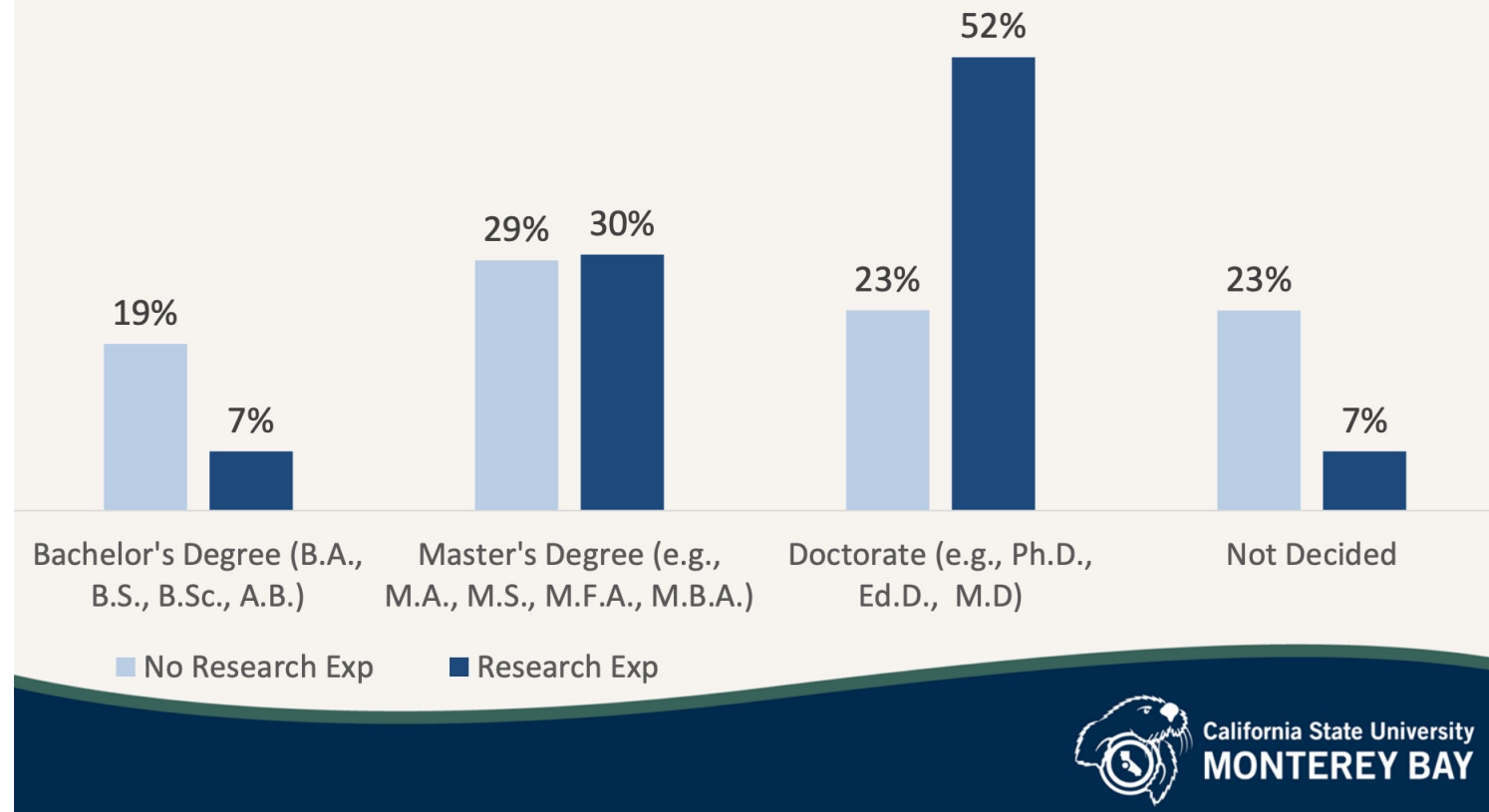
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## Engaging Undergraduates in Research:

*Students who participate in undergrad research are more likely to earn doctorate.*

## Educational Aspirations

- Students who have research experience are significantly more likely to aspire to go to graduate school, especially at the doctoral level



Engaging  
Undergraduates  
in Research

*Opportunities for  
Students*

# 5 **Practical Benefits** *of* **Undergraduate Research**

1. **Units to Graduate**

2. **GPA Booster**

3. **Unique Resume  
Builder**

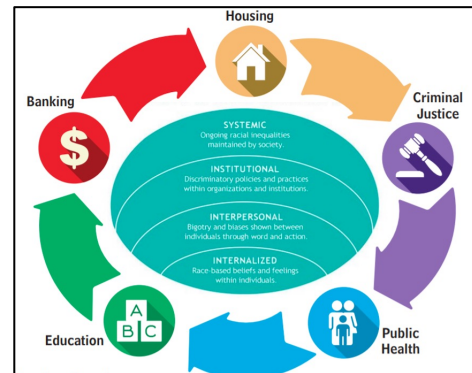
4. **Great Networking  
Opportunity**

5. **Professional Reference  
Letters and  
Recommendations**

# Engaging Undergraduates in Research:

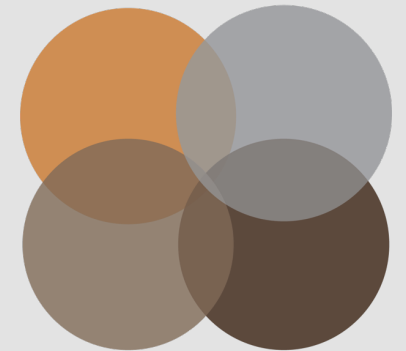
## Barriers for Students

- Lower rates of participation in UR
  - First-generation
  - Low-income
  - Transfer
  - Adult learners
  - Students of color are all less likely to participate in UR (even at MSIs)
  - Pell eligible students



Haeger, H., Armstron-Land, M., & Smith, C. (2019). Identifying and breaking down barriers to participation in undergraduate research. <https://researchinsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/IDBarriersUndergrad-HaegerArmstrong-LandSmith2019.pdf>

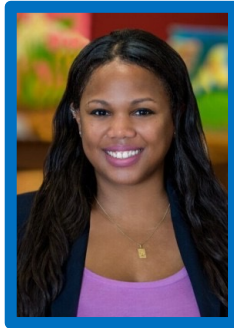
# Project Teamwork



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# Project Team: SCSU Faculty, Students, Community Partners



# Harm Reduction Framework

## Principles of Harm Reduction

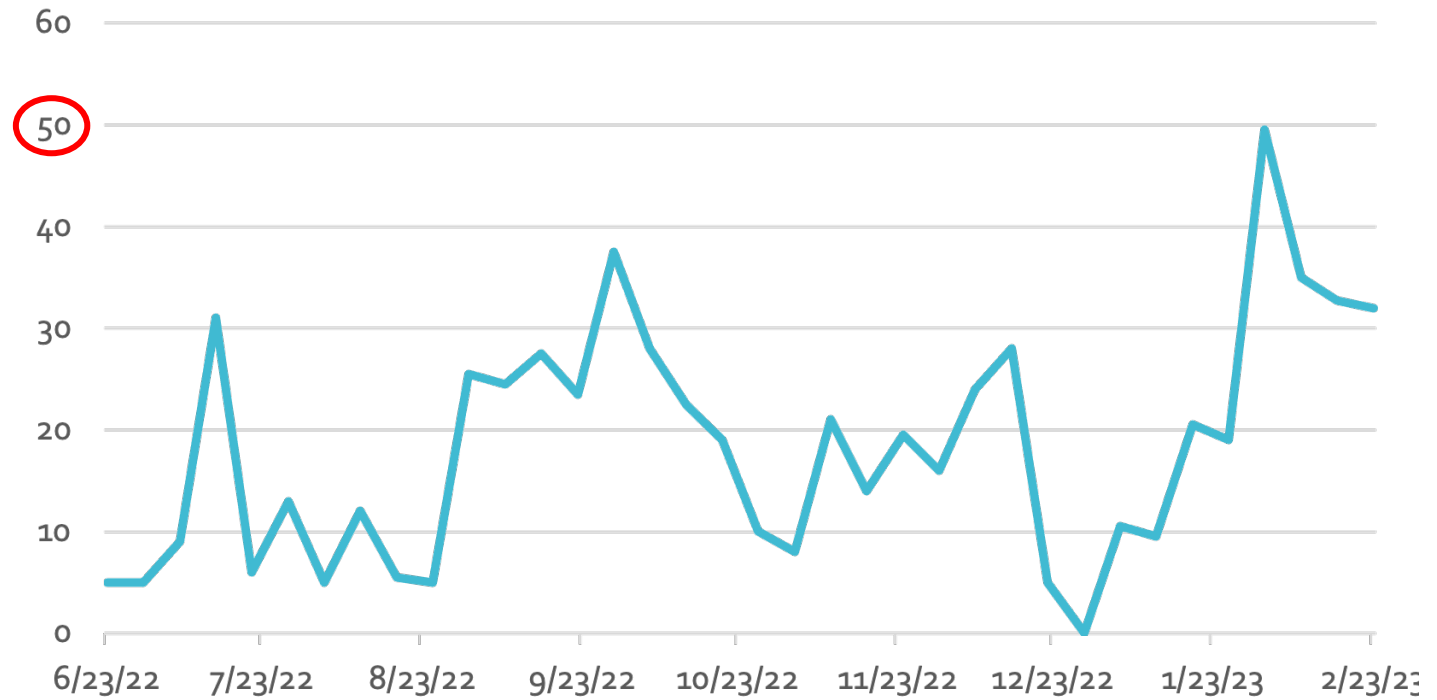
<https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

- Meet people where they are.
- Non-judgmental, non-coercive.
- Any level of engagement is better than no engagement.
- Understands engagement in research is a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that encompasses a continuum of behaviors and acknowledges that people will engage in different ways.
- Ensures that undergrads have a real voice in the creation of research opportunities designed to engage them.
- Recognizes that the realities of poverty, class, racism, social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination, and other social inequalities affect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for engaging in research.
- Whatever the question, the answer is yes.

Harm Reduction  
Framework:

Meeting People  
Where They Are

Team Hours Per Week



## Team Building



- Orientation**
- CITI Certification
  - Teams: Read, Listen, Watch
  - Website Photo & Bio
  - Office Hours Schedule

- Communication**
- Friday Meetings
  - Group Text
  - Teams Work
  - Email
- 

## Community Engagement

- Meetings**
- Ryan White
  - Reentry Roundtables
  - Yale CIRA QRWG
  - CT Social Work Action Alliance (SWAA)

- Volunteer**
- SWAN
  - City Wide Youth
  - Stop Solitary CT
  - DESK
- 



## Data Collection

- Create Instruments**
- Demographic Survey
  - Life History Interview
  - COVID Calendar Interview

- Develop Recruitment Plan**
- Logo & Website
  - Flyers & Outreach
  - IRB Approval



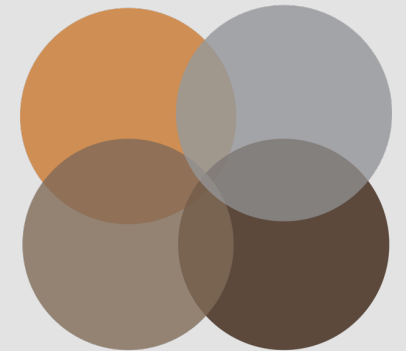
## Analysis & Dissemination

- Data Management & Analysis**
- Transcribe
  - RQI: Summarize & Share
  - Code & Thematic Analysis



- Dissemination**
- Peer Reviewed Journals
  - Conferences
  - Community Meetings
  - Website/Social Media

# Data Collection & Preliminary Findings



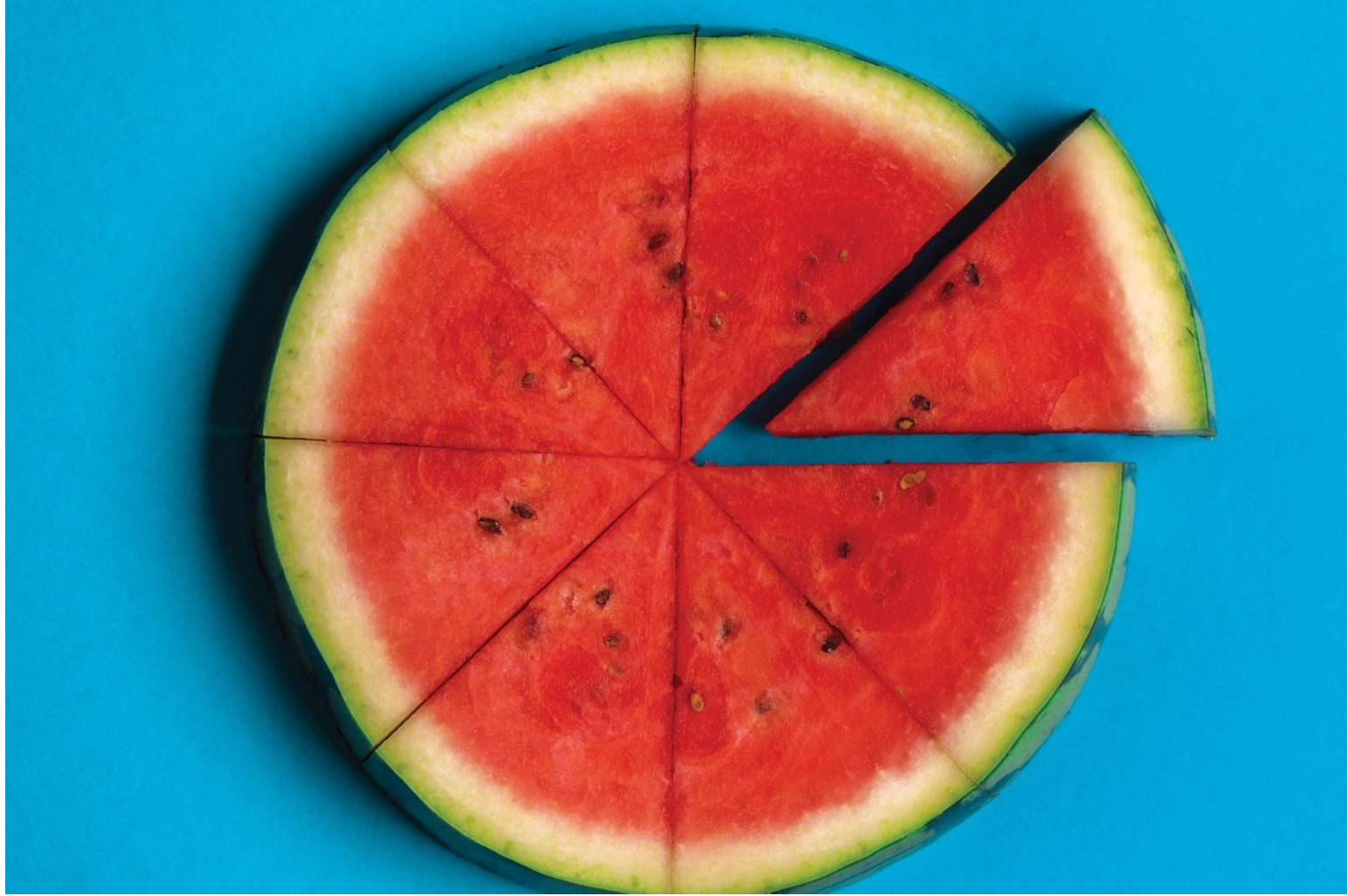
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# Social Science: Qualitative and Quantitative

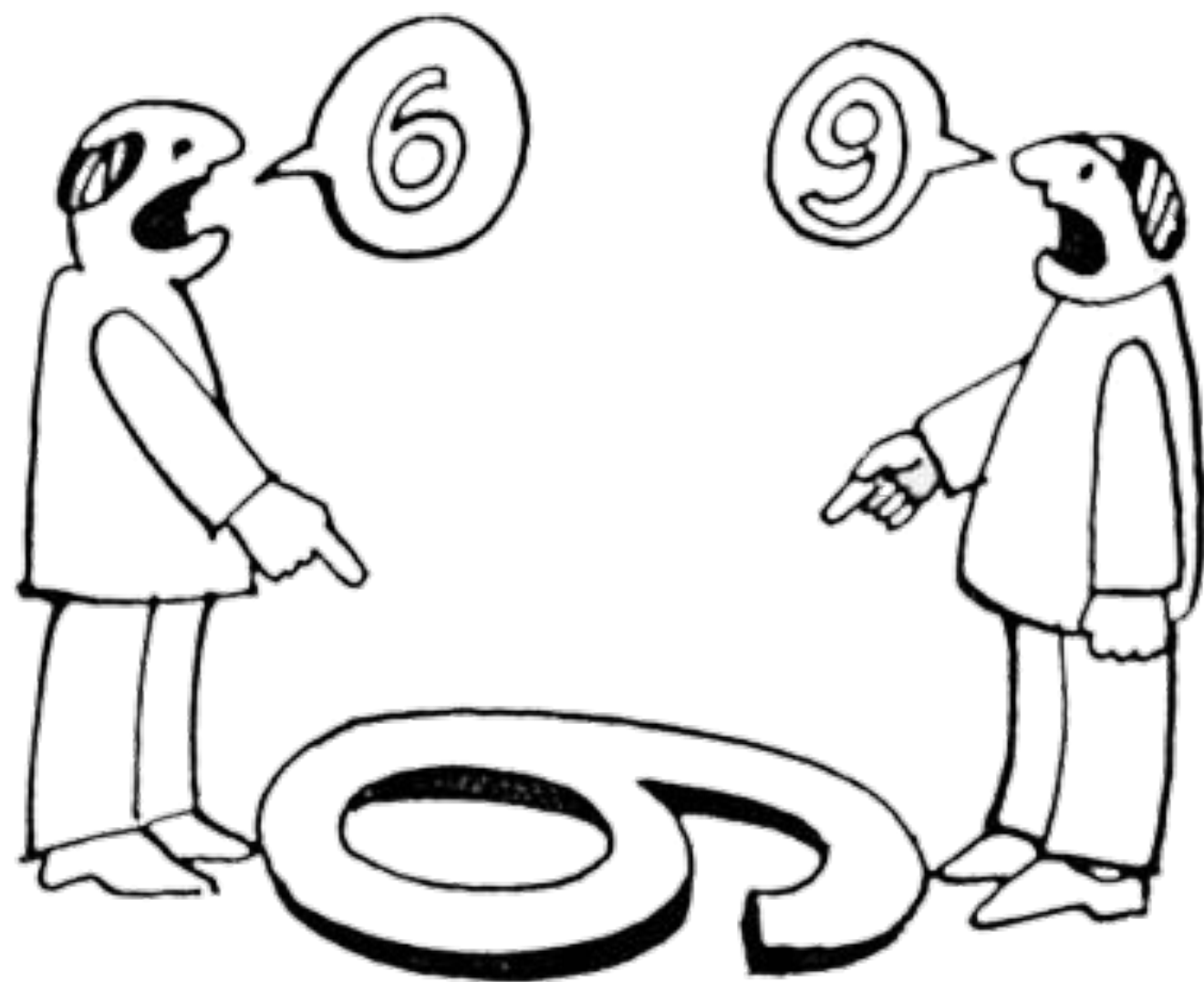


# Qualitative: Narrative Analysis









# What was your COVID experience?

**A research study with  
formerly incarcerated women.**

*Amy Smoyer, a social work researcher at Southern Connecticut State University, is interviewing women with histories of drug use and incarceration to learn more about their lives during the first year of the COVID-19 epidemic (2020-2021).*

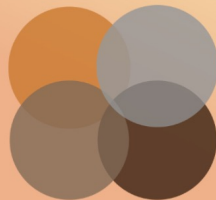
## **Eligibility Criteria**

- Age 18 or older
- History of drug use
- Incarcerated at York CI at least 3 times before March 2020

## **Study Information**

- This study includes 1 survey (30 min) + 2 interviews (60-90 min).
- All participants will be compensated for their time: \$20 for survey and \$40 for each interview.

**All participation will be confidential. No names or  
other identifying information will be shared.**



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If you are interested in participating,  
please complete contact form at:  
<https://tinyurl.com/SHAWN23>



	Queen	Cathy	Elaine	Jessica	Elle
Age	45	56	37	41	38
Race	Black	Black	Latina	Latina	Latina
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	Heterosexual	Bisexual	Bisexual	Bisexual
Drug Use	Alcohol, Cannabis, Hallucinogenic, Opioids	Cocaine	Alcohol, Cannabis, Cocaine, Stimulants	Alcohol, Cannabis, Hallucinogenic	Alcohol, Cannabis, Cocaine, Heroin (injection drug use)
Number of Children	2	2	5	2	2
Loss of Child	Death (Cancer)	Death (accident), Incarceration	DCF	Death, DCF	DCF
Sex Work	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
History of Homelessness	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COVID	Unhoused, using drugs	Working fast food, arrested on warrant	Rent room, sex work, arrested	Unhoused, Substance Use	Living in motel with GF, sex work, IDU

# Questions & Ideas



[www.theshawnproject.com](http://www.theshawnproject.com)

Thank you!

