

Basic Statistics

• Current state and federal prison population: More than 2.3 million or 1 in 100 adults on any given day⁹

in prison populations to get us back to where we were.

• U.S. share of world population of incarcerated people: 25%¹⁸

• Annual jail population: Approximately 730,000¹⁰ on any given day, or a total of 13 million people annually¹¹

• Total under correctional control (including incarceration, probation, and parole): 6.9 million¹² or 1 in 31 adults¹³

• Current incarceration relative to US average from 1925-1970: 5x¹⁴

• Current incarceration relative to Western Europe: 6-8x¹⁵

• The incarceration rate for black males is about 4,700 per 100,000, or several times the rate at which South Africa was locking up black men just before apartheid ended.¹⁶

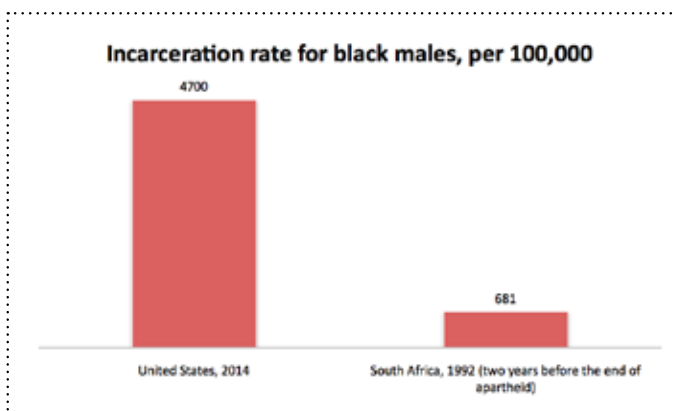
"...So the custom in Yiddish of counting negatively - *nit ein, nit zvei* - has deep roots in Jewish culture and consciousness. A fear of numbering prompts us to be circumspect. And I would dare to say that for Jews demography is not a value-free science. Our numbers are too small to be carefree or indifferent. For a vulnerable minority counting is always a matter of gravity."²³

**- Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, PhD,
Chancellor Emeritus of the
Jewish Theological Seminary**

• U.S. share of world population of incarcerated women: 32.2%¹⁹

• Rates of drug use in black vs. white Americans: roughly equal, or slightly higher in white communities²⁰

• Rate of arrest for drug use in black vs. white Americans: more than 3x greater²¹



It's important to note that aggregating statistics nationally obscures the "profound variations"²² from one jurisdiction to another across the country, including from neighborhood to neighborhood within one city. Ultimately, the issue of

• Reduction needed to return incarceration rate to 1970 level: 80%.¹⁷ This means that even ending most or all prison time for non-violent drug offences will not provide sufficient reductions

mass incarceration is one that must be tackled state-by-state, as most incarcerated people are in state, not federal prisons.

⁹ <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2008/02/28/one-in-100-behind-bars-in-america-2008>

¹⁰ <http://www.vera.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/incarcerations-front-door-report.pdf>

¹¹ <http://www.nij.gov/journals/270/pages/criminal-records.aspx>

¹² <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=5177>

¹³ <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/about/news-room/press-releases/0001/01/01/one-in-31-us-adults-are-behind-bars-on-parole-or-probation>

¹⁴ <http://faculty.washington.edu/matsueda/courses/587/readings/Western%20and%20Pettit.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://faculty.washington.edu/matsueda/courses/587/readings/Western%20and%20Pettit.pdf>

¹⁶ Gottschalk, p. 121

¹⁷ <https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/03/04/how-to-cut-the-prison-population-by-50-percent>

¹⁸ <https://www.aclu.org/prison-crisis>

¹⁹ http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/prisonstudies.org/files/resources/downloads/wfil_2nd_edition.pdf

²⁰ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/17/racial-disparity-drug-use_n_3941346.html, based on 2011 data from the

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

²¹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/17/racial-disparity-drug-use_n_3941346.html, based on 2009 data from Human Rights Watch.

²² Gottschalk, p. 266

²³ <https://www.jtsa.edu/prebuilt/ParashahArchives/5762/bamidbar.shtml>