



Study Questions for *The Thread* Episode 2:

Maya Schenwar interview:

- What has led to the prison system that we currently have? Is there a problem with reinforcing the system as it is currently designed and structured?
- Why is it necessary to examine and critique prison reforms?
- Why is it so important for people who are incarcerated/formerly incarcerated to lead the fight for reforms in the criminal justice system?
- What are some examples of reforms that may be effective for pregnant women who are incarcerated, instead of the “Moms and Babies” program that they currently have in place in Illinois?
- What is an example of a transformative reform/reparations that occurred as a result of resistance to and organizing against Chicago Police torture victims?
- Many believe that predictive policing and “Broken Window” policies have “cleaned up crime” cities throughout America, but what are the issues with this type of policing? How does it relate to/reflect the prison system itself?
- Maya says that there are three questions you should ask when a reform is being proposed. What do you think of these? The questions are:
 - Is this proposed reform going to increase the amount of police on the streets?
 - If this proposed reform going to increase the funding to police?
 - Does the proposed reform involve technology (and pretending to be a silver bullet)?
- What does it mean that many social scientists believe prisons are criminogenic?
- What happened to crime in states that have decreased their prison populations in recent years?
- What scares the less revolutionary reformers so much about the idea of decarceration? How could decarcerating prisons decrease harm on the inside of prisons and on the outside in society?
- What types of things could replace the criminal justice and prison systems, which could address the root of crime, the need for safety, and for repairing people who are harmed and who do harm?



Kinetik Justice interview Pt. 2:

- What was one of the major successes of the recent Alabama Prison Strike? How was it defeated/weakened?
- What are the economics of the prison system? What are the numbers on the “balance sheet” of how much we pay for prisons and how much money is made from them?
- How should we approach the idea of building newer, safer prisons for people?
- What factors have led to this phenomenon of mass incarceration? How did mass incarceration fit into the changing economy from the 1970s until now?
- Kinetik speaks of how he got involved in prison politics and activism. How can groups use his experience to recruit others to their cause?
- What kind of training, education, and self-help programs can people in prison create and run for themselves? What are some examples that Kinetik spoke about?
- How can people learn from organizing that they don’t necessarily learn from reading and studying alone?
- How can we support the next planned prison strike (which will include institutions across multiple states) on the anniversary of the Attica Uprising, September 9th?
- Can you connect Kinetik’s testimonials, motivation, and strategies within prisons to Maya’s focus on issues from the outside? Can we learn from these two activists on either side of the wall and how to connect other activists whether they are incarcerated or not?

Feedback for The Thread:

- Do you have feedback on the Working Principles?
- What unresolved questions or feedback did you or your group have about this podcast?
- Are there follow up topics/issues you’d like to see explored in future podcasts?
- Can someone from your group post feedback at defeatmassincarceration.com or send to brokenonallsidesintern@gmail.com or 419 Johnson St., Jenkintown, PA 19095?