

## **Mothers of Incarcerated Sons as Invisible Victims: An Intervention**

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### **Abstract**

In 2007, 2.3 million people, the overwhelming majority of whom are males, lived inside United States prisons. In this feminist intervention, I examine how the incarceration of male prisoners affects every aspect of the lives of their mothers. The first part of the paper interrogates some of the dominant, traditional constructions of motherhood and the role these play in the constitution of the “unconscious foundations” that shape mothers’ reactions to the incarceration of their sons. In the second part, drawing on the theories of Gramsci and Freiri, I reflect on the resistance of these mothers to participate in what would have been a fieldwork-based project, and to communication and self-examination more generally. I, thus, conclude that these women, like many other marginalized groups, would benefit from progressive activist intervention that would provide them with the education, information, and above all, agency that would enable them to understand their conditions of existence and affect social change.

**Keywords:** mothers, motherhood, incarceration, prison, sons, social change, feminist theory, Gramscian theory, Freirian theory.

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