

Curriculum Vitae

MICHAEL GIBSON-LIGHT

University of Denver  
Sociology & Criminology  
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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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- 2024 – **Associate Professor of Sociology & Criminology**, University of Denver  
2019 – 2024 **Assistant Professor of Sociology & Criminology**, University of Denver

EDUCATION & TRAINING

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- 2019 **Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology**, University of Arizona  
*Title: “The Prison as Market: How Penal Labor Systems Reproduce Inequality”*
- 2013 **Master of Arts in Sociology**, University of Arizona
- 2009 **Bachelor of Arts in Sociology**, with honors, University of Missouri–St. Louis

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

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**Books**

Gibson-Light, Michael. In preparation. *Organizing Outlaws: The American Prison Labor Movement and the Struggle Against Mass Incarceration* [tentative title]. New York: Russell Sage Foundation Press.

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. *Orange-Collar Labor: Work and Inequality in Prison*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: [9780190055400](https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soad086)

- ◆ *Review*: Hatton, Erin. 2023. “Review of ‘Orange-Collar Labor: Work and Inequality in Prison.’” *Social Forces* 102(2):e1-e3.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soad086>
- ◆ *Review*: Ross, Jeffrey Ian. 2024. “Michael Gibson-Light: *Orange-Collar Labor: Work and Inequality in Prison*.” *Critical Criminology* (online first).  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-024-09757-5>

**Refereed Journal Articles**

Gibson-Light, Michael and Philip Goodman. 2025. “The Consent of the Punished: Toward a Gramscian Theory of Penal Punishment, Labor, and Control.” *Incarceration* 6:1-19.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/26326663251341190>

- Davis, Andrew P., Michael Gibson-Light, Jessica Pfaffendorf, and Christian Alberg. 2025. "Incarceration, Stigma, and Labor Power: The Prison as Neoliberal Labor Governance Institution in 36 OECD Countries." *Social Science Research* 129:1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2025.103177>
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. "The Ghosts Inside: The Historic Struggle to Reclassify Prison Labor, 1967 – 1979." *The Prison Journal* 103(4):489-512. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00328855231188430>
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. "Remote Control: Horizontal Surveillance and the Gendering of Carceral Punishment." *Theoretical Criminology* 27(2):245-264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13624806221082094>
- Davis, Andrew P., Michael Gibson-Light, Eric Bjorklund, and Teron Nunley. 2022. "Institutional Arrangements and Power Threat: Diversity, Democracy, and Punitive Attitudes." *Justice Quarterly* 39(7):1545-1564. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2022.2045343>
- Gibson-Light, Michael and Josh Seim. 2020. "Punishing Fieldwork: Penal Domination and Prison Ethnography." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 49(5):666-690. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0891241620932982>
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2020. "Sandpiles of Dignity: Labor Status and Boundary-Making in the Contemporary American Prison." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 6(1):198-216. <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2020.6.1.09>
- Davis, Andrew P. and Michael Gibson-Light. 2020. "Difference & Punishment: Ethno-Political Exclusion, Colonial Institutional Legacies, and Incarceration." *Punishment & Society* 22(1):3-27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1462474518816643>
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2018. "Ramen Politics: Informal Money and Logics of Resistance in the Contemporary American Prison." *Qualitative Sociology* 41(2):199-220. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-018-9376-0>
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2017. "Classification Struggles in Semi-Formal and Precarious Work: Lessons from Inmate\* Labor and Cultural Production." *Research in the Sociology of Work* 31:61-90. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0277-283320170000031002> (also available via [Google Scholar](#))
- Rivas, Ricardo and Michael Gibson-Light. 2016. "Exploring Culture through In-Depth Interviews: Is it Useful to Ask People What They Think, Mean, and Do?" ["Explorando fenómenos culturales a través de entrevistas en profundidad: ¿de qué sirve preguntar a las personas acerca de lo que piensan, de lo que quieren decir y de lo que hacen?"] *Cinta de Moebio* 57:316-329. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0717-554X2016000300007>
- Gibson, Michael. 2014. "'That's Hip-Hop to Me': Temporal Logics of Authenticity in Independent Cultural Production." *Poetics* 46:38-55. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2014.09.002>

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\* I have since ceased using this term unless quoting others, guided in part by Cox (2020) and Solomon (2021).

### **Book Chapters**

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2020. "Foreword." Pp. v-viii in *The Pawn*, by Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez. Seattle: Amazon Publishing. ISBN: [0578635798](#)

### **Book Reviews**

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. Book Review: "Danielle Rudes with Shannon Magnuson and Angela Hattery, *Surviving Solitary: Living and Working in Restricted Housing Units.*" *Punishment & Society* 25(5):1389-1391. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F14624745221117520>

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2022. Book Review: "Erin Hatton, *Coerced: Work Under Threat of Punishment.*" *Punishment & Society* 24(2):287-289. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1462474520980812>

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2019. Book Review: "Bruce Western, *Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison.*" *International Sociology* 34(5):639-641. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0268580919870742b>

### **Encyclopedia Entries**

Puetz, Kyle and Michael Gibson. 2015. "Authenticity." Pp. 160-161 in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Economics & Society*, edited by F. F. Wherry and J. Schor. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452206905.n68>

### **Other Publications**

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2024. "Sociologists on the Value of Their Work to Society: Michael Gibson-Light." *Footnotes: A Magazine of the American Sociological Association* 52(2). <https://www.asanet.org/footnotes-article/sociologists-on-the-value-of-their-work-to-society/>

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2022. "The Forgotten Labors of the Imprisoned: A Snapshot." Featured article in *Crime, Law, and Deviance News: Newsletter for the Crime, Law, and Deviance section of the American Sociological Association*, Fall/Winter. <https://www.asanet.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Crime-Law-and-Deviance-2022-Fall-Winter.pdf>

Gibson, Michael. 2008. "Working for CHAMP after Hours: The Role of Volunteers in the CHAMP Program." Pp. 46-59 in *Research Report: An Evaluation of the CHAMP Service Dog Training Program at the Women's Eastern Reception, Diagnostic, & Correctional Center*, edited by Jody Miller. St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri–St. Louis.

## ACADEMIC TALKS & PRESENTATIONS

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### **Invited Talks**

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2025. "Keynote Address: Prison Labor from the Ground Up: From the Field to the Archives." Teaching With Primary Sources. March 28. Princeton University Industrial Relations Section and the Prison Teaching Initiative, Princeton University.

Princeton, NJ.

- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2024. "The Consent of the Punished: A Gramscian Revisit of an American Prison Ethnography." The Social Analysis of Penalty across Boundaries Workshop Series. October 31. The Scottish Center of Crime and Justice Research (University of Glasgow, Scotland) and the Crime and Society Programs (National University of the Littoral, Argentina). *(Presented virtually)*
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2024. "(Prison) Labor & Employment." Denver Law Review Annual Symposium: Debt & Financial Insecurity in the Modern Economy. April 13. Sturm College of Law, University of Denver. Denver, CO.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2024. "Conditions Inside: Contemporary and Historical Prison Labor Struggles." Punishment Beyond Incarceration Symposium. April 4. Urban Institute and the Watson Institute of International Public Affairs, Brown University. Providence, RI.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. "Texas Book Salon: *Orange-Collar Labor*." Sociology Colloquium Series. October 19. University of Texas at Austin. Austin, TX. *(Presented virtually)*
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. "I Owe My Soul to the Commissary Store: Economic Stratification Behind Bars." IRP Seminar. April 20. Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin–Madison. Madison, WI.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2022. "Horizontal Surveillance and the Gendering of Carceral Punishment." U of I Sociology Colloquium. February 18. University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign. Urbana, IL. *(Presented virtually)*
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2021. "'There's Rules in Prison': Penal Labor as Racialized and Racializing." USC Sociology Colloquium. April 14. University of Southern California. Los Angeles, CA. *(Presented virtually)*
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2020. "Dignity, Work, and Punishment Behind Bars." Exclusion and Extraction: A Symposium on Criminal Justice Contact and Labor Reallocation. April 17. University of California–Berkeley Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. Berkeley, CA. *(Event cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic)*
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2020. "Punching the Jailhouse Clock: Investigating Inequality at Work in an American Prison." Sociology in Action Annual Lecture. February 18. University of Houston. Houston, TX.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2017. "Prisoner Labor and the Production of an Underclass." March 15. University of Cambridge Prisons Research Centre. Cambridge, United Kingdom.

### **Conference Presentations**

- Gibson-Light, Michael and Philip Goodman. 2025. "Toward a Gramscian Theory of Punishment, Labor, and Control." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 10. Chicago, IL.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2024. "Privileging the Penal Press: Inverting the Hierarchy of Credibility in Historical Prison Research." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology.

November 14. San Francisco, CA.

- Davis, Andrew P., Michael Gibson-Light, and Jessica Pfaffendorf. 2024. "Incarceration, Stigma, and Labor Power." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 10. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. "Author-Meets-Critics: *Orange-Collar Labor*." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 17. Philadelphia, PA.
- Kinney, Alexander and Michael Gibson-Light. 2023. "Unpacking Institutional Peculiarity." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 17. Philadelphia, PA.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. "The Historic Struggle to Reclassify Prison Labor." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 19. Philadelphia, PA.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. "Mobilizing the Convicted Class: The Struggle for Prisoner Unionization at the Eve of Mass Incarceration." Annual Meeting of the Southern Sociological Society. April 1. Myrtle Beach, SC.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2022. "Organizing Outlaws: The Struggle to Reclassify Prison Labor at the Eve of Mass Incarceration." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 19. Atlanta, GA.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2022. "Public Impact: Prison Labor in the United States." University of Denver Public Impact Fellows Meeting. May 16. Denver, CO.
- Davis, Andrew P., Michael Gibson-Light, Jessica Pfaffendorf, and Christian Alberg. 2021. "Incarceration and Labor Power: The Prison as Neoliberal Labor Governance Institution in 36 OECD Countries, 1960 – 2017." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 17. Chicago, IL.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2020. "Resisting and Reframing: Prisoner Responses to (In)Dignity in Penal Labor." Annual Meeting of the Law and Society Association. May 29. Denver, CO. (*Presented virtually*)
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2020. "Data Transparency and Ethnography: A View from Inside a Paramilitary Organization." Arizona Methods Workshop / ASA Methods Section Mid-Year Meeting: Replication and Rigor in the Social Sciences. March 20. Tucson, AZ. (*Event cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic*)
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2019. "Diffuse Surveillance Structures in the Contemporary Prison: The Gendering of Discipline and the Shifting Burden of Rehabilitation Under Neoliberal Penology." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 15. San Francisco, CA.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2019. "Sandpiles of Dignity: Labor Status and Symbolic Boundary-Making in the Contemporary American Prison." Russell Sage Foundation, The Criminal Justice System as a Labor Market Institution Conference. February 22. New York, NY.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2018. "The Prison as Segmented Labor Market: Ethnographic Insights into Penal Labor Structure and Practice." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological

- Association. August 11. Philadelphia, PA.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2018. "The Dignity of Working Inmates: Prisoner Strategies and Workplace Games." Annual Meeting of the Law and Society Association. June 7. Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2017. "Hard Work, Harder Time: Penal Labor Structure and the Reproduction of the Underclass." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 15. Philadelphia, PA.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2017. "Class Difference behind Bars: Inmate Labor Stratification and Access to Formal and Informal Prison Markets." Economic Sociology and Organizations, Occupations, & Work: Fellow Travelers on Different Roads, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting Preconference. August 11. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Puetz, Kyle and Michael Gibson-Light. 2017. "Moral Rhetorics of Authenticity: A Repertoire-Theoretical Analysis of Authenticity within a Field of Restricted Production." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 12. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2016. "Labor, Power, and Inmate Consent: Work as an Apparatus of Control in an American Prison." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 16. New Orleans, LA.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2016. "Must Work for Food: The Politics of Nutrition and Informal Economy in an American Prison." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 22. Seattle, WA.
- Gibson, Michael. 2015. "What's in a Name: Towards a Framework for Theorizing Boundary Categories of Work." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 23. Chicago, IL.
- Davis, Andrew and Michael Gibson. 2015. "Stand Up and Cut Down: Authenticity and Validation in Comedy Production Venues." Annual Meeting of the Southern Sociological Society. March 26. New Orleans, LA.
- Puetz, Kyle and Michael Gibson. 2014. "Narrative Identity in Culture Industries: An Individualist Model of Authentic Action in Contemporary Hip-Hop." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 18. San Francisco, CA.
- Gibson, Michael. 2013. "'That's Hip-Hop to Me': Temporal Logics of Authenticity in Independent Cultural Production." Arizona Culture Workshop. October 9. University of Arizona. Tucson, AZ.
- Sallaz, Jeffrey and Michael Gibson. 2013. "What is Outsourcing? How the New Industrial Revolution has been Framed in Newspaper Editorials." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. August 12. New York, NY.
- Gibson, Michael. 2013. "Temporal Distinctions and Relation to Convention in Claims to Authenticity among Cultural Producers." Annual Meeting of the Chicago Ethnography Conference. March 2. Chicago, IL.

Gibson, Michael. 2009. "Willingness to Protest in the United States: Who Protests and Why." University of Missouri–St. Louis Undergraduate Research Symposium. May 1. St. Louis, MO.

Gibson, Michael. 2008. "Working for CHAMP after Hours: The Role of Volunteers in a Prison-Based Service Dog Training Program." Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. November 14. St. Louis, MO.

### **Panel Participation**

Panel Discussant, 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. Panel title: *Carcerality: Prisons, Race, and Inequality*. August 10. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Panel Co-Organizer, 2023 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. Panel title: *Theorizing "The Prison" as an Institution*, Roundtable Session. November 17. Philadelphia, PA.

Panel Co-Organizer and Discussant, 2021 Annual Meeting of the Law and Society Association. Panel title: *Prison Economies: Exploitation, Predation, and Resistance inside Carceral Spaces*, CRN 27: Punishment and Society. May 28. Chicago, IL. (Panel presented virtually)

Panel Presider, 2019 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. Panel title: *Ethnography / Ethnographic Studies*, Regular Session. August 10. New York, NY.

Panel Convener, 2018 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. Panel title: *Social Organization of the Prison: Moving Past Classic Debates using New Qualitative Research*, Area VII: The Criminal Justice System. November 15. Atlanta, GA.

Panel Presider, 2017 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. Panel title: *The Everyday Life and Subculture of Prison Inmates*, Area VII: Criminal Justice Policy & Practice, Corrections. November 15. Philadelphia, PA.

Panel Presider, 2016 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology. Panel title: *Correctional Programming*, Area VII: Criminal Justice Policy & Practice, Corrections. November 16. New Orleans, LA.

Panel Presider, 2015 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. Panel title: *Job Insecurity and Precarious Employment*, Section on Organizations, Occupations, & Work. August 23. Chicago, IL.

Assistant Coordinator, 2013 The Poetics and Politics of Hip-Hop Cultures Symposium. University of Arizona Conflucenter for Creative Inquiry. February 7-8. Tucson, AZ.

### **SELECT RESEARCH GRANTS & FUNDING**

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#### **External Research Funding**

2025 – 2026 Fellowship, National Endowment for the Humanities, Award Number FEL-301742 (\$60,000) (*Fellowship terminated by federal "Department of*

*Government Efficiency”)*

- 2025 Mid-Career Fellowship in Interdisciplinary Legal Studies, Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy, University at Buffalo, SUNY (\$10,000)
- 2023 – 2024 Pipeline Grant, Russell Sage Foundation and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Reference Number 2210-40058 (\$29,999)
- 2023 Summer Stipend, National Endowment for the Humanities, Application Number FT-291244 (\$6,000)
- 2017 Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, National Science Foundation, Award Number 1665067 (\$11,869)

**Select Internal University Funding**

- 2025 Dean’s Meritorious Sabbatical Award, University of Denver, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, Reference Number 81525-140807 (\$5,000)
- 2024 Rosenberry Fund Travel Grant, University of Denver (\$800)
- 2022 – 2023 Faculty Research Fund, University of Denver, Reference Number 80159-140807 (\$2,929)
- 2023 Rosenberry Fund Travel Grant, University of Denver (\$500)
- 2016 – 2017 Fredrick A. and Margaret S. Conrad Fellowship, University of Arizona School of Sociology (\$9,265)
- 2012 – 2013 Peter Likins Fellowship, University of Arizona (\$10,000)

**AWARDS & HONORS**

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**Professional Organization Awards & Honors**

- 2024 Outstanding Book Award, American Sociological Association Section on Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility (*Orange-Collar Labor: Work and Inequality in Prison*), honorable mention
- 2023 Distinguished Scholarly Book Award, American Sociological Association Section on Labor & Labor Movements (*Orange-Collar Labor: Work and Inequality in Prison*), recipient
- 2023 Noteworthy Book in Industrial Relations and Labor Economics, Princeton University Industrial Relations Section, honoree
- 2020 Law and Society Association Dissertation Prize (“The Prison as Market: How Penal Labor Systems Reproduce Inequality”), honorable mention
- 2019 James D. Thompson Graduate Student Paper Award, American Sociological Association Section on Organizations, Occupations, & Work (“Sandpiles of Dignity: Labor Status and Boundary-Making in the Contemporary American Prison”), recipient
- 2019 2019 Graduate Student Paper Award, American Sociological Association Section on the Sociology of Law (“Sandpiles of Dignity: Labor Status and Boundary-Making in the Contemporary American Prison”), honorable mention
- 2018 Graduate Student Paper Award, American Society of Criminology Division on International Criminology (“Difference & Punishment: Ethno-Political Exclusion, Colonial Institutional Legacies, and Incarceration,” with Andrew P. Davis), recipient
- 2017 Graduate Student Paper Award, American Society of Criminology Division on Critical Criminology & Social Justice (“Ramen Politics: Informal Money and Logics of Resistance in the Contemporary American Prison”), recipient

- 2017 Graduate Student Paper Award, American Society of Criminology Division on Corrections & Sentencing (“Ramen Politics: Informal Money and Logics of Resistance in the Contemporary American Prison”), recipient
- 2017 Robert Dentler Award for Outstanding Student Achievement, American Sociological Association Section on Sociological Practice & Public Sociology, recipient

***Internal University Honors***

2021 – 2022 Public Impact Fellow, University of Denver

**PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

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***Grant Peer Reviewing***

- 2024 Russell Sage Foundation, Dissertation Research Grants Program
- 2023 National Science Foundation Law and Science Program, Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant
- 2022 National Science Foundation Law and Science Program, Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant

***Journal Manuscript Peer Reviewing***

- 2024 *Theoretical Criminology; Social Forces*
- 2023 *Punishment & Society; American Sociological Review*
- 2022 *American Sociological Review; Theoretical Criminology; Howard Journal of Crime and Justice; Journal of Prisoners on Prisons*
- 2021 *American Journal of Sociology; Criminology; Social Problems; Punishment & Society; Food & Foodways; Body & Society; Sociological Perspectives*
- 2020 *American Journal of Sociology; Sociological Perspectives; Social Forces; Theory & Society; Punishment & Society*
- 2018 *Punishment & Society; Social Problems; Qualitative Sociology*
- 2017 *Poetics*

***Book Peer Reviewing***

- 2025 Russell Sage Foundation Press
- 2023 Oxford University Press
- 2021 W. W. Norton
- 2020 Routledge
- 2018 University of California Press
- 2015 Taylor and Francis
- 2013 Routledge

**SELECT PROFESSIONAL SERVICE WORK**

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***Departmental Service***

2023 – 2025 Senator, University of Denver Faculty Senate

- 2024 Committee Member, Sociology & Criminology Assessment Committee (Spring 2024)
- 2024 Search Committee Member, Sociology of Law and Inequality Hiring Committee, University of Denver (Winter 2024)
- 2022 – 2023 Search Committee Member, Sociology of Inequality Hiring Committee, University of Denver (Fall 2022, Winter 2023)
- 2021 Search Committee Member, Critical Race and Ethnic Studies (CRES) Program Founding Director, University of Denver (Fall 2021)

### ***University & Divisional Service***

- 2021 – 2022 Invited Fellow, Public Impact Fellows Program, University of Denver
- 2020 – 2021 Faculty Mentor, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences First-Gen Undergraduate Mentoring Pilot Program, University of Denver

### ***Professional Association Service***

- 2024 – 2026 Elected Section Council Member, American Sociological Association, Section on the Sociology of Law
- 2025 Nominations Committee Chair, American Sociological Association, Section on the Sociology of Law
- 2025 Award Committee Member, American Sociological Association, Section on Labor and Labor Movements, Clawson Award for Lifetime Activism
- 2024 Nominations Committee Member, American Sociological Association, Section on the Sociology of Law
- 2024 Award Committee Member, American Sociological Association, Section on Labor and Labor Movements, Distinguished Scholarly Book Award
- 2023 Award Committee Chair, American Sociological Association, Section on Crime, Law, & Deviance, Distinguished Student Paper Award
- 2022 – 2023 Program Committee Member, American Society of Criminology, 2023 ASC Annual Meeting, Area XI: Methodology – Advances in Qualitative Methods
- 2020 Award Committee Member, American Sociological Association, Section on Organizations, Occupations, & Work, Graduate Student Paper Award
- 2019 Award Committee Member, American Society of Criminology, Division on Critical Criminology & Social Justice, Book Award
- 2018 Award Committee Member, American Society of Criminology, Division on Critical Criminology & Social Justice, Student Paper Award
- 2018 Award Committee Member, American Society of Criminology, Division on Critical Criminology & Social Justice, Book Award

### ***Academic Journal Service***

- 2025 – 2028 Editorial Board Member, *Contemporary Sociology*
- 2025 – 2026 Co-Editor of Themed Issue (with Alexander Kinney), *Incarceration* (issue theme: “New Directions in Theorizing ‘The Prison’ as an Institution”)

## **STUDENT ADVISING & MENTORSHIP**

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### ***Graduate Dissertation and Thesis Advising***

- 2024 – Sarwat Sharif, PhD Dissertation Committee External Member, School of Social Welfare, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee (title: “Transformational Leadership and its Influence on a Short-Term Correctional Institution: A Comprehensive Study of Programming and Participant Outcomes”)
- 2024 Mansoor Ahmad, PhD Dissertation External Reviewer, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar, Pakistan (title: “Causes and Consequences of Recidivism: A Study of Selected Jails in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan”)
- 2021 – 2022 Sloan Rucker, MA Thesis Committee External Member, Department of Sociology, University of Houston (title: “An Intersectional Look at Black Women’s Experiences in Texas Prisons”)

### ***Undergraduate Thesis Advising***

- 2025 Sarah Stucki, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Socio-Legal Studies, University of Denver (title: “Communicating Grievability: An Analysis of Human Rights Reports on U.S. Drone Strikes”)
- 2025 Emily Borbón, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Socio-Legal Studies, University of Denver (title: “One Step Forward and Two Steps Back: Neoliberal Houseless Governance in the City of Denver”)
- 2025 Lily Baeza, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Denver (title: “Read All About It: Using Obituaries to Investigate How Co-Victims of Minoritized Murder Victims Memorialize Their Lost Loved Ones”)
- 2024 Eisha Mehroze, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Gender & Women’s Studies, University of Denver (title: “The Clash of Civilizations: Gender Equality Discourse in Europe, Far-Right Nationalism, and Securitizing the Spectre of Immigrant ‘Other’”)
- 2023 Connor Block, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Denver (title: “Inductive Analysis of Minnesota Newspaper Coverage of the 2000 George Floyd Protests”)
- 2022 Grace Gonzalez, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Denver (title: “Georgia’s HB 1059: Analyzing the Nation’s Toughest Sex Offender Bill and its Implications for Life Sentences”)
- 2022 Alexia Thompson, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Denver (title: “Colorado’s Rural War on Drugs: A Case Study of Grand Junction’s Legalized Marijuana Implementation, Local Politics, and Carceral Ethos”)
- 2022 I Made “Ade” Wijaya, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Denver (title: “Vignette: A Revitalized Approach to Exploring Perceptions of Crime”)
- 2021 Devanae Allen, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Denver (title: “Media Coverage of Police Brutality”)
- 2020 Aliyah Williams, Senior Thesis Committee Member, Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Denver (title: “Media Representation of African American Bodies: A Content Analysis of how COVID-19 has Misshapen Black Livelihoods”)

### ***Research Assistant Advising***

- 2024 Rylee Patrick, Undergraduate Research Assistant PI (Russell Sage Foundation Pipeline Grant Number 2210-40058), University of Denver (Winter 2024 –

- 2024 Spring 2024)  
Sage Williams, Undergraduate Research Assistant PI (Russell Sage Foundation Pipeline Grant Number 2210-40058), University of Denver (Winter 2024 – Spring 2024)
- 2022 – 2023 Grant Stansbury, Undergraduate Research Assistant PI (DU Faculty Research Fund Reference Number 80159-140807), University of Denver (Spring 2022, Winter 2023)
- 2022 Rachel Gorman, Undergraduate Research Assistant PI (DU Faculty Research Fund Reference Number 80159-140807), University of Denver (Spring 2022)
- 2022 I Made “Ade” Wijaya, Undergraduate Research Assistant PI, University of Denver (Winter 2022)
- 2017 – 2018 Korina Lopez, Undergraduate Research Assistant PI (National Science Foundation Award Number 1665067), University of Arizona (Fall 2017 – Spring 2018)
- 2012 – 2013 Martin Forstrom, Undergraduate Research Assistant PI, University of Arizona (Fall 2012 – Spring 2013)

### ***Other Mentorship & Advising***

- 2023 Tolaska Hunts Along, Independent Study Research Advisor, University of Denver (Spring 2023)
- 2020 – 2021 Anahi Quezada-Villa, College Mentor, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Denver (Fall 2020 – Spring 2021)
- 2020 – 2021 Zoe Guill, Independent Study Research Advisor, University of Denver (Fall 2020, Winter 2021)

## **PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY**

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### ***Public Service Positions***

- 2024 – Steering Committee Member, End Slavery Colorado Coalition
- 2024 – Research Committee Co-Chair, End Slavery Colorado Coalition
- 2022 – 2024 Research Committee Member, End Slavery Colorado Coalition

### ***Public Talks***

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2023. “Orange-Collar Labor in Colorado – A Juneteenth Panel Discussion.” Invited talk followed by a panel discussion joined by representatives of the Black Legislators Democratic Caucus of Colorado, Towards Justice, the Colorado Working Families Party, local religious leaders, and formerly incarcerated advocates. Shorter Community AME Church. June 19. Denver, CO.

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2022. “Dead Theorists: From Social Theory to Card Games.” Denver Public Library, Ross-University Hills Branch. November 12. Denver, CO.

### ***Public Writing & Materials***

Gibson-Light, Michael. 2024 – 2025. Research review to support *Colorado House Bill 25-1013: Concerning Social Visitation Rights for a Person Confined in a Correctional Facility*. Completed as co-chair of End Slavery Colorado Research Committee. [HB25-1013](#).

- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2024. Expert declaration in *Lilgerose v. Polis et al.* Invited by counsel for the Plaintiffs.
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2022. *Dead Theorists: A Card Game for Disillusioned Philosophers and Aspiring Academics*. Portland, OR: Microcosm Publishing. ISBN: [978-1648411359](#)
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2020. "Foreword." Pp. v-viii in *The Pawn*, by Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez. Seattle, WA: Amazon Publishing. ISBN: [0578635798](#)
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2018. "How Many Prisoners Work in the US Today? It's Hard to Say." *Punishment & Society Blog*. <https://punishment-society.blogspot.com/2018/01/how-many-prisoners-work-in-us-today-its.html>
- Gibson-Light, Michael. 2017. "'It's Bigger than Christmas': Thoughts on the Significance of the Super Bowl in Prison." *Punishment & Society Blog*. <https://punishment-society.blogspot.com/2017/02/its-bigger-than-christmas-thoughts-on.html>

### **Public Application of Research**

- 2024 Research discussed in report, *Observations to the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations* (regarding forced labor practices in US prisons), drafted by ACLU and submitted to United Nations International Labor Organization by the International Trade Union Confederation. [https://mega.nz/file/WpJjBDLL#8eRCw\\_xOXJNOGEy-xJxjKOFWCO8EECu66LzQCOiomoY](https://mega.nz/file/WpJjBDLL#8eRCw_xOXJNOGEy-xJxjKOFWCO8EECu66LzQCOiomoY)
- 2022 Research discussed in report, *Captive Labor: Exploitation of Incarcerated Workers*, drafted by ACLU and the University of Chicago Law School Global Human Rights Clinic. [https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field\\_document/2022-06-15-captivelaborresearchreport.pdf](https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/2022-06-15-captivelaborresearchreport.pdf)
- 2020 Consultation provided for, and research cited in report, *Eating Behind Bars: Enduring the Hidden Punishment of Food in Prison*, by Impact Justice nonprofit research center. <https://impactjustice.org/impact/food-in-prison/#report>
- 2018 Research cited in Brief of *Amici Curiae* filed by the ACLU of Ohio Foundation, The ACLU Foundation, The Southern Poverty Law Center, and The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. Supreme Court of Ohio, Case No. 2017-0186. [https://www.acluohio.org/sites/default/files/Ohio.v.Dunson-ACLUOfOhioAmicusBrief-2018\\_0206.pdf](https://www.acluohio.org/sites/default/files/Ohio.v.Dunson-ACLUOfOhioAmicusBrief-2018_0206.pdf)

### **Long-Form Media Appearances**

- 2025 University at Buffalo, The Baldy Center Podcast, Episode 51: "Michael Gibson-Light Discusses Prison Labor, Prisoners' Unions, and the Politics of Work Behind Bars." <https://www.buffalo.edu/baldycenter/multimedia/podcast/podcast-fall-2025/Gibson-Light-prison-labor.html>
- 2020 BYU Radio, Top of Mind with Julie Rose, Episode 1320: "Antibody Tests, Stamped, Prison Ramen." <https://www.byuradio.org/a8d5c293-d8c3-4414-8e8e-5197c11b6ea3/top-of-mind-with-julie-rose-antibody-tests-stamped-prison-ramen>

**Select Media Interviews & Consultations**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 2026 | Columbia Journalism School, Denver 7  |
| 2025 | Denver 7  |
| 2024 | Financial Times, Bloomberg Businessweek, Jacobin  |
| 2023 | Arizona Republic, Bolts Magazine, NPR, All Things Considered                                |
| 2022 | Business Insider, Vice News, The Marshall Project, Cosmopolitan, New York Times: T Magazine |
| 2021 | NPR Marketplace, Arizona Republic   |
| 2019 | The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Nation   |
| 2018 | BBC, AP, The Young Turks, The Outline, Prison Legal News, ThirtyK                           |
| 2017 | The Guardian  |
| 2016 | NPR, El Mundo, The Guardian, Christian Science Monitor, Gizmodo                             |

**Select Media Citations & Portrayals**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 2024 | DU Magazine  |
| 2021 | History Extra, CoinGeek  |
| 2020 | Business Insider, Fox Business   |
| 2019 | Ellen’s Game of Games (NBC), Pocono Record   |
| 2018 | Prison Legal News, Oxygen, Vox   |
| 2017 | The Sun Herald, Brooklyn Nine-Nine (Fox)   |
| 2016 | USA Today, BBC, Time, The Atlantic, Washington Post, NPR, Fortune, US News & World Report, The Telegraph, ABC, Harper’s Magazine, Huffington Post, Vice News, Business Insider |

**TEACHING**

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**Courses Currently Offered**

Prison Labor

*Exploring work and employment within and surrounding US prisons as well as what prison labor can reveal about the nature of punishment and work in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Discipline and Punishment

*Exploring theoretical and empirical traditions in the study of punishment, institutional mechanisms of discipline, and pervasive systems of social control*

Sociological Imagination and Inquiry – Part A

*Introduction to qualitative research methods, providing training in methodologies including ethnography, in-depth interviewing, and qualitative content analysis*

Criminology

*Introduction to the study of criminology, exploring core questions and theories, social definitions of criminality, and institutional responses to crime*

Transforming Justice (in development)

*Exploring and generating empirically-grounded, structural solutions to inequalities associated with criminal legal institutions like prisons, jails, policing, and courts*

Independent Study

*Student-directed independent research and writing*

**Courses Previously Offered**

Work and Society

*Exploring the structure and practice of labor in the contemporary US, emphasizing inequalities in labor market access, participation, representation, and outcomes*

Explaining Deviance

*Exploring explanatory factors surrounding deviance and participation in deviant subcultures, as well as the role of state and other institutions in these phenomena*

Sociology of Popular Culture

*Exploring the structure and impacts of the contemporary popular culture industry, emphasizing inequalities in production and representation*

**Guest Lectures**

- 2025 Mass Incarceration, Professor Michael Campbell II. University of Denver.  
2024 Sociological Imagination and Inquiry – Part A, Professor Hava Gordon. University of Denver.  
2023 Field Methods, Professor Mary E. Pattillo. Northwestern University, Northwestern Prison Education Program, Logan Correctional Center (*Lecture delivered virtually*).  
2023 Work and Occupations, Professor Jeffrey J. Sallaz. University of Arizona (*Lecture delivered virtually*).  
2021 Sociological Imagination and Inquiry – Part A, Professor Hava Gordon. University of Denver.  
2020 Crime, Punishment, and Inequality, Professor Sarah Brayne. University of Texas at Austin (*Lecture delivered virtually*).  
2020 Sociological Imagination and Inquiry – Part A, Professor Hava Gordon. University of Denver (*Lecture delivered virtually*).  
2020 Methods of Sociological Inquiry, Professor Megan Henley. Colorado Mesa University (*Lecture delivered virtually*).  
2019 Sociological Imagination and Inquiry – Part A, Professor Hava Gordon. University of Denver.  
2017 Social Research Methods, Instructor Jessica Pfaffendorf. University of Arizona.  
2016 Social Research Methods, Instructor Eric Bjorklund. University of Arizona.  
2014 Sources of Sociological Theory, Professor Corey Abramson. University of Arizona.

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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American Sociological Association

Section on Crime, Law, & Deviance; Section on Comparative and Historical Sociology; Section on Labor & Labor Movements; Section on Organizations, Occupations, & Work; Section on Sociology of Law; Section on Methodology; Section on Inequality, Poverty, & Mobility; Section on Sociology of Culture

American Society of Criminology

Division on Critical Criminology & Social Justice; Division on Convict Criminology; Division on People of Color and Crime; Division on Corrections & Sentencing

Law and Society Association

CRN 27 Punishment & Society

Southern Sociological Society

**PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES**

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Available upon request