



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice

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**New Jersey Institute for Social Justice Presents Encore Screening/Panel of *MORAL PANIC*:  
A Documentary Film on Gangs and Prisoner Reentry**

**NEWARK, NJ** – The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice ([www.njisj.org](http://www.njisj.org)), a Newark-based research and advocacy organization, will host an encore screening/panel of its documentary film on gangs and prisoner reentry, *MORAL PANIC*, on Tuesday, May 20 at 6:30pm at Rutgers-Newark Center for Law and Justice, 123 Washington Street, Room 070, Newark, NJ. The event is free and open to the public. The film is based upon the Institute's 2007 report on gangs and prisoner reentry, "Do No Harm" (<http://www.njisj.org/publications.html#reports>), which highlights evidence-based strategies that could be used to make gang activity less violent and pervasive.

*MORAL PANIC* is the first film of its kind to bring together the voices of policymakers, law enforcement, community-based activists, faith leaders, educators, researchers, and gang members themselves, who explain their own motivations, aspirations, and challenges. The 30-minute film, a "cinematic conversation" among these diverse stakeholders, features original interviews with Newark Mayor Cory Booker; Newark Police Director Garry McCarthy; Dr. Robert Johnson, Dean of the New Jersey Medical School of UMDNJ; Marcellus "Bishop" Allen, President of Saving Our Selves (S.O.S.); Reverend Reginald Jackson, President of the Black Ministers' Council of New Jersey; Judith Greene, co-author of "Gang Wars" (Justice Policy Institute, 2007); Ras Baraka, Newark activist and educator; Dr. David Kennedy, Director of the Center for Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College of Criminal Justice; Dashaun "Jiwe" Morris, author of "War of the Bloods in My Veins" (Scribner, 2008); Al-Tarik Onque, Co-Founder of Stop Shootin'; and others.

Directed by the critically-acclaimed photojournalist Akintola Hanif, the film takes its title from the sociological term 'moral panic,' which describes social phenomena that generate more 'heat' (concern and reaction) than 'light' (understanding and dialogue). The film seeks to counter 'moral panic' by generating greater understanding of gang issues through dialogue among the diverse stakeholders. "The film is emblematic of a comprehensive community-wide approach of shared responsibility and shared engagement - the belief that community leaders, law enforcement, and gang members themselves should all be at the table to craft the strategies that will make our neighborhoods safer," says Cornell William Brooks, Executive Director of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice. "The voices in the film remind us that this is about communities of families and young people, not faceless monoliths. Together, these voices are a powerful tool for building coalitions and creating alliances to design solutions collectively."

*MORAL PANIC* will screen throughout 2008-09 at a variety of venues. To inquire about arranging a screening or obtaining a copy of the film, contact [rgreenberg@njisj.org](mailto:rgreenberg@njisj.org)/(973) 624-9400 x26.

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