

**Learning Across Borders:  
An Introduction to the 2021 Innocence Network Conference  
Scholarship Panel Articles**

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“Without community there is no liberation”  
*By Audre Lorde*

This compelling issue of the *Wrongful Conviction Law Review* features a series of articles accepted as part of the Innocence Network’s 2021 call for “innocence scholarship.” The Innocence Network is a coalition of organizations dedicated to righting individual cases of wrongful conviction, supporting freed people in rebuilding their lives, and addressing systemic flaws in the criminal legal system to prevent future injustices. The Network also hosts an annual conference bringing together a diverse group of exonerated and freed people, their supporters, attorneys, and other stakeholders — including policy experts, researchers, journalists, and students. The innocence scholarship session provides an opportunity for academic experts and the Network community to connect, thereby encouraging practical research and informing data-driven legal, policy, and social work. Although the ongoing threat of Covid-19 prevented gathering in person this year, the work continues.

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted everyone, simultaneously highlighting our interconnectedness and exacerbating long-standing societal inequities. Successfully addressing this unprecedented global health and economic crisis requires dynamic scientific and public policy collaboration, and care for one another. The past twenty months have shown us the ways in which our fates are intertwined and how necessary it is to correct disparities in access to resources and fair treatment. The path forward is not unfamiliar to those who work to address and prevent wrongful convictions.

Each individual wrongful conviction reveals structural flaws in the criminal legal system. These flaws have the potential to impact us all but disproportionately harm already-marginalized groups, particularly Black people, Indigenous people, and communities of color more broadly. We can only approach true justice by recognizing our shared humanity, crafting solutions that center the people most affected and cooperating across geographic, political, and sectoral borders to achieve structural transformation.

With critical analyses from multiple international authors and research featuring interdisciplinary collaboration, these papers showcase interconnectedness at its best. Perspectives

from Australia, Chile, England, Wales, and the United States demonstrate the global reach of the innocence movement, while insights from the fields of criminal justice, law, linguistics, neuroscience, psychology, and public policy reveal the strength in collaboration.

As we in the Innocence Network have heard from client after client, it truly takes a village to pursue justice and find the truth. When advocates and scholars come together, led by the perseverance and perspectives of the wrongly convicted, we succeed. The number of people freed, laws passed, people educated and engaged is growing. The articles below are an invitation to learn across borders and disciplines and keep up the momentum of the movement.