

City University of New York (CUNY)

CUNY Academic Works

Capstones

Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism

Fall 12-14-2018

Urbanely Chained: Issues Within A City

Esther Shittu

Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

More information about this work at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gj_etds/308

Discover additional works at: <https://academicworks.cuny.edu>

This work is made publicly available by the City University of New York (CUNY).

Contact: AcademicWorks@cuny.edu

Urbanely Chained: Issues Within A City

Each city in the United States bears its own burdens. In New York, one glaring burden is transportation, the second is the criminal justice system that seems to be packaged into one main facility: Rikers Island. The video and animation below explore these two issues. In *Urbanely Chained: 219 West*, the problems are examined within the scope of a television news magazine show. In *Urbanely Chained: Gladiator Island History*, the deep-rooted history of Rikers is explored.

219 West:

Every month, students in the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism produce a news magazine show that highlights different human-interest stories. As a segment producer for *219 West*, I wrote, produced, and edited two stories that show the burdens of a city where everyone in the world dreamed about being. As a line producer, I booked interviews, wrote scripts, produced and edited the show. The following is an example of the storytelling elements that goes into a television news magazine.

What is the correlation between the MTA workers' plight against assault and the plight of activists hoping to close down Rikers Island? Passion. Both issues are driven by passionate individuals screaming to the world to hear about their struggles. They are fighting against a system that wishes to be silent, and instead using their voices to raise awareness. And in raising awareness,

they are bringing about change, whether it's body cameras or the closing of Rikers.

Gladiator Island History:

“If the foundation is destroyed what can the righteous do?” This verse from the book of Psalms sums up the history of Rikers. It was a place that was owned by the Rycken family. Richard Riker, a descendant of the family, is known for denying fugitives slaves the right to a trial as well as selling and sending back free slaves back to the south. Even after the city bought the Island, the method in which they built and expanded the Island, as well as the interference of politicians, made Rikers into what it is known as today. The video below gives an animated history of what some people call Gladiator Island.