

**Occasional Series on Reentry Research  
Prisoner Reentry Institute  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

**Scarlet Letters and Recidivism  
March 24, 2006**

**Robert Brame** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of South Carolina. He received his Ph.D. in Criminology and Criminal Justice in 1997 from the University of Maryland. His current research emphasizes continuity and cessation of offending, collateral consequences of a criminal record, estimation of treatment effects in observational data, and law enforcement responses to domestic violence.

**Megan Kurlychek** is an Assistant Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of South Carolina. She holds a Ph.D. in Crime, Law and Justice from Pennsylvania State University. She has previously worked as a Research Associate for the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing, the National Center for Juvenile Justice and the Pennsylvania State Legislature. Her primary research interests center on the development and evaluation of programs and policies to prevent delinquency and crime and/or to intervene with individuals already involved in offending. She has previously published work in *Criminology* and *Crime and Delinquency*.

**Assemblyman Michael Benjamin** has represented the 79th Assembly District in the Bronx since 2003 and serves on the Corrections Committee for the New York State Assembly. He also serves on the Banks; Children and Families; Election Law; Housing; and Libraries and Education Technology Committees. Assemblyman Benjamin was the first African American to head the Bronx Board of Elections. Recently he introduced legislation (A6179) to prohibit the use of a criminal record as the sole basis for determining an applicant's good moral character for purposes of granting a barber or cosmetology license.

**Kirsten Levingston** directs the Criminal Justice Program at the Brennan Center for Justice, which advocates for fair and effective administration of justice by preventing crime, not merely punishing it, ensuring public safety, and promoting social reintegration for those who come into conflict with the law. The Center promotes rational sentencing policy and opportunities for prison diversion and rehabilitation, and seeks to increase economic opportunities for those with conviction histories. Prior to joining the Brennan Center, Ms. Levingston directed the National Defender Leadership Project at the Vera Institute of Justice in New York, where she helped public defender managers take more active and creative roles as system leaders. Ms. Levingston earned her B.A. from University of Southern California and her J.D. from Harvard Law School.