

JAN. 22ND

2016

INTERNATIONAL  
TRANS PRISONER DAY OF  
ACTION AND SOLIDARITY

my body is  
trapped in here,  
but my heart  
is with you  
still fighting  
out there...

-Marina  
Mason



Zine #1

Image: Nicholas Luchak

TRANSPRISONERS.NET

**INTERNATIONAL**

# TRANS PRISONER DAY OF ACTION AND SOLIDARITY

2016 will be the first annual Trans Prisoner Day of Action. This is a call to action against the system which seeks to erase our very existence. The survival of trans and other sex and gender minority people is not a quaint conversation about awareness, but a struggle for us to live in a world so determined to marginalize, dehumanise, and criminalise us – especially trans women, and especially Black, brown, and indigenous trans people.

We are discriminated against in every area of society including housing, healthcare, employment. Our survival is often precarious and many of us survive by work which is also criminalised – making us even more of a target for police harassment and the crime of “Walking While Trans”.

Once incarcerated, trans people face humiliation, physical and sexual abuse, denial of medical needs, and legal reprisals. Many transgender people are placed in solitary confinement for months or years, simply for being trans. Trans women are usually placed in men’s prisons, where there is a massive increased risk of experiencing sexual violence.

Just as our lives are violently repressed on the outside, trans people experience extreme suffering and death within the walls of jails, prisons, youth facilities, and immigrant detention centers.



## Follow Up After Jan 22nd.

Did you take part in an event for Jan 22nd? We'd love to hear a report back: What did you do? Did you form any new alliances? What's your vision for how this event could grow in the future? How could the Jan 22 organizing group support you or your local work?

For those on the inside, get in touch with us and let us know: How can Jan 22nd support trans prisoners? What ideas do you have for next time? How would you like to be involved? How can we collaborate and work together?

### Zine #2

Send us your contributions!  
Artwork, articles, stories, poetry!

PO Box 163126  
Sacramento, CA 95816

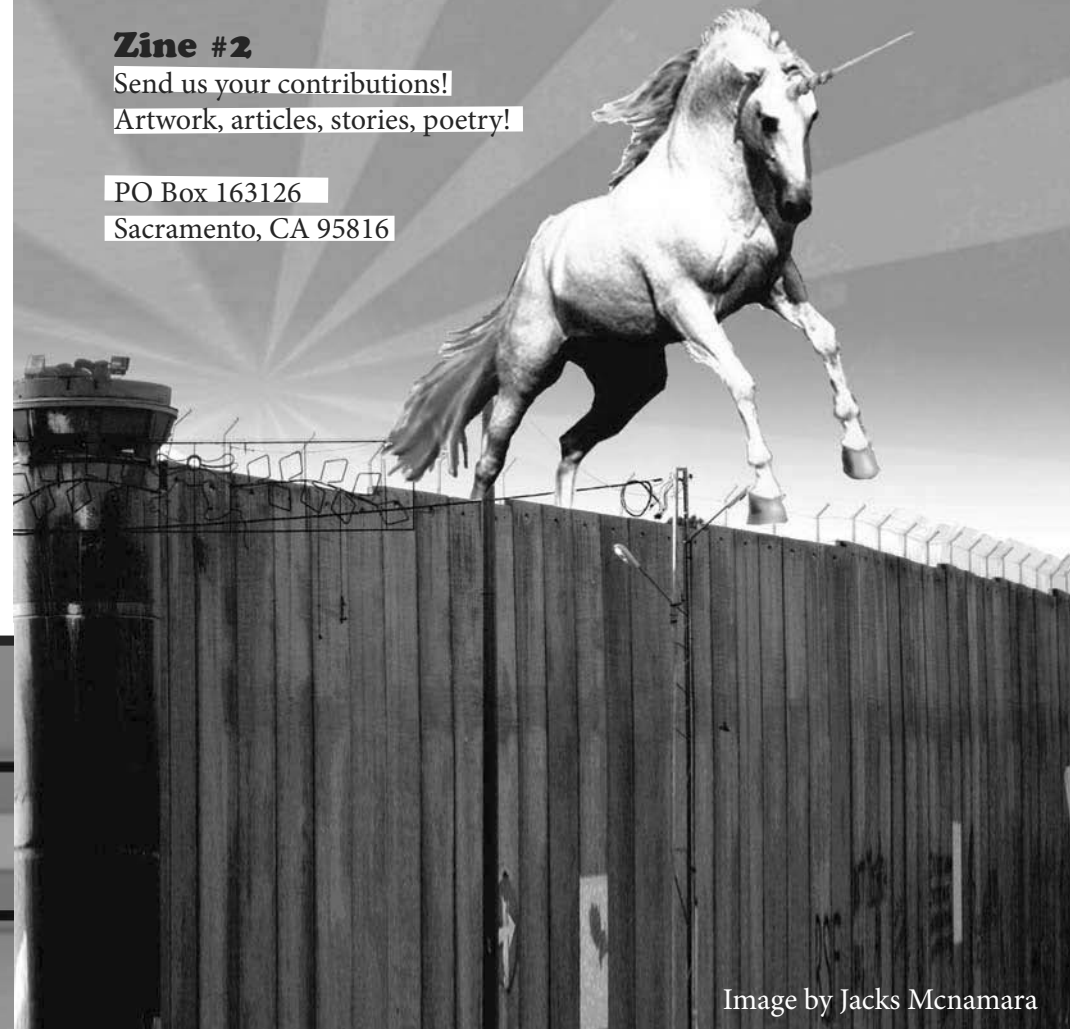



Image by Jacks Mcnamara



**Jay Chase**  
Jared Chase M44710  
P.O. Box 99  
Pontiac, IL 61764

If you are in Chicago, please attend the Feb. 3 Pretrial court date to show solidarity. At this time, **mail and letters to Jay are being requested so he knows he has the support of people who care about him.** If you have been already following his case, you may know of him as Maya. Recently he sent the following statement: "After a lot of thinking, I've decided even though I am Bi/Ts/GQ I don't think I want to spend the rest of my life as a Woman 24/7. So you can refer to me in masculine terms." Jared Chase of the NATO 3 is serving an 8-year sentence for helping undercover cops with their own idea to make molotov cocktails, that were never used, to protest the 2012 NATO summit in Chicago. Chase has been diagnosed with Huntingtons disease and has not been receiving the recommended medical care and nutritional supplements required to treat his condition while in custody, further adding to his deterioration as indicated by rapid weight loss.

To find out more about his case, support efforts, or to send a book from his Amazon wish list go to his Facebook page Jay Chase of the Nato 3 Pre-trial Court Date  
<http://powmedicaljustice.com/jay-chase-send-letters/>

★

If you or a trans prisoner you know would like to be added to the pen-pal or Campaigns list, please let us know!

Jan 22  
PO Box 163126  
Sacramento, CA 95816



Email:  
[transprisonersolidarity@riseup.net](mailto:transprisonersolidarity@riseup.net)

Trans Prisoner Day of Action on January 22nd is a day to acknowledge the experiences of trans and other sex and gender-minority prisoners. It's about collaboration. It is about forging new relationships and dismantling the isolation of prison. It's about resistance to state violence. It's about solidarity between those who experience the violence of the system first hand and those for whom the state hasn't come yet.

Many prisoner support and prison abolition groups around the world do so much excellent work writing letters to prisoners, educating the public with letters to editors and articles for the media, holding protests and marches, organising queer communities to phone in and demand that trans prisoners be treated with respect and dignity, calling for an end to incarceration. Trans Prisoner Day of Action aims to make this work accessible to all who are in support – we encourage you to hold vigils for those in our communities who have been taken by State violence, to hold an event, host speakers, screen films, invite presentations, and hold workshops to spread the word on the experience of trans prisoners, share knowledge, and build strategies of resistance. Have dance parties and raise funds for people and groups already doing amazing work. Take action. Let's join together and show our conviction in supporting each other and ending prisons once and for all.

This project was first imagined by Marius Mason, a trans prisoner in Texas, USA. Since then, through his friends and supporters, an international collective of people both inside and outside of prison walls have come together to make Trans Prisoner Day of Action a reality. We are trans and non-trans folks and friends and supporters. We join a long tradition of trans and queer people resisting state violence.

**Join with us in the struggle for freedom.**





## Content Warning

This publication contains content that may be distressing or triggering, including references to: physical violence, sexual assault, experience of child sexual abuse, perpetrating sexual abuse, drug use.



## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and First Nations people of the land in which we live and on whose land this zine was made. We want to acknowledge the high incarceration rates and impacts of colonisation on First Nations people globally

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their stories and artwork to this zine. Thank you for sharing with such honesty and bravery.

This zine will be distributed to folks both inside and outside prison walls.



To write to Chelsea:

**CHELSEA E. MANNING 89289  
1300 NORTH WAREHOUSE ROAD  
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS  
66027-2304**

Notes regarding this address:

- Do not include a hash (“#”) in front of Manning’s inmate number.
- Do not include any title in front of Manning’s name, such as “Ms.,” “Mr.,” “PVT,” “PFC,” etc.
- Do not include any additional information in the address, such as “US Army” or “US Disciplinary Barracks.”
- Do not modify the address to conform to USPS standards, such as abbreviating “North,” “Road,” “Fort,” or “Kansas.”

Convicted in July 2013 of violations of the Espionage Act and other offenses, after disclosing to WikiLeaks nearly three-quarters of a million classified or unclassified but sensitive military and diplomatic documents. To stay updates on her case and support efforts: [www.chelseamanning.org](http://www.chelseamanning.org)

Sign the petition for a presidential pardon for Chelsea [www.chelseamanning.org/pardonpetition](http://www.chelseamanning.org/pardonpetition)



Ky Peterson is a Black transman imprisoned for killing his rapist. To find out more about his case and support campaign, go to [freeingky.wordpress.com](http://freeingky.wordpress.com)

**Kenyota Peterson #100961001, Pulaski State  
Prison (E-6), P.O.Box 839, Hawkinsville, Ga. 31036**

**What TO Write:** always put a return address on the envelope or postcard (otherwise the prison will not give it to Ky): we love you :we are in solidarity with you: a story about how this is relevant to you: anything uplifting and supportive: drawings: poems: updates on current events and trans related info (things you think he may find interesting)



## Lisa Mitchell

Lisa Mitchell is a Black trans woman who has been sitting in solitary confinement for the past 6 months. She is in solitary solely because of her gender identity as a trans woman. She is being held on charges of "prostitution." Sex work should not be criminalized. While fighting her case, Lisa Mitchell has experienced transphobia at all levels of the criminal system. She has been denied hormone therapy, has been called the wrong name and pronouns, her gender identity has been called deceptive and a disguise, and again, her long sit in solitary is only due to her gender identity. The harassment and criminalization of Lisa Mitchell due to being a Black trans woman must stop. During the 1-hour a day she has out of her cell she has been working to get trans health care exclusions removed from Medicaid in Wisconsin. She is a tireless activist for all trans people and she needs our support now.

We say  
#HandsOffBlackWomen!  
#HandsOffLisaMitchell!  
#FreeLisa!

1 in 2 Black trans women are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated in the US. We need to end this pattern of criminalization and we can take one step towards this by setting Lisa Mitchell free.

To sign the petition, go to <http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/hands-off-lisa-mitchell>



Statement from Marius Mason - January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016

Happy New Year, Family and Friends! Many, many thanks for so much support and care over this year from both long-standing friends and new pen pals. I feel, very grateful and am always humbled by the encouragement and resources sent my way by folks who are doing so much already to increase our collective chances for survival. The news has been full of stories about someone winning the big money pool that has accumulated for the US Lotto - but the most important "win" has nothing to do with money. I am betting on the movement to win big this year: in getting more control over their communities and defending against police brutality and racial inequality, in winning more victories for animal and in the defense of wild spaces, in creating social relations based on respect, dignity and compassion for all people...irregardless of their race, orientation, creed or gender presentation.

Thank you for coming together today, to hold up those members of our community who struggle so hard behind walls to keep their sense of self intact. Sovereignty over our selves, our bodies is essential for any other kind of liberty to be possible. By reaching out to trans prisoners, you affirm their right to define themselves for themselves - and defend them against the overwhelming voices who claim that they do not exist, that they must allow others to define them. In the isolating environment of prison, this is toxic and intimidating, and amounts to the cruelest form of psychological torture. By offering your help and solidarity, you may just save a life. I know that for the last year and a half, as I have struggled to assert myself as a transman, as I have advocated for the relief of appropriate medical care for my gender dysphoria - it has been the gentle and loving reminders of my extended family of supporters who have given me strength and courage to continue. Please join me in offering this help to so many others who need it to keep going. Never underestimate the healing power of a letter, those letters have kept me going...and I want to pass that gift on, if you will help me.

Thank you again for coming together on this day, for connecting to those on the inside who truly need you, who need you to see them as they really are and striving to be. Until the prisons are gone, we need to work hard to support those of us inside - especially those of us who are not always as visible to the rest of the world. We are always stronger together.





## Building an Abolitionist Trans and Queer Movement

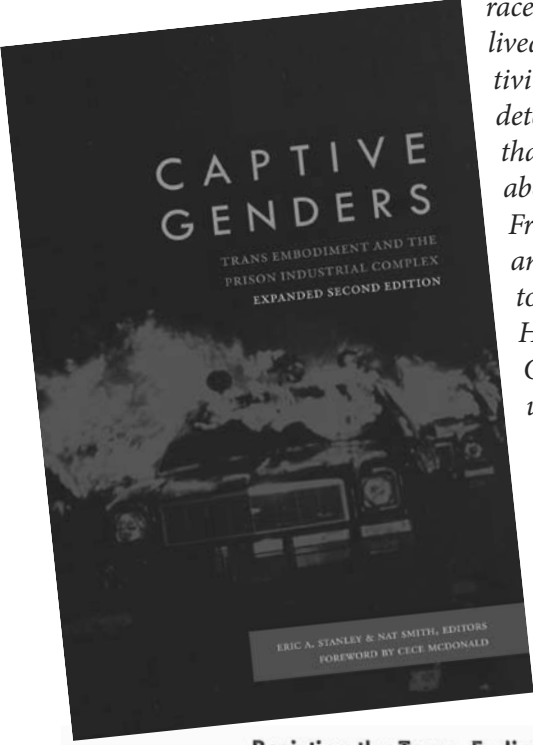
The follow is an excerpt from an article titled “Building an Abolitionist Trans and Queer Movement with Everything We’ve Got” by Morgan Bassichis, Alexander Lee and Dean Spade, from the book *Captive Genders*.

*“Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith bring together current and former prisoners, activists, and academics to offer new ways for understanding how race, gender, ability, and sexuality are lived under the crushing weight of captivity. Through a politic of gender self-determination, this collection argues that trans/queer liberation and prison abolition must be grown together. From rioting against police violence and critiquing hate crimes legislation to prisoners demanding access to HIV medications, and far beyond, *Captive Genders* is a challenge for us all to join the struggle”*

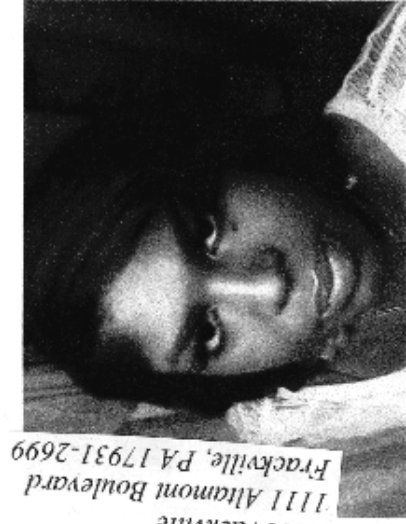
*Captive Genders* is available from AK Press, and all proceeds go towards sending free copies to prisoners.

### Resisting the Traps, Ending Trans Imprisonment

Even in the context of growing imprisonment rates and deteriorating safety nets, the past decade has brought with it an upsurge in organizing and activism to challenge the imprisonment and policing of transgender and gender-non-conforming communities.<sup>32</sup> Through high-profile lawsuits, human rights and media documentation, conferences and trainings,



SUPPORT  
NIARA



Herman Burton #KTU1265  
SCI Frackville  
1111 Allamont Boulevard  
Frackville, PA 17931-2699

Niara is a Black trans woman serving 25-50 years in prison for the self-defense murder of a john. Throughout her trial and sentencing, the media engaged in transmisogynist and racist attacks on her character, disrespecting her gender identity and blaming her for defending herself from an attacker. Since being arrested, Niara has had to defend herself against transphobic violence in the prison system and has only been punished and put in solitary for fighting off men trying to abuse her. Despite constant attacks from prison officials and predatory inmates, Niara has continued to struggle with dignity in the most inhumane conditions.

address the envelope to Herman Burton, but the letter to Niara

[freeniara.wordpress.com](http://freeniara.wordpress.com)

# PRISONER CAMPAIGNS

Marius Mason

This international day of solidarity was initiated by Marius Mason. He is an imprisoned transgender anarchist, serving 22 years for acts of eco-sabotage. Marius is incarcerated at Carswell in Fort Worth, Texas, a small, high-security facility; he receives few visits, his mail is monitored, and he is intensely socially isolated. He is only allowed to respond to a small list of correspondence, so may not be able to write back, but he really appreciates mail.

Since he came out, he has engaged in a painfully slow process of medical screenings to see if he will be permitted to have access to the WPATH standards of care for transgendered people (hormones, surgery, and the right to legally change his name to a gender-appropriate one of his choosing).

To help get the word out and keep in touch with upcoming events and campaigns concerning Marius's case and campaigns Marius supports, please email [supportmariusmason@riseup.net](mailto:supportmariusmason@riseup.net)

You can follow various social media's by going to Marius' support page [www. http://supportmariusmason.org/](http://supportmariusmason.org/)

To write to Marius:

Marie (Marius) Mason #04672-061  
FMC Carswell  
Federal Medical Center  
P.O. Box 27137  
Fort Worth, TX 76127

grassroots organizing, and coalitional efforts, more individuals and organizations are aware of the dynamics of trans imprisonment than ever. This work has both fallen prey to the tricky traps of the "New World Order" that we described above and also generated courageous new ways of doing the work of transformation and resistance that are in line with the radical values that we also trace. What was once either completely erased or significantly marginalized on the agendas of both the LGBT and anti-prison/prisoner rights movements is now gaining more and more visibility and activity. We think of this as a tremendous opportunity to choose which legacies and practices we want for this work moving forward. This is not about playing the blame game and pointing fingers at which work is radical and which is oppressive, but rather about building on all of our collective successes, losses, and contradictions to do work that will transform society (and all of us) as we know it.

Below are a few helpful lessons that have been guided by the values above and generated at the powerful intersections of prison abolition and gender justice:<sup>33</sup>

## 1. We refuse to create "deserving" vs. "undeserving" victims.<sup>34</sup>

Although we understand that transgender and gender-non-conforming people in prisons, jails, and detention centers experience egregious and often specific forms of violence—including sexual assault, rape, medical neglect and discrimination, and humiliation based on transphobic norms—we recognize that all people impacted by the prison industrial complex are facing severe violence. Instead of saying that transgender people are the "most" oppressed in prisons, we can talk about the different forms of violence that people impacted by the prison industrial complex face, and how those forms of violence help maintain the status quo common sense that the "real bad people"—the "rapists," "murderers," "child molesters," in some cases now the "bigots"—deserve to be locked up. Seeking to understand the specific arrangements that cause certain communities to face particular types of violence at the hands of police and in detention can allow us to develop solidarity around shared and different experiences with these forces and build effective resistance that gets to the roots of these problems. Building arguments about trans people as "innocent victims" while other prisoners are cast as dangerous and deserving of detention only undermines the power of a shared resistance strategy that sees imprisonment as a violent, dangerous tactic for everybody it touches.



We know that the push for hate crimes laws as the solution to anti-queer and -trans violence will never actually address the fundamental reasons why we are vulnerable to violence in the first place or why homophobia and transphobia are encouraged in our cultures. Individualizing solutions like hate crimes laws create a false binary of “perpetrator” and “victim” or “bad” and “good” people without addressing the underlying systemic problem, and often strengthen that problem. In place of this common sense, we understand that racism, state violence, and capitalism are the root causes of violence in our culture, not individual “bigots” or even prison guards. *We must end the cycle of oppressed people being pitted against one another.*

## **2. We support strategies that weaken oppressive institutions, not strengthen them.**

We can respond to the crises that our communities are facing right now while refusing long-term compromises that will strengthen the very institutions that are hurting us. As more and more awareness is being raised about the terrible violence that transgender and gender-non-conforming people face in prisons, jails, and detention centers, some prisoner rights and queer and trans researchers and advocates are suggesting that building trans-specific prisons or jails is the only way that imprisoned transgender and gender-non-conforming people will be safe in the short-term. Particularly in light of the dangerous popularity of “gender responsiveness” among legislators and advocates alike, we reject all notions that we must expand the prison industrial complex to respond to immediate conditions of violence. Funneling more money into prison building of any kind strengthens the prison industrial complex’s death hold on our communities. We know that if they build it, they will fill it, and getting trans people out of prison is the only real way to address the safety issues that trans prisoners face. *We want strategies that will reduce and ultimately eliminate the number of people and dollars going into prisons, while attending to the immediate healing and redress of individual imprisoned people.*

## **3. We must transform exploitative dynamics in our work.**

A lot of oppressed people are hyper-sexualized in dominant culture as a way to create them as a threat, a fetish, or a caricature—transgender women, black men, Asian and Pacific Islander women, to name a few. Despite often good intentions to raise awareness about the treatment of transgender and gender-non-conforming people in prisons, we recognize

her release on the grounds that she has been harassed, physically and sexually assaulted “Hernández-Polanco, 24, has been in custody at a male facility in the Florence processing center since Oct. 18, 2014, after she presented herself to the U.S. Border Patrol in the San Luis area upon crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. She immediately requested asylum....While in custody, she said she has endured abuse from both detainees and ICE officials in the facility...She reported it to officials, who are investigating the assault, but she said there was no follow-up and that she has to see her alleged attacker regularly in the center.” Yoohyun Jung writes in their article published recently in the Arizona Daily Star.

The fact that many immigration facilities are now privatized adds yet another layer of exploitation and abuse. Maru, an organizer and leader with NWDR, makes it clear that privatization makes it more profitable to confine people rather than find alternatives. GEO group, the corporation that owns and operates the Northwest Detention Center makes about \$120 a day for each prisoner. GEO is guaranteed that money whether one or all of the beds are filled. This fact gives law enforcement and ICE an incentive to work together to keep facilities filled to capacity. “The bed quota requires ICE to hold an average of 34,000 individuals in detention on a daily basis. This quota has steadily increased since its establishment in 2007” (immigrationjustice.org). “As long as Congress continues to require ICE to keep an arbitrary quota ... LGBT immigrants are vulnerable to the inherent health and safety risks that detention poses.” (Sharita Gruberg in “No Way Out: Congress’ Bed Quota Traps LGBT Immigrants in Detention”).

Between privatization that allows corporations to profit off of the incarceration of many people in vulnerable positions to the terrible abuse happening within these facilities private and public is can be easy to think that the situation is hopeless. Mariposas Sin Fronteras articulates in a powerful statement that in my opinion communicates a fierce kind of hope “it is impossible to reform the detention system and make it just. Detention is imprisonment and torture and by its very nature racist, classist, homophobic and transphobic. That is why we believe that no one from the LGBTQJ community should be placed in detention and we ask that the prison industry be terminated and all detention centers be shutdown.”



*Image: TWAC members take action to protest immigration detention*



## **Immigration Detention Centers and Trans Detainees**

by Eva Donjacour, Northwest Detention Center Resistance (NWDCR).

I work with NWDCR a grassroots undocumented led movement that works to end the detention of immigrants and stop deportations. I have also been working closely with the Trans and/or Women's Action Camp, a space for folks who identify as female, transgender, transsexual, gender queer and gender variant to share campaign information and direct action skills in a conscientious, supportive and empowering environment for voices often marginalized. My involvement inspired me to write this zine entry about the issues faced by trans detainees in the 200 ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) facilities across the US. This is a compilation of information from articles written by people who have lived these experiences, and conversations with members of the NWDCR group.

To even start addressing these issues we have to start with the simple fact that there isn't accurate information. Isa Noyola of the Trans Gender Law Center in California explains more in the publication *Latina* "we actually don't know how many LGBTQ+ immigrants there are because of how ICE gathers that information. Detention centers are really violent places, and many people in them won't disclose their true identity in hopes of avoiding abuses like physical and sexual assault as well as being placed in solitary confinement for long periods of time."

Noyola also sheds light on the cycle of deportation and abuse "Trans women flee violence from their home country and are then placed in detention centers, where they are retraumatized and experience more violence. Once they leave detention, if they do, they realize they are vulnerable, from street violence to the lack of a safety net. They have little to no housing and job opportunities, forcing them to survive through a street economy like survival sex, which places them in physical danger. Many trans people come here and, because of pop culture, believe they are coming to a place that is more accepting of them, and maybe in some ways they do find more tolerance, but there's another reality saying, "you really can't survive here." Some do give up and go back to their place of origin, back to the trauma and the harassment from police and family members, and when the risk of danger becomes unbearable, they try to come back to another city in the U.S. It's a cycle."

A concrete example of this can be found in Nicolle Hernández-Polanco's story. Nicolle is a transgender woman being held in an all male facility in Arizona. Marisposas sin Fronteras, a transgender advocacy group, has been calling for

that much of the "public education" work around these issues often relies on sexualization, voyeurism, sensationalism, and fetishization to get its point across. In general there is a focus on graphic descriptions of people's bodies (specifically their genitals), sexual violence, and the humiliation they have faced. Imprisoned people (who are usually represented as black) and transgender people (who are usually represented as transgender women of color in this context) have long been the target of voyeuristic representation—from porn movies that glorify rape in prison to fetishizing "human rights" research distributed to majority white, middle-class audiences. As transgender people who often have our bodies on display for non-transgender people who feel empowered to question, display, and discuss us, we know that this is a dangerous trend that seriously undercuts the integrity of our work and the types of relationships that can be formed. Unless we address these exploitative power dynamics in our work, even our most "well-intentioned" strategies and movements will reproduce the prison industrial complex's norms of transphobic, misogynist, and racist sexualized violence. *Research, media, cultural work, and activism on this issue needs to be accountable to and directed by low-income transgender people and transgender people of color and our organizations.*

### **4. We see ending trans imprisonment as part of the larger struggle for transformation.**

The violence that transgender people—significantly low-income transgender people of color—face in prisons, jails, and detention centers and the cycles of poverty and criminalization that leads so many of us to imprisonment is a key place to work for broad-based social and political transformation. There is no way that transgender people can ever be "safe" in prisons as long as prisons exist and, as scholar Fred Moten has written, as long as we live in a society that could even *have* prisons. Building a trans and queer abolitionist movement means building power among people facing multiple systems of oppression in order to imagine a world beyond mass devastation, violence, and inequity that occurs within and between communities. We must resist the trap of being compartmentalized into "issues" and "priorities" and sacrificing a broader political vision and movement to react to the crisis of the here and now. This is the logic that allows many white and middle-class gay and lesbian folks to think that marriage is *the* most important and pressing LGBT issue, without being invested in the real goal of ending racism and capitalism. *Struggling*

*against trans imprisonment is one of many key places to radicalize queer and trans politics, expand anti-prison politics, and join in a larger movement for racial, economic, gender, and social justice to end all forms of militarization, criminalization, and warfare.*

### III. So You Think We're Impossible?

This stuff is heavy, we realize. Our communities and our movements are up against tremendous odds and have inherited a great deal of trauma that we are still struggling to deal with. A common and reasonable response to these conditions is getting overwhelmed, feeling defeated, losing hope. In this kind of emotional and political climate, when activists call for deep change like prison abolition (or, gasp, an LGBT agenda *centered around* prison abolition), our demands get called “impossible” or “idealistic” or even “divisive.” As trans people, we’ve been hearing this for ages. After all, according to our legal system, the media, science, and many of our families and religions, we shouldn’t exist! Our ways of living and expressing ourselves break such fundamental rules that systems crash at our feet, close their doors to us, and attempt to wipe us out. And yet we exist, continuing to build and sustain new ways of looking at gender, bodies, family, desire, resistance, and happiness that nourish us and challenge expectations.

In an age when thousands of people are murdered annually in the name of “democracy,” millions of people are locked up to “protect public safety,” and LGBT organizations march hand in hand with cops in Pride parades, being impossible may just be the best thing we’ve got going for ourselves: *Impossibility may very well be our only possibility.*

What would it mean to *embrace*, rather than *shy away from*, the impossibility of our ways of living as well as our political visions? What would it mean to desire a future that we can’t even imagine but that we are told couldn’t ever exist? We see the abolition of policing, prisons, jails, and detention not strictly as a narrow answer to “imprisonment” and the abuses that occur within prisons, but also as a challenge to the rule of poverty, violence, racism, alienation, and disconnection that we face every day. Abolition is not just about closing the doors to violent institutions, but also about building up and recovering institutions and practices and relationships that nurture wholeness, self-determination, and transformation. Abolition is not some distant future but something we create in every moment when we say no to the traps of empire and yes to the nourishing possibilities dreamed of and practiced by our ancestors and friends. Every time we insist on accessible and affirming healthcare, safe and quality

They will run straight to the doctor,  
he is the one who will decide whether I am sane.

If he feels that I am,  
he will send me back to the population so that I may do my time.

But if he certifies me,  
time stops.

He can keep me in here for as long as he wants,  
for the rest of my life,  
and it won’t count towards my sentence.

If I had known what it took,  
that you have to be able to turn your feelings off,  
just shut them down completely,  
it happens gradually,  
so slowly that you don’t realize it.

The injuries and deaths and the lies pound away at you until,  
finally,  
you reach down inside yourself and find nothing.

Empty space.

And it feels pretty damn good,  
Not to hurt!

Write to:  
S. SchienBein  
P.O. Box 1500  
Maple ridge B.C.  
V2X-7G3  
Canada



I hope you're smiling today. Here's a poem I wrote when I was in "seg."  
Look I'm very lonely I need help getting through this roller coaster ride  
I'm on. Maybe you could help me get a penpal. Thank you!  
Much love and respect  
Big Stephen

### 30 Days in the Hole

There are times,  
When I've slipped away from concentrating on something specific,  
that I suffer & rage which takes my sight away,  
closes off my vision,  
makes the air around me turn purple,  
I try to believe that I would not really do it.  
I have been in the place too long now,  
while the prison shrinks.  
I must not tell them.  
Nothing they might say would change what I'm feeling,  
and I cannot admit to them how many times each day I lose my focus  
and find this thing,  
this raging unwanted something,  
assaulting my brain.  
I must not think about it.  
I don't know how not to.  
But if I tell them,  
they will decide I am dangerous.  
They will call the warden and warn him.

education, meaningful and secure employment, loving and healing relationships, and being our full and whole selves, we are doing abolition. Abolition is about breaking down things that oppress and building up things that nourish. Abolition is the practice of transformation in the here and now and the ever after.

Maybe wrestling with such a significant demand is the wake-up call that an increasingly sleepy LGBT movement needs. The true potential of queer and trans politics cannot be found in attempting to reinforce our tenuous right to exist by undermining someone else's. If it is not clear already, we are all in this together. To claim our legacy of beautiful impossibility is to begin practicing ways of being with one another and making movement that sustain all life on this planet, without exception. It is to begin speaking what we have not yet had the words to wish for.

"THE PRISON IS SYNONYMOUS WITH  
VIOLENCE. EVEN IF WE ADVOCATE FOR  
ITS REFORM, WE NECESSARILY HAVE  
OUR EYES SET ON ITS ABOLITION."  
-EMILIE RĀKETE



Image by  
Mengzhu Fu -  
Fu Fighter Arts.

\*\*Content Warning: this letter contains references to child sexual abuse

## Krysta Morningstarr

Hello, my name is Krysta Morningstarr\*. I am a trans woman living in the Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice. Texas has begun Gender reassignment treatment on a case by case basis. I had to learn everything I know today pretty much on my own.

I have faced much ridicule in prison, both from security and the straight and even gay community here. You see I am trans gendered but I don't look it. I will need several surgeries before I will be the woman on the outside I am on the inside. I have passed a psych eval. and a medical evaluation. Now I have given 9 vials of blood to test for hormone irregularities that could have been causing my dysphoria. They came back normal so now medical has referred me to a panel of specialists in the state's main medical hospital to determine if I fit the profile for a successful transition.

I should.

But perhaps I get ahead of myself. It will be at least a year before I get my surgeries, sooner for hormone treatments.

I have been trying to live proud and strong in the face of adversity. Denying my inner nature caused me a lot of problems. It led me to prison. I will share with you my story, in all of its shocking and ugly details.

I have been trans gendered for as long as I can remember. When the other little boys were into GI Joe and He Man, I was into Barbie and Rainbow Brite. When my 3rd grade class put on a production of "The Wizard of Oz" I innocently asked if I could play Dorothy. I was laughed at and told no. When I was 9 I was sexually molested by my uncle. This was my first experience with sex. Not only did he manipulate my genitals, he made me have sex with my cousin while he videotaped it. When I had seen my cousin's vagina I was fascinated by it. I began to actively

## Tart Ti

First, a Big-Loud shout out to all of our extended diaspora of trans and other LGBTQI family members whether imprisoned in a community of bars and concrete or imprisoned amongst those of the free world. Many thanks from all of us, here, in prison in the United States of America for your efforts made on our behalf; and a special thanks to Marius Mason for the incredible insight that caused this project to develop. May it yield big ripe juicy fruit for generations already ahead of us here. By way of introduction, I self-identify as gender queer with a biological intersex influence.

**\*\*Let's Have a Celebration!\*\***

An effusive big and juicy hello! to our collective trans family. Wherever you are being held captive, and under whatever conditions please know that your innermost spirit is never bounded or cuffed nor caged so let it soar freely as is its natural nature to do so, knowing that there are many of us standing behind you in full support of you so that should you ever stumble you shall never fall. Now, find a day to rejoice in being simply you as you are; believing, truly that you are most beautiful in your own way; with personality, character, and charisma. Please, it is in your best interest to find a teacher, a guru, to explore self as spirit for sole pursuit of material interests is sure to disappoint you. Also, a daily workout routine to build strength and confidence is a complement to a well rounded life style. Eat the best foods, eschew commercial garbage as much as possible; and demonstrate the collective power and unstoppable force of our trans family by exhibiting unity amongst all of our members, being willing to protect them against violence and exploitation. And, supply them with the necessary essentials of life as needed asking for "nothing" in return but allegiance to our core principles. Doing all of these things, altruistically, we shall never fail and can only flourish and grow as is our rightful inheritance.

Celebrate "International Day of Solidarity with Trans Prisoners" with ceremony, establish ritual (within reason) and let's make it a 7 day "festival" of re-dedication to our principles, accomplishments, and people. Stay safe, healthy, resourceful; and, always! Happy!

~Tart-Ti~



## Amber Fayefox

Even though I've known I'm different gender-wise since 3rd grade, I have only embraced my "girl-hood" for a little over a year now. And even as I write this I'm in the process of planning how and when I will be coming out here in the prison. I have, as of 2 weeks ago, just finished coming out to my friends and family. So, I guess you could say I'm still a "kinder-trans" just learning about the culture and history of my people. A process I've been through before as a goth and a pagan. This time is different. When I was first coming into my own as a perky goth and a witch I was initiated by some one else who knew what it means to be a goth and to be a pagan. Also, I told people about my new sense of self identity as I came to understand it.

My journey as a trans woman has been a horse of a different color. As a child I hid my difference not knowing what it was. As a teen I compromised with my self living as an effeminate male, despite feeling like a bitchy 14-year old girl in desperate need of a makeover. I had a fair idea of what I was, but no one to show me the way. And so... I continued to hide.

It was only when I realized December of 2016 will be the 20 year anniversary of my choice to hide way back in 3rd grade, that I decided to see to my own initiation.

And in its way, the universe found a way to help. First with an awesome radio show on KWCW called "Raising the Rainbow" hosted by a trans man named Max. I wrote him a letter, but found myself unable to be honest about my identity. This gave me motivation to work on my nearly crippling trust issues. (Thank you Max, wherever you are.)

As my correspondence with Max came to an end, I gained another penpal. One I did eventually come out to. When I did, that penpal told me the She was actually a Xim.

I will always marvel at how the Goddess manages to always provide a guide when one is needed. First a trans man then a gender neutral penpal. Both of whom I can only describe as totally awesome people. The care I could see with every word has given me the courage to be who I truly am. A beautiful, self empowered, woman.

Glitter-bombs, Blessings, and Sisterhood!

Amber Fayefox \*

fantasize about being a girl. I would study myself in the bathroom mirror while tucking my penis between my legs to simulate having a vagina. This would turn me on.

In the 5th grade I dressed up in a blouse and mini skirt for Halloween and went to school dressed like this. For once no one laughed in my face, but the teachers were upset.

By the time I was 13 I had taken my allowance to Walmart and purchased a set of school girl clothes. I got them home and waited for my parents to leave so I could dress up.

At the age of 15 I was emancipated and I dropped out of high school getting my GED. I went to beauty school and learned the art of making someone look pretty. After a while I quit beauty school to enrol in Louisiana Tech University. I studied psychology. I knew I was different from other boys, I wanted to know why. I still had not heard of the term trans gender.

While in college I looked up how to walk, talk, and act like a girl. It was then that I found a video of a sex change operation. Suddenly the stars seemed to have aligned for me. I knew then what must be

One day I had put on a fake vagina and recorded myself manipulating it as if I were masturbating. I left the tape in the player and someone stole it. They showed it to the whole campus. I was so embarrassed I had to drop out.

I was then determined to act like a man. I got married. Then I had a daughter. One day when my child was 4 months old I came home from

work to discover that my wife had beaten the baby. I divorced her and was given custody. I enlisted in the army to support my child. Then the stress of Army, family, and denying who I am took its toll. I began having schizophrenic symptoms. I began hearing voices. I started taking street drugs to self medicate. Fighting my inner nature was like telling the storm not to rain or the ocean not to have tides. The street drugs made my mental illness worse.

The army quietly discharged me (honourably, surprisingly) and I left taking my daughter with me.

Fast forward about 8 years of heroin and cocaine abuse. I came home one day so high off of speedballs (a mix of cocaine and heroine in an injection) I couldn't remember who I was. I saw my daughter as an extension of myself.

Now I am most ashamed of this as it is my darkest secret. The voices told me to "make her ready." I initiated a relationship with her that she reciprocated. While high my drug addled mind I thought it was my self I was having sex with. I thought I was the little girl.

I pray that you don't judge me. I have much remorse for what I did and after I was caught I felt relieved. I felt like "finally it can stop!" I will never allow it to happen again.

Now I am serving out a 20 year sentence. I received 5 long years of counselling at the Skyview Hospital for the criminally insane.

I was such a misfit here. The other inmates looked up my crime on the internet and proceeded to ridicule me about it.

No Pride In Prisons are a New Zealand based queer and trans activist group fighting for the abolition of prisons.

POC, ESPECIALLY QTPOC, ARE OFTEN IN MUCH MORE DESPERATE FINANCIAL SITUATIONS AND MORE PROFILED AS CRIMINALS.

TRANS WOMEN ARE OFTEN EFFECTIVELY FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN COMPLETE ISOLATION & RAPE.

SOLIDARITY WITH TRANS PRISONERS REQUIRES PRISON ABOLITION.

"I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT I AM LIKELY TO BE RAPED IN PRISON AGAIN."

ERINGA,  
A MAORI TRANS WOMAN

"I WANTED TO COMPLAIN (about assault while under police supervision) BUT THEY JUST WEREN'T INTERESTED."

"I AM AFRAID. I HAVE BEEN ATTACKED SINCE I HAVE BEEN HERE WITH THREE MEN FORCING THEMSELVES UPON ME."  
VANESSA COOPER,  
WHANGAREI

KIRAN FOSTER 2016 ♀



# NO PRIDE IN PRISONS

WHY PRISON ABOLITION IS NECESSARY FOR US

PRISONS ARE:

**RACIST**  
(NO WAY!)

- POC ARE OVERREPRESENTED. IN NZ MĀORI ARE 51% OF THE PRISON POPULATION AND ONLY 15% OF THE GENERAL POPULATION.
- PRISONS ARE A COLONIAL, WHITE SUPREMACIST CONCEPT AS THEY EXIST TODAY. NO INDIGENOUS JUSTICE SYSTEM LOOKS LIKE THIS. NO INDIGENOUS PERSON SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO THIS.

POLICIES ARE  
**CISSEXIST &  
TRANSMISOGYNIST**  
(like the rest of the state)

- IN GENERAL + IN NZ POLICY IS TO CATEGORIZE INCARCERATED PPL BY BIRTH CERTIFICATE / "BIOLOGY".
- AN OMBUDSMAN REPORT ON NZ JAILS: TRANS PRISONERS AREN'T TREATED W/ DIGNITY & DON'T HAVE GENDERS ACKNOWLEDGED.
- MEDICAL TRANSITION OFTEN DENIED DESPITE BEING LIFE SAVING.

CONDITIONS ARE  
**INCREDIBLY  
UNSAFE &  
PUT US AT  
RISK OF  
ASSAULT**

NOT TO MENTION HOW  
VIOLENT IMPRISONMENT  
ITSELF IS!

- NEW ZEALAND PRISONS ARE **OVERCROWDED** AND PPL ARE BUNKED TWO TO ONE CELL. THIS + GENERAL EFFECTS OF OVERCROWDING LEAD TO INCREASED SUICIDES, VIOLENCE, MURDER, MENTAL + PHYSICAL ILLNESS, ETC.
- TRANS WOMEN ARE OFTEN BUNKED WITH MEN + HAVE BEEN RAPED.
- VIOLENCE AGAINST PRISONERS MUCH LESS TRANS POC IS VERY UNDER-REPORTED & V V HIGH. SEE THE **BLACK AND PINK** REPORT.

I was myself raped and beaten multiple times. I continued to try and hide my inner woman until one day I landed in with a good counselor and psychiatrist. I was shown that if I can accept myself for who I am, any ridicule or adversity will not affect me. I came to terms then with my Gender Dysphoria and at that time decided to do something about it.

I approached my counselor and told him pretty much what I am telling you now. The counselor referred me to the head psych Dr. here and she agreed that I had gender dysphoria. I was sent to security and medical.

This brings me back to where I started. Once I became open with my trans gendered nature my schizophrenic symptoms stopped. The doctor has taken me off of my psych meds and while I still have auditory hallucinations I no longer hear the voices telling me mean things.

So take it from me, if you are trans, don't try to sublimate who you are.

Don't force yourself to be something you're not.

Live life free and proud.

Much love~  
Krysta M. Morningstarr\*

All correspondence must be addressed to:

Kris Jones 1705728  
Skyview Unit  
379 FM 2972 W  
Rusk, TX 75785

Kaysta M.  
Morningstar

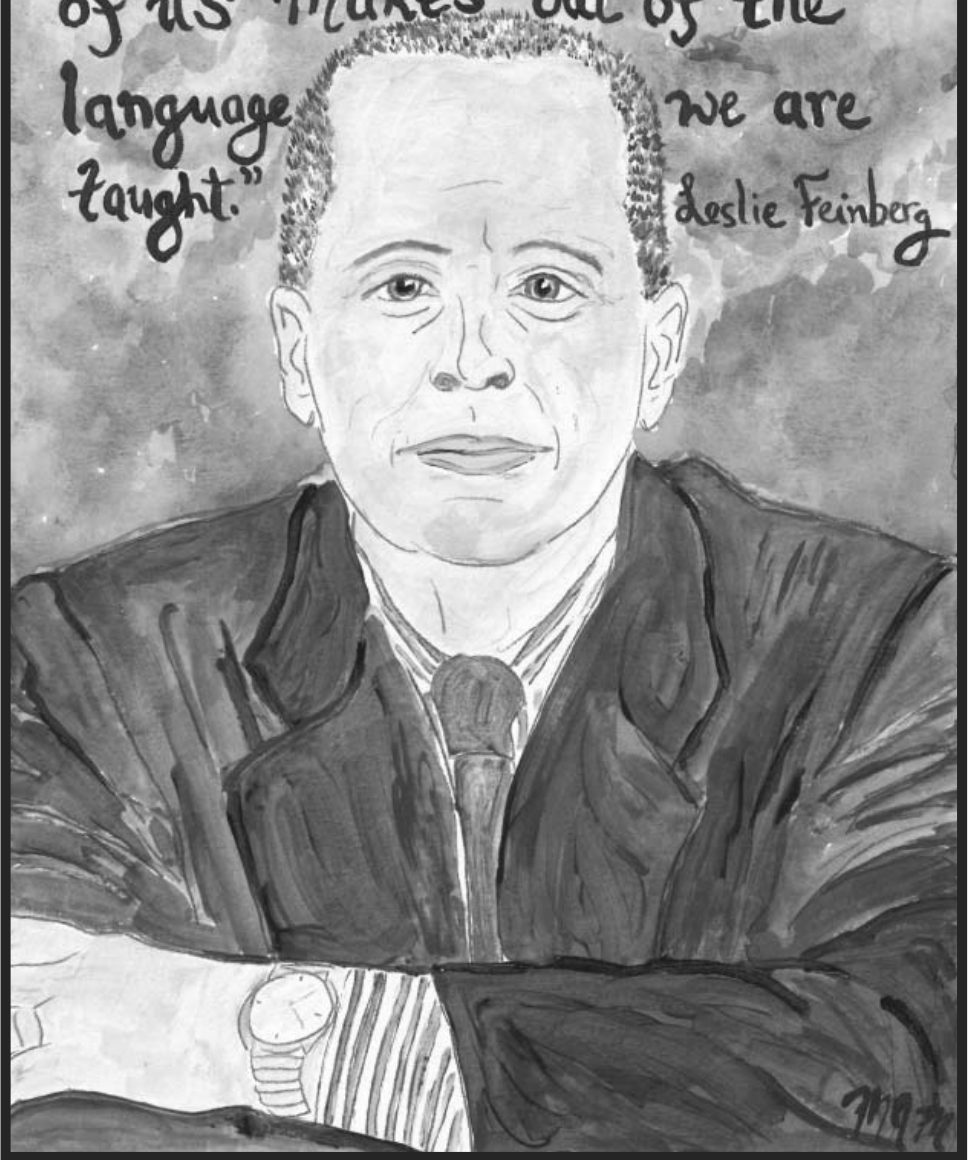
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a quote by  
CHRISTOPHER

"If you can dream it, you can be it" - HART

"Gender is the poetry each  
of us makes out of the  
language  
taught." we are  
Leslie Feinberg







“Wearing Orange, Feeling Blue, Thinking Green” Artwork by Marius Mason while in the SHU (Special Housing Unit).



Opposite:  
“If you can dream it, you can be it” by Krysta Morningstarr



Artwork by Nora Castaneda, currently incarcerated in Texas, US.



Hello! My name is Karisma Garcia, im a Transgender woman (MTF) that is currently housed at the High Desert State Prison in Indian Springs, Nevada. Im 34 yrs old. Blond with blue eyes, 180lbs. Im a survivor of prison sexual abuse by guard. And am looking for (pen pals), (financial assistance), (networking support) Im Jewish, I Love music and food. I dont really have a political affiliation, (Just love people.) I ~~am~~ <sup>would like</sup> to gain assistance from people that are completely aware of what im in need of. Im doing a lawsuit against (N.O.D.C.) for the abuse thats happening here in this prison to inmates myself include and its not easy. Any legal assistance would be awesome. Im also ~~possibly~~ look for someone that may be interested in helping me with some financial assistance for Hygiene items, maybe a TV. Radio. fan, ect... If your able to help Thanks. If i have been to forward haven't really done this pen-pal thing before. but if your possibly interested please contact me at: Karisma Garcia #68529

# Trans Heroes



by Marius Mason

The reason I wanted to create these images for the event is just simple visibility. By being seen, by being lovingly seen as respected community members who contribute their talents to many causes, to uplifting the next generation...I wanted to try to expand upon what may still be the main perspective on trans folks....that we are caricatures rather than real and complex people. Some of the individuals I focused on were poets and writers, or counselors and activists. I think I will keep going with this series this year, marking some of he many professions and contributions that trans people make to this world. We are everywhere...and we belong. We deserve dignity and respect, to be seen as we are.



Write to:  
 Karisma Garcia #68529  
 HDSP  
 PO Box 650  
 Indian Springs,  
 Nevada 89070





## Karisma Garcia.

I currently receive improper treatment of my Gender Identity Dysphoria. In the state of Nevada they (Nevada Dept of Corrections) don't allow for proper treatment of a persons gender identity dysphoria. They don't allow purchases of feminine items from the inmate store (such as... panties, make up, ect). If a person comes in already on hormone therapy they are only maintained at that level with no proper testing of blood for accuracy of correct hormone levels. I have been denied any Endocrinologist treatment; I am denied any sexual re-assignment surgeries. And I continue everyday to be discriminated on by staff and correctional officers alike. But I fight to get through. I have been sexually assaulted by a prison guard, of which he was fired and disappeared even as I fought to get justice. Civilly in case A-12-673006-C in Clark County, Nevada. I won \$60, 500.00 against the C/O that abused me. But because it's civil and he's hiding I'll never see a bit of it. And I currently have no means to further my case. Legal assistance to myself and other Trans people could be a huge help. Pen-pals are also great. But you have to consider a lot of Trans-prisoners do not have a support system so unless pen-pals are willing to maybe help with financial support phone calls and stamps, envelopes and paper cost money. The prison system in Nevada does not have proper policies established for Transgender inmates. They house us with who they want not considering our own opinion of safety. It's live with who they chose or go to the segregation unit on lock down for disciplinary for refusal to live with who they want. My time in this place is horrible. They do sell items that make time a bit more bearable but again unless you have a support system the cost of radios, TVs, appliances is crazy.

Azzurra is a person that has introduced me to a person named Natasha that has been writing me for a few months and she is one of the biggest blessings I have received. She helps me when she can and writes me at least 2 times a month. And I am glad I know her. She makes me feel loved and cared for. So, pen-pal programs are important.

Transpeople are being abused in prisons and unless people show support the prison system gets away with it. If they see we have support they begin to back away a bit. We are all humans.

Daniel H. Harris #00622851  
Stiles Unit  
3060 FM 3514  
Beaumont, TX 77705

Lady With Balls  
By  
Daniel (Dani) Harris

When I was born in 1960 there were only two possible genders: Girl or Boy. Due to a bit of dangling flesh the doctor pronounced, "It's a boy!" Cigars were smoked to celebrate.

Today I know he was wrong. The physical evidence led him to deduce what there was no way to know. My whole life has been spent trying to live up to the expectations of my family and society his diagnosis engendered and be a man.

In my early years I didn't realize there was anything wrong with me. When my grandmother was making nightgowns for my sisters and girl cousins out of the cutest material I had ever seen, it had kittens on it, I begged for her to make me one. No one thought I'd keep wearing it when they made fun of me. My answer to ridicule was to get a baseball bat. I was only 5 years old. When I wouldn't give it up it disappeared from my toy box. I started to steal my sisters stuff to wear, but I knew to hide. They had taught me that the real me wouldn't be accepted.

Deceptions were layered upon lies to cover my reality. There were girlfriends and wives and lots of heartache for all of us. I hid that broken little girl behind a masculine facade and protected her with enough violence to make the asshole rednecks in South Alabama think twice before making fun of us when she would forget to hide and make us look like a sissy with our hands on our hips or let our eyes wonder down to check out the endowment on some guy in the bathroom or shower at school.

Prison has been more of the same. Every since I got to Texas prison in 1992 I've admitted I was gay, yet knew I had to continue to hide and deny the existence of the sweet little girl that dwelled within me to protect us from the predators that see girl as a synonym for weak. We fought the battles that let us be free and avoid being forced to live in sexual servitude.

It's supposed to be a new age in Texas prison due to the passing of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). It finally felt like time to set this little girl free. It's proven harder than I expected. Since I arrived here on Stiles Unit I've been denied safe keeping and came here on a transgender transfer in September, 2015. My first day here my first cell partner told me I had to leave because I admitted to being gay, transgendered, and HIV positive. I left rather than fight, but it seems Texas prison hasn't changed all that much.

My next cell assignment was with a violent and volatile Crip gang member that has never allowed a white or gay person to live in the cell with him in more than two decades of coming to prison and most of those that did not leave when he told them to were beaten brutally. Anthony Campbell is a man with a lot of hatred to share with the world. We might have gotten along better if I had been wealthy and had more money he could extort. I

TDCJ has become zero tolerance for sexual assault and it has made prison safer.  
But it's still...

Since I've been in prison I have tried to commit suicide 3 times. Coping with my dysphoria has been extremely difficult for me! For years TDCJ would not treat me because I was not diagnosed in society or on Estrogen.

Due to policy change and abusing myself- I have begun Estrogen and other medication to help me cope with my gender dysphoria. I'm still being denied treatment! My doctor at UTMB Kevin McKinney prescribed me the real-life experience and recommended that I be allowed to live full time as a female and to have the items to live as a female.

The doctor on my unit denied my doctor's orders! Sucks! His name is Douglas Greene. He doesn't even specialize in GID treatment!

It's my hope that my story will inspire you to become more active in prison rights and be our voice so our plea for help will be heard!

Love ya  
Vanessa, TX

Write to Vanessa:  
Scott Gibson #699888  
A. Hughes Unit  
Rt 2 Box 4400  
Gatesville, TX 76597

Note: Address envelope to  
Scott "Vanessa" Gibson,  
and address letter to  
Vanessa.



put her off - but told her z'd be ok,  
the next day z was placed in safe  
keeping.

Although this was 22 yrs ago - Rape  
still happens and it's a fact that trans-  
women are more at risk than any other  
prisoner because we are the closet thing  
to a real female and it makes it dangerous  
for us!

This would not happen if prison officials  
would create policies that allowed us to  
be kept separately or housed with other

transwomen!

I believe there is no consensual sex in  
prison! Especially if it's done under duress  
or intimidation. A lot of cases, rape does  
not occur by violence. The threat of being  
hurt is usually the way it happens. Or  
a transwoman can be in a place with 2 or  
3 inmates and they will pressure her into  
having sex.

I encourage all the girls to have a  
walky partner - someone to be with them at  
all times, and to report all abuse!

am poor by most standards and only thought of as wealthy due to having all  
the electronics I've collected over the years and a typewriter that is  
my lifeline to express myself. Things were tense. My property was in  
jeopardy since it had value and I was not seen as a threat. Since  
Anthony wasn't in to gay sex and violence was no longer an option if I  
could help it I began to hold his contraband so he could make money with  
no chance of getting busted with stolen goods. Once he began to use me  
to hold his contraband life was easier.

In less than ninety days I've seen prisoners robbed, extorted, and used  
for sex slaves. This isn't supposed to happen any more. There are cameras  
everywhere and no one cares because they know there are not enough officers  
to monitor the images. R, H, D, and J all took advantage of me  
for sexual favors. They'd swear it was consensual sex. It wasn't and  
could never be when my refusal was so likely to lead to violence. I like  
sex, but only when I feel I have a choice. All of this and more happened  
daily in front of the cameras. It's a joke to have such expensive  
surveillance equipment when you can't afford to monitor them. Stiles is  
so short-handed that we are often stuck in the dayrooms with no way to  
get in our cells for hours on end because there is no officer available to  
supervise the opening of cell doors much less provide adequate security  
to keep us safe from the predators.

Of course, now I'm in transect awaiting Unit Classification Committee  
after being caught with a s wine. Not sure where I'll end up. I'm  
trying again to be placed in Safe Keeping with my sisters and expect it  
will only happen if I'm willing to be that most hated of prisoner, a snitch.  
It's not supposed to work that way since snitching only puts us more in  
danger of retaliation from gang members and they can't protect me if Crips  
decide to get me.

What I won't do is put this little girl (Dani) back in a cage. She  
deserves to live. Whatever it takes we will survive and we'll do it with  
our eyebrows plucked, legs shaved, and wearing our pants as tight as we  
can get them. It's time this little girl grew into the lady with balls  
she was always capable of being if I hadn't been afraid to let her.







and stomped bloody by gang members who were determined to force me to pay protection and to force me into prostitution!

I know I fought 6 to 8 people back to back - the harder I fought - the worse I was beaten!

I was a kid! My first day in prison - I had sex - with 3 people. It's sick! I was still bloody! My mouth was bleeding, my chin was split and my eyes were swollen and they still wanted to have sex with me!

The whole time I fought - I remember saying over & over; go Fuck yourselves!

But I gave in! I was exhausted mentally and physically. This older Mexican inmate told them to get off me, and let him talk to me. He basically told me! You have

a choice - you can either get in line or this will continue!

I thought my best way to survive would be with him. He was in a prison gang called TS. But it wasn't <sup>for</sup> long he was trying to share me with his home boys.

Fortunately my mother came to see me! When she seen how badly I was beaten, she went into a rage! She was crying and demanded to see the warden. They naturally put her off - but told her I'd be ok,



my name is: Vanessa. I'm truly grateful to have the opportunity to participate in this program to share my struggles and pleas for help, with you.

I'm truly in debt to Vylah Cruz who was kind enough to write and ask me to participate in this zine.

Without wonderful people like x and you, our lives in prison would be a nightmare for real! so thanks!

As a transwoman in prison, I can attest to the abuse we deal with everyday, not only from inmates, but from guards too!

I have been in prison close to 22 flat years. I'm soon to be 38 in Feb 2016. I was certified as an adult at the age of 16 for ass. Robbery. when I turned 17 yrs. old, I came to prison which was one of the scariest moments in my life because I was instantly attacked!

I grew up dealing with abuse. It was nothing new. I was raped when I was 8 yrs. old, and growing up, I stayed in fights because being different was hard as hell! In a insane

way, this made me mentally tough! But prison shook me to my core! I never experienced nothing like this or the level of abuse.

True enough being raped is brutal- but I have never been beaten so bad in my life! my first day in prison I was beaten



Artwork by Nora Castaneda, currently incarcerated in Texas, US.



"The wheels of life"

1-5-16

When I was working as a volunteer Editor in Baton Rouge, LA. I use to go to Southern Hospital on my way home. I would walk down the corridors, and just walk into different people's room ["what can I say, I'm a people person"] and read Scriptures to them or talk to them. It was a way of forgetting about my problems and being thankful to God for my health. It made a difference in the lives of those I visited. One time it really saved my life....

I was very controversial in my writing. I had offended someone in an editorial that I had done about a promoter who was bringing entertainers into town who were not the original members of a particular group. The person I exposed literally took a contract out on me!!!

One night I was coming home from a party about two o'clock in the morning. I had just drop my friend off at his house. As I began to open my door, a man came out behind the side of my house and said, Are you Mocha? I said "yes, Sir"....

He said, "I need to talk to you. I was sent here to carry out a contract on you".

Me? why? I asked.

He said, "well, there's a promoter that's very upset about

Continue →

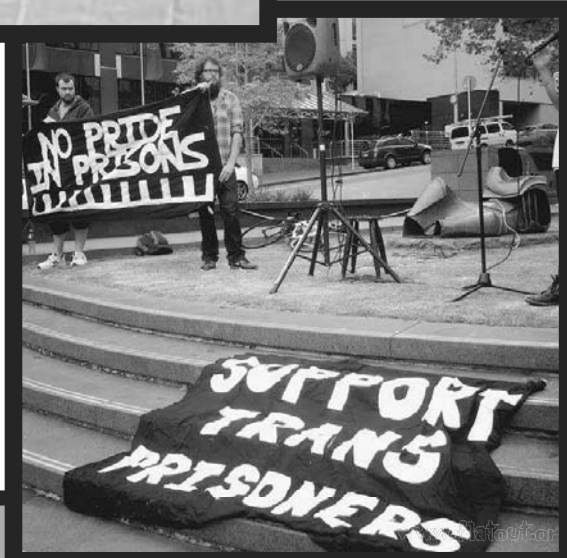


Images

Above: Banner by SF Black & Pink

Right: No Pride In Prisons  
New Zealand

Below: Postcard by FlatOut,  
Melbourne, Australia.







Art by Vanessa Gibson, currently incarcerated in Texas, US.

the money you cost him, when you said that the group that was coming to town was not the real group".....

"Are you going to do something to me? I asked. He said, "No" and I didn't want to ask him why because I didn't want to change his mind! I was just glad.....

He continue. "my mother was in Southern Hospital and she wrote me about how you came in one day and sat down and talked to her, and read scripture to her. She was so impressed that this morning Baton Rouge Star Editorial, who didn't know her, came ~~in~~ in and did that. She wrote me about you when I was in Angolia Penitentiary. I was impressed with that and I've always wanted to meet you. when I heard the word out on the street that somebody wanted to knock you off," he said, "I accepted the contract and then told them to leave you alone. "What Goes Around, Comes Around".....

The End!!!

I leave you with a Quote of mine:

On your Mark, Get Ready, Set, and let's fight for our Rights...

Special Thanks to  
Dell Gaither....

written by: J. "Mocha"  
Scroggins

## Sistergirls and Brotherboys

**Sistergirls** are Aboriginal (First Nations people of so-called Australia) transgender women who have a distinct cultural identity and often take on female roles within the community, including looking after children and family. Many Sistergirls live a traditional lifestyle and have strong cultural backgrounds. Their cultural, spiritual, and religious beliefs are pivotal to their lives

**Brotherboys** are Indigenous transgender people with a male spirit, whose bodies were considered female at birth. Brotherboys choose to live their lives as male, regardless of which stage/path medically they choose. Brotherboys have a strong sense of their cultural identity.

### Fears For Transgender “Sistergirls” Locked Up In NT Prisons

Brothers and Sisters NT, an advocacy and support group that celebrates gender, intersex and sexuality diversity, has accused the NT Attorney-General John Elferink and Corrections Commissioner Ken Middlebrook of ignoring transgender prisoners - particularly transgender Aboriginal women known as Sistergirls - in custody

“I’ve heard stories of Sistergirls being incarcerated recently and correctional staff going, ‘what’s wrong with them? Something is wrong with them; they’re not normal,’” Starlady Nungari, one of the founders of Brothers and Sisters NT, told BuzzFeed News.

Aboriginal woman Lisa Obrien, 49, spent the majority of her youth in prison. As a transgender inmate, she was repeatedly raped, assaulted and humiliated while in custody.

“I first went to prison when I was 18 and it was absolutely terrifying. The last time I was in prison was when I was 30. It was mostly related to prostitution, driving offences or drug offences. I wasn’t a hardcore criminal.”

“I experienced rape and violation. Constantly being violated by other prisoners and also prison guards. I’ve been approached by prison guards who made me strip off so that they could have a look at me out of curiosity,”

She believes Indigenous Sistergirls are at highest risk of abuse and death inside prison, saying that even in states with a gender identity policy, indigenous transgender women are often alienated because many of them don’t meet the criteria.

“Even with a prison policy I don’t think there is a lot of protection for transgender people, and that is especially true for Sistergirls. In most cases they wouldn’t even come under that prison policy anyway.”

“Prison policy around transgender people has conditions, like you must be on hormone replacement therapy, and it relies on your surgical status. It’s up to the discretion of whoever processes you to decide if you meet the conditions. Most sistergirls don’t meet these conditions because they have limited access to health services and options,” said Obrien.

Starlady agrees that the cultural difference is staggering and must be addressed in any future policy in the NT, where almost 90 percent of the prison population is Aboriginal.

“The Sistergirl identity is different from other transgender identities,” she says.

“It is a cultural identity and it’s different. It challenges what other people register as what ‘transgender’ is from a non-indigenous perspective. Sometimes Sistergirls just grow their hair long to signify that they are transgender and my concern is correctional staff won’t even register that they are transgender,” Starlady says.

Excerpts from BuzzFeed News  
8th October 2015  
Article by Allan Clarke