

Dear Friends:

This issue is dedicated to women and girls in the jails and prisons of New Jersey.

Because there are fewer women (and even fewer girls) incarcerated, per capita, in our prison systems, their individual and family needs are often overlooked. It is often assumed that their experiences are the same as those of their male counterparts. But in our experience, nothing could be further from the truth.

For example, incarcerated women and girls are more likely than men to have suffered severe abuse, neglect, or exploitation from being trafficked or prostituted. In addition to having unique medical and psychological needs, based on such life experiences and on physiological differences, women often come into incarceration either pregnant or already mothers and primary caregivers of disabled family members and elderly parents. This does not in any way discount the role of men as fathers. However, in most families, women are the 'glue' that holds their families together. And in low-income families, women are often the sole parent and breadwinner. This means that when they go to jail or prison, their children are likely to be placed in the foster or residential care systems, which are now seen as part of the 'community to prison pipeline.' The incarceration of women, therefore, has a significant impact on the jails and prisons of the future, as well as the present.

In New Jersey there is only one prison for adult women - the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, which is located far from population centers and in the north center portion of the state. This prison houses women at all levels of security, including psychiatric unit, but there is also women housed in the Trenton Psychiatric Hospital. There are jails in 20 counties of the state, the majority of which confine both women and girls, pre and post-conviction; one juvenile facility confining girls in Bordentown; and four halfway houses (with DOC oversight) spread throughout the state, which confine women who have served a part of their sentence, who are now preparing for full release, as well as limited numbers of women on parole sanctions.

This system directly affects thousands of women and girls around the state. Because the voices of these "captives" are hardly ever heard, we cannot fully understand their experiences in custody, or ensure that the conditions of their confinement are safe, healthy and humane. Since their fate affects multiple generations and communities, our lack of knowledge places a large sector of our society at risk of harm, and affects both present and future generations.

Getting information and direct testimonies about incarcerated women and girls is particularly challenging. Prison communication policies are monitored and restricted, exposing the women to censorship and retaliation; the population in the jails and halfway houses are fluid; and getting testimony from juveniles is virtually impossible, because of privacy restrictions affecting youth, which keeps these girls especially isolated. All of these conditions frustrate any kind of independent oversight.

In order to begin to give proper attention to the particular problems of incarcerated women and girls, and in light of these barriers, this edition of [From the Inside Out](#) is structured a little differently than in the past. In a departure from previous issues, we are including testimonies from outside New Jersey, since many of the issues raised are common to all incarcerated women. And, in addition to testimonials, we are including information, articles, and links to short documentary features that are designed to enrich the knowledge about women inside, and enhance the knowledge of their advocates in the community.

The majority of the excerpted pieces below conclude with a hyperlink in blue. These link directly to a more complete or complementary news article, or a related documentary.

We hope you will learn from all of the material in this issue, and use what you learn to advocate for improvement for the prison systems that affect us all.

The Editors

INTRODUCTION

The staggering picture that we see, when we look carefully at the prison system, is that when we incarcerate anyone, we are not simply putting “a bad guy/girl away” or “making our community safer.” Often the opposite is the case, because of toxic conditions within the prisons - the failure of health and rehabilitation services, the lack of safety, and the violence of the prison culture - and the deep impact of incarceration on the life of the families and communities left behind.

Over 50% of the women currently in our federal and state prisons have a child or children at home under 18 years of age. Many were pregnant at the time of their arrest. So incarcerating these women requires either that someone in the family steps up to take their children, or the children have to enter the foster care system and face the risk of eventual adoption. As a result, all costs quoted as the “annual cost of incarceration” are misleading, since they do not include the public cost of caring for children in out of home placements and other dependent family members who are elderly or disabled. This effect doubles (at least) the financial burden of incarcerating women.

Additionally, the reported percentage of incarcerated women suffering from traumatic or other mental illnesses, upon arrest or incarceration, is double that of men. But appropriate mental health and related substance abuse services in the various institutions for women are severely deficient, consisting primarily of medicating patients into silence. This results in untold suffering, and the release of women who are more ill than when they entered the system, and less likely to escape cycles of future institutionalization.

When you shift the attention from women, to girls, the situation is even more disturbing.

“The ages of the 641,000 girls who enter the maze of the juvenile justice system each year range from 11 to 18. Almost 80% of the girls and young women in the juvenile detention centers have experienced physical and/or sexual abuse in their short lifetimes. Reflecting the racial disparities that exist within law enforcement, Black females are 20% more likely to be detained than white girls their age, while American Indian girls are 50% more likely.”

These dynamics contribute to increased cycles of institutionalization for girls already facing daunting challenges in our society.

“Often referred to as the sexual abuse to prison pipeline, teen girls who are victims of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse make up almost 90% of those filling these bare cellblocks today. Many of these girls come from domestic scenes of physical and emotional neglect; health statistics reveal large percentages of girls who enter the detention system are in need of eyeglasses, are currently pregnant or have been pregnant, and up to 41% bear physical marks of sexual abuse.”

“Taking these factors into consideration, it is critical to examine local, state, and federal legislation and policies in place today and whether they are aimed at restoring, not warehousing, our youth.

Further, and continuing from the the Annie E. Casey Foundation:

“Creating lasting detention reform means that every decision maker must be at the table – judges, law enforcement, prosecutors, defenders, probation officers, social workers, legislators, governor’s reps....Without committed policymakers, success for even the most effectively designed program can be derailed as support and implementation become problematic.”

"It is vitally important that policies and practices consider the critical role that gender plays within the factors leading to the upward trend of young women filling detention centers. "

<http://www.sharedjustice.org/domestic-justice/2016/10/20/hidden-from-view-the-plight-of-girls-in-juvenile-detention?rq=girls%20in%20juvenile>

As former US Attorney General Loretta Lynch declared in 2016:

"Put simply, we know that when we incarcerate a woman we often are truly incarcerating a family, in terms of the far-reaching effect on her children, her community, and her entire family network." These unique needs cannot be addressed, however, when the experiences of criminalized men define reforms aimed solely at ameliorating the ills of a single carceral facility.

While closing jails around the country is an essential goal, we cannot make the mistake of conflating the dismantling of carceral facilities with the amelioration of all of the myriad ills of the nation's punitive apparatus. If we are committed to truly ending "mass incarceration," we must also turn our attention to the experiences of women and girls -- instead of rendering these narratives vulnerable to further erasure.'

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/40867-we-can-t-end-mass-incarceration-if-we-erase-the-experiences-of-criminalized-women>

Finally, women being released from any kind of incarceration face not only the same battles as their male counterparts of finding employment, housing, and other basic necessities for themselves. They must also prove themselves able to regain custody of their children, and care for them at a level that is 'approved' by an outside agency. The pressures on women during incarceration, to try to parent their children and avoid losing them forever to out of home placements and adoption, is enormous. Actually transitioning to care for and parent them upon release; to rebuild the relationships that have been disrupted at best, and destroyed at worst; to do all of this under the gaze and oversight of correctional and child protective agencies who control their movements, actions, and often choices - it is no wonder that many women, especially those with either mental health or abuse backgrounds, simply surrender. Then what becomes of the women, their children and their families?

Advocating for community-based alternatives to detention, choosing to be a mentor to a girl, volunteering at an after school tutoring program, or teaching empowerment through sports are all ways in which we can uphold the dignity of girls in our communities.

Providing a safe space for young women to grow and flourish is a high calling that we must respond to. We all depend upon it.

"It's an act of love and an act of faith to allow yourself to feel the pain of another."

Isabel Wilkerson

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Why aren't we talking about the 800% Growth in Incarcerated Women?

"Holly Harris may wear cowboy boots to work, but the Kentucky mom and Executive Director for the [US Justice Action Network](#) (USJAN) is far from your average southerner. Harris was the first speaker at [FreedomWorks' #JusticeForAll event](#), and as the leader of USJAN, she set the tone for what turned out to be a fascinating conference.

The veteran litigator opened her speech by outlining USJAN's goals, explaining the organization believes "our [criminal] code just doesn't make sense." That's why their "goal is to shrink criminal codes" and "get rid of these unfair, unnecessary duplicative and inconsistent laws."

But it was something else she told the crowd a few minutes later that got attendees worked up.

"The fastest growing segment of the prison population in America," Harris articulated, "is women ... and nobody is talking about that."

According to the [Families Against Mandatory Minimums Foundation](#) (FAMM), the female prison population in the United States has grown by over 800 percent in the last 30 years, while the male population grew by 416 percent during the same period. Despite this staggering growth, violent criminals are not being sent to prison in droves. Instead, nearly two-thirds of female prisoners are incarcerated for nonviolent offenses. About 56 percent of incarcerated women are in jail due to the drug war or over property crimes, FAMM reports.

Due to mandatory minimums, FAMM contends, many women are given sentences that do not fit the crime — and the result is tragic. Because 60 percent of women in prison are also mothers to children under the age of 18, the drug war has negatively impacted countless families; the number of American children whose mothers are in jail has more than double since 1991."

<http://mommyjustice.com/index.php/2016/07/06/arent-talking-800-growth-incarcerated-women/>



MENTAL HEALTH

The Mental Health Crisis Facing Women in Prison

More than two-thirds of incarcerated women in America reported having a history of mental health problems — a far higher percentage than their male counterparts, according to a study released Thursday by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Although women make up only 7 percent of the prison population, 66 percent of women in prison reported having a history of a mental disorder, almost twice the percentage of men in prison. And one in five women in prison had recently experienced serious psychological distress, while one in seven men had.

“Because of that, we can only speculate, but I believe one factor is that incarcerated women have experienced sexual trauma before their imprisonment at a much higher rate than men. They are also likely more inclined to report psychological distress to the prison mental health services than male inmates.”

https://www.themarshallproject.org/2017/06/22/the-mental-health-crisis-facing-women-in-prison?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter&utm_source=opening-statement&utm_term=newsletter-20170623-784#.dk66WYWGn

Justice Department: Federal inmates sometimes in isolation for years

A [new report](#) from the Department of Justice finds that the Federal Bureau of Prisons is not doing enough to help mentally ill inmates -- in part because the bureau doesn't know how many inmates have mental illness. "We found that the BOP cannot accurately determine the number of inmates who have mental illness because institution staff do not always document mental disorders," said the study, published this week by the office of the Department of Justice Inspector General [Michael Horowitz](#). According to the report, as of June 2016, there were more than 148,000 federal inmates, about 7% kept in such restricted housing units. Recent [research](#) finds that confining people in such restricted environments, even for short periods, of time can negatively impact their mental health, and it can be particularly harmful for those with mental illness. At least three states, including Colorado, Maine and Pennsylvania, do not place inmates with severe mental illness in such restricted conditions. Massachusetts, Mississippi, and New York limit such stays to 30 days.

The report recognized that the Bureau of Prisons has taken some steps to deal with mental health concerns, including sending inmates with serious mental health issues to residential mental health treatment programs. However, a **lack of resources** was considered to be a key factor in why more inmates could not be helped. As a result of the analysis, the inspector general's office made 15 recommendations to the Bureau of Prisons to improve screening, treatment and monitoring of inmates, including creating policies around who can be held in restrictive housing and limits on restricted housing. It also recommended putting in place systems to track and identify inmates with mental illness. In a response to a draft of the recommendations, the Bureau of Prisons said it agreed with all of the 15 recommendations.

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/07/13/health/mental-illness-solitary-confinement-just-department/index.html>

Editors Note: The BOP (Bureau of Prisons) agreed with the above documented suggestions..

This is where oversight comes in. The system itself has clearly documented that not enough is being done, and in fact actual treatment of mental illness is down, even while more is identified. This particular report covers all federal prison locations, not just the women. Since previous studies have found that women have mental health issues at 30% higher rates than men in incarceration.

SLAVERY!

ECONOMIC SLAVERY!

13th Amendment

AGU

INCARCERATION RATES: WOMEN AMONG FOUNDING NATO COUNTRIES

Country	Incarceration Rate (per 100,000 population)
United States	127
Portugal	16
United Kingdom	13
Canada	11
Luxembourg	9
Belgium	9
Norway	8
Netherlands	8
Italy	7
France	6
Denmark	5

ACROSS THE U.S.A.

BABYLON THE BANDIT!

YOU CALL THIS A DEMOCRACY!

Collage by Ojore Lutalo
kerness.b@verizon.net

LGBTQ+

Trans People in Prison Fight Barriers to Changing Their Legal Names and Gender Markers

“The Bureau of Justice estimates that, between 2011 and 2012, there were [3,209 trans people incarcerated](#) in state and federal prisons and another 1,709 trans people in local jails.” Trans people in prison face numerous barriers not endured or easily understood by cisgender (individuals whose gender identity, or how they live and express their gender, is the same as the gender they were assigned at birth) prisoners.

Most prisons fail to recognize trans identity when sorting prisoners into their facilities, such that a trans person who identifies and lives as a woman but has male genitalia is forced into a men’s facility — where she is often targeted for violence or harassment (by fellow prisoners and guards alike) for her identity. Beyond this hardship, which can often result in injury and death, trans people in prison face additional obstacles such as those discussed in this article by Victoria Law:

“During her 30 years in California’s prison system, Cookie Bivens has seen numerous trans women attempt to change their name and gender marker while incarcerated. Not a single woman ever succeeded.”

“Recalling her own time awaiting trial in the San Jose County jail, [Janetta Louise Johnson, executive director of the [TGI Justice Project](#)] explained that jail staff routinely called people by their last names. But if the person was a trans woman, staff would instead call them by their legal first name. ‘If your legal name was Frederick Douglass, they would call you Frederick,’ she said.”

Name change and gender marker parameters vary by state, and sometimes prisoners are only required to petition for the change in family court, rather than get approval from medical professionals or social workers. The cost and efforts demanded by these services, however, can be prohibitive.

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/41220-trans-people-in-prison-fight-barriers-to-changing-their-legal-names-and-gender-markers>



CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Prison Rips Babies From the Arms of Their Mothers: A View From Behind Bars

[In this piece](#), Mary Fish, a prisoner at Mabel Bassett Correctional Center in Oklahoma, shares stories of mothers' experiences being incarcerated and separated from their children. In some cases, women are allowed some very limited visitation or correspondence with their children. In others, like that of Geneva Phillips, mothers are separated from their children upon being sent to prison or taken into state custody and are "never given a reason as to why nor [is] there a hearing that [they are] told about."

As with other inequities in the criminal legal system, the disproportionate representation of women of color in prisons means that this problem is impacting different families at different rates in the United States. More black and brown children and their mothers are forced to deal with the trauma of family separation and all of its repercussions.

The mothers profiled in this article mention a number of programs and potential solutions to this issue. "Oklahoma's Messages Project, which allow some mothers to record a 15-minute message to their children and grandchildren, even though restrictions apply, and not every mother receives permission from guardians to participate and send books or messages. The Mommy and Me program also sends recorded messages along with a photo and age-appropriate books for the little ones...However, no matter how many connections are able to be built from behind bars, it's no replacement for seeing each other in person."

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/41055-prison-rips-babies-from-the-arms-of-their-mothers-a-view-from-behind-bars>

Women In Prison Are Fighting For The Right To Breastfeed — & So Far, It's Not Going Well

In US prisons, most babies are taken from their mothers within one to two days after their being born. In most prisons in the United States, however, "there are very few concrete policies regarding pregnant women in prisons and jails across the country, and even fewer regarding lactation."

In federal prisons, breastfeeding is permitted during family visitation, but policies, if they exist at all, vary at state and private prisons.

A number of cases have been in the news recently have documented women in prison enduring cruel treatment with regard to their babies. One mother in a New Mexico prison was stripped of "her hospital-issued electric breast pump, deeming it a security violation and issuing her a manual pump instead."

<https://www.romper.com/p/women-in-prison-are-fighting-for-the-right-to-breastfeed-so-far-its-not-going-well-72803/amp>



Image from Mario Tama/Getty Images News/Getty Images

Overlooked

At age 12, Kyla Booker knew enough to keep her head down and her mouth shut.

'Braid your sister's' pigtails. Get them on the school bus. Walk half a mile to the convenience store to buy groceries with the food-stamp card.

Don't let anyone know you and the babies are home alone 'cause Mama is in jail again.'

For nearly a month, Kyla and her two young sisters lived alone in a rented house in Arlington. No one involved in jailing their mother — not the police, not the courts, not the sheriff's department — ever checked on them.

It was not the first, the last, or even the most dangerous time that the Booker sisters were overlooked by adults who put their mother in jail.

No one in the criminal justice system is responsible for the safety of children whose mothers go to jail, an investigation by *The Dallas Morning News* has found. Not in North Texas, and not in most communities across the country.

While the moms may have committed crimes, the kids are innocent. Most were born and raised in tough circumstances they didn't choose. When their mothers get locked up, the children often suffer.

Nobody's mother is supposed to stay long in jail, which generally holds people who have been accused but not convicted of a crime. Sometimes, people serve short sentences there for minor offenses.

But since 2010, the number of women incarcerated in jails has been growing **at a faster rate than any other correctional population** in the U.S.

Because of the traditional turnover in jail populations, however, researchers looking at female inmates and their families have tended to focus on state and federal prisons, where convicts usually serve longer sentences for more serious crimes.

Federal studies of prison populations show dramatic differences in who cares for the kids of male and female inmates. Men almost always rely on their children's mothers to take care of them. Women turn far more often to grandparents, relatives and friends.

Their children **are five times as likely** as men's to end up in foster care.

Lawyers often advise women awaiting sentences in jail not to discuss their kids for fear they could be accused of child neglect on top of their existing charges. For the same reason, some experts say, women do not always tell court personnel if their kids are home alone.

<https://interactives.dallasnews.com/2017/overlooked/>

Editors Note - the above article is much longer than the part quoted here. It is a critical look at the realities of our "justice" system as it relates to children. It follows the children over a long period of time concerning their relationship with their mother, including their own interactions the system - specific to Texas, This is reflected in similar ways throughout the country. The article outlines the difference one or two people in the right positions can make - and how far we have to go systemically. In researching for this edition and reading this article, we were appalled at the lack of resources. Even more stunning was to read the online comments at the end. This is where the challenge and education of the public is needed by activists. It is where advocates and a committed organized citizenry can make such a difference. The comments ranged from suggestions of state orphanages, to sterilization based on criminal involvement. These attitudes in the public arena reflects what could and often is happening to these children, who are our future generations. If there is no change in attitude nationally, and at the juvenile and county level, damage will continue to be intergenerational. This social change begins with this community oversight initiative. This begins with us - here and now.

“When a Parent Is Taken Away, It’s Like a Death”: Two States Consider Bills to Keep Parents Out of Jail

“Nationally, the number of children affected by past or present parental incarceration is estimated at 5.1 million, which may be a conservative estimate given that no agency or organization is tasked with keeping track of children with incarcerated parents.” Of course, most of these children are children of color, as the United States’ criminal legal system disproportionately targets and profiles individuals and communities of color, creating disastrous and harmful ripple effects on the people connected to those individuals and communities.

“In a number of states, legislation is emerging that would allow parents and other primary caretakers convicted of nonviolent crimes to request a non-prison alternative.” In Massachusetts, for example, [Bill S.770](#), or the Primary Caretakers Bill, could give those convicted of nonviolent crimes potential alternatives to prison when they are sentenced.

“If passed, the Primary Caretakers bill could affect a large percentage of women behind bars...In 2016, 459 women were sentenced to prison; nearly half (48 percent) [had nonviolent convictions](#), and In 2004, the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that, among women (of all ages) in state prisons, [62 percent were mothers to minor children](#).”

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/40148-when-a-parent-is-taken-away-it-s-like-a-death-ma-and-tn-consider-bills-to-keep-parents-out-of-jail>



MEDICAL NEEDS



Prison guards escort an inmate held in the Administrative Segregation unit to her appointment

[@@caroline_catlin](#)

Providing Free Pads And Tampons To Incarcerated Women Is About More Than Hygiene

“It’s a question of dignity.”

“While jails [often supply menstrual products](#), such as pads and tampons, they are typically [poor quality](#) and doled out in limited numbers. If a woman needs more than what’s been allocated for her, she might be able to buy products from the commissary — if she can afford it. Otherwise, it’s likely up to guards to decide if they want to provide additional supplies, further reinforcing the unequal power structure and raising the risk of abuses.”

In New York City’s only jail housing female inmates, the Rose M. Singer Center (on Rikers Island), it was recorded that each prisoner receives less than 3 sanitary pads each week. This kind of base lacking in adequate medical care is not something that is new to the prison system, and it is a problem that plagues so-called “free” society as well. Individuals in need of menstrual care have to deal with disproportionate costs and social stigma, both of which are amplified in the prison system.

“A scathing report published last year by the Correctional Association of New York found that New York state [prison authorities failed to provide](#) most female prisoners with enough sanitary napkins and toilet paper. More than half of the women surveyed said they were not given enough sanitary pads each month. To get more supplies, women reported having to apply for a medical permit.”

For individuals to have to go to such lengths for basic hygiene and medical needs is absurd, even in a world such as the corrections system in the United States.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/new-york-prisons-periods_us_576bfcade4b0b489bb0c901b

New York Makes History, with Tampons and Pads

People in need of menstrual care products in prison often have to pay outrageous prices to access them at the prison commissary or make due by creating their own tampons, pads, etc. In June of 2016, “New York City made history...with passage of the nation’s first legislative package to ensure access to menstrual products in public schools, shelters and correctional facilities.”

The following month, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio signed the legislation into law. “The first bill, Intro. 1122-A, requires the Department of Correction to ensure that all female inmates are guaranteed access to feminine hygiene products, codifying an existing practice into law. This bill reaffirms that everyone under the care of the City should have access to the hygiene products they need.”

https://nytimes.com/blogs/kristof/2016/06/21/new-york-makes-history-with-tampons-and-pads/?referer=http://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/us_576bfcade4b0b489bb0c901b

<http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/611-16/mayor-de-blasio-signs-legislation-increasing-access-feminine-hygiene-products-students->

Why Is the U.S. Handcuffing Incarcerated Women In Childbirth?

A July conference called “Women Unshackled” discussed the issue of women being restrained during childbirth. At the conference, a new proposed bill backed by senator Elizabeth Warren (D, Massachusetts) and junior senator Cory Booker (D, New Jersey), known as the “Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act” seeks to remedy some of the particular injustices and abuses faced by women in prison. The bill “would abolish the practice of shackling women during childbirth, and seek to restore the humanity of women behind bars by giving them free access to phone calls and tampons and protecting them from sexual exploitation within the prison — by restricting, for instance, opposite-sex strip searches. The bill would also expand trauma-informed care for prisoners by providing trainings to every correctional officer and Bureau of Prisons employee who regularly interacts with prisoners.”

https://sojo.net/articles/why-us-handcuffing-incarcerated-women-childbirth?utm_content=bufferba77d&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer

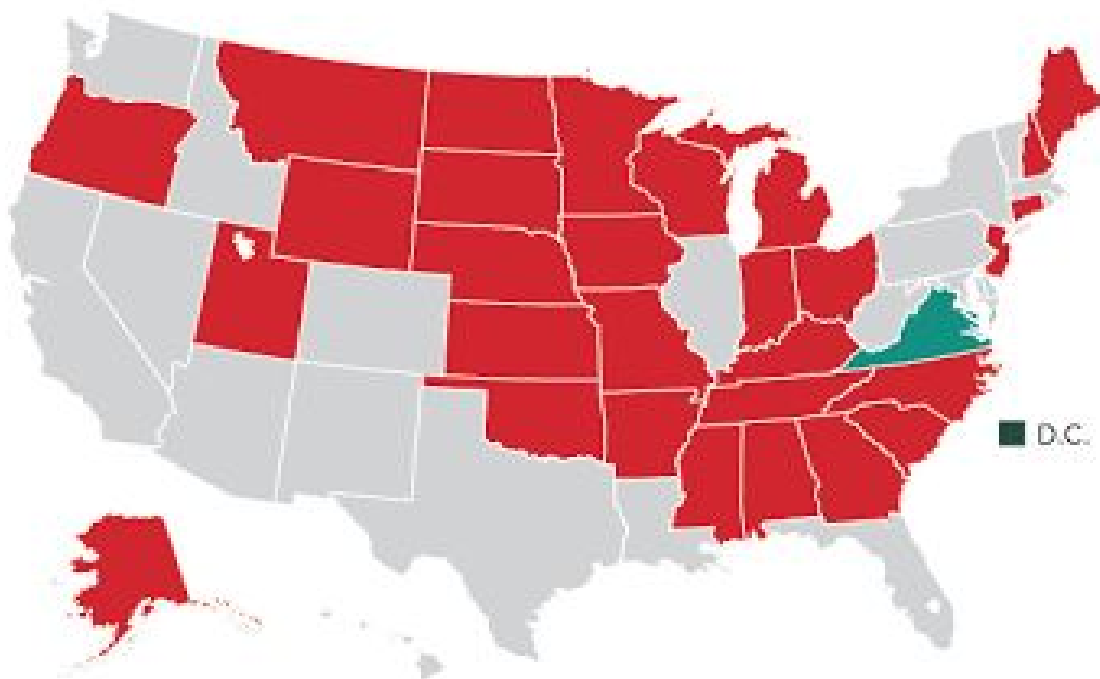
<http://www.refinery29.com/2017/07/163017/dignity-incarcerated-women-act-prison-reform-bill>



29 States And D.C. Don't Prohibit Shackling Prisoners While They Give Birth

Shackling of pregnant prisoners during labor and delivery is regarded by human rights groups and medical professionals as unnecessary and potentially harmful to the health of both the mother and her child. Shackled prisoners are not able to adequately position themselves to cope with labor pains, and can be bruised or cut by shackles during the strains of childbirth. Restraints used during labor and delivery also restrict how doctors are able to manipulate a woman for the safe delivery of her child, and can limit their ability to perform emergency C-sections. In at least two states with prohibitions on shackling during labor and delivery – Texas and Pennsylvania – investigations revealed it was happening in violation of the law.

- States with no laws on shackling during labor and delivery
- States where laws that prohibit shackling during labor and delivery have been introduced but not passed
- States with a set of regulations on shackling issued by the Department of Corrections
- States with laws that prohibit shackling during labor and delivery



Source: ACLU

THE HUFFINGTON POST

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/29/women-in-prison-america-data_n_5630097.html

SENTENCING



To Create Our Opportunity

It is common that LWOP's [Life Without Parolees] like myself turn into super-achievers. We overload our plate with significant endeavors such as college, facilitating, heading organizations or committees, personal pursuits of self-help groups, and basically filling in every possible minute of our days with a purpose. For me the truth behind such noble action is that by staying busy, I am dodging that ever-present fact that this (life in prison) is it for me. I may feel positive about who I am today and what I am doing with my time. However, I am much like a hamster running on a wheel, expending great effort, and spinning through my days, but forever on that wheel. What I have learned about myself:

I am resilient
I do not give up easily
I care about my community
I have the capacity to change and grow
I stand up for what is right
I stand up for myself

I would like to share a quote that resonates within my soul and my experiences at CCWF. It is from a 16th century Japanese general named Takamori Siago who said, "In life there are two types of opportunities, those which we chance upon and those which we create. In times of difficulty one must create one's opportunity." We each have the ability to create our opportunity to heal, learn, thrive, and to become the person we were always meant to be.

By Michele R. Scott W41282 Central California Williams Facility (CCWF)

Living Now

“More people would learn from their mistakes if they weren’t so busy denying them.” I was thumbing through some random book and seen that quote. It has become a focal point of my rehabilitation. Was it a mistake I participated in that murder? No, that was intentional. Was it a mistake when I committed my first crime and went to prison? No, that was a result of me wanting fast money. Was it a mistake when I returned to prison three more times with new cases? No, those were choices. My mistakes were the constant finger pointing, denying, blaming, deflecting, blatant refusal of any responsibility for my actions. Was it a mistake I received a LWOP sentence? No, I can honestly say I earned that sentence. Fast forward 20 years later.

I’ve made peace with my life behind these concrete walls. Had I never come to prison, I would never have had the opportunity to learn new things such as small engine repair, landscaping or carpentry. My life would have continued down a destructive path of hate, pain and loss. Only when my life was interrupted and I got kicked out of the world, did I begin to see my gifts, talents, strengths and my true essence, along with my shortcomings, distorted thinking patterns and areas needing improvement.

I was lost coming from a dysfunctional home, neighborhood and community. I would never have acquired the skills of deductive reasoning or how to use judgment and reason when making critical choices. Now I can think ahead of my actions and play out the nature of their consequences. I can heighten my cognitive awareness and control my responses to everyday scenarios, even the unpleasant ones. I changed my world from behind these concrete walls. AS a result, I’ve convinced myself I am a good person. I am worth of something better. I don’t have to exercise abuse, anger, violence or pain. I can strive for more.

For all the LWOP’s and lifers struggling with the idea of their time, I know it’s difficult to be here when every molecule of your body wants to be somewhere else. Yet, you’re hurting yourself by not living in the now. You’re also hurting yourself if you do not begin the journey into self-reflection, improvement, growth and ultimately, change. As an LWOP I may never get out of prison. So the question I ask you is, “When shall I live if not now?”

By Laverne Dejohnette W32321, CCWF

“Up to 90% of girls in juvenile detention, and nearly 60% of adult women in prison experienced some form of physical or sexual abuse before entering the system. We often hear about the “school-to-prison pipeline” for boys, but for girls, there seems to be a “sexual-violence-to-prison pipeline.” For minors, the abuse is often the thing that prompts truancy or running away, initiating their engagement with the juvenile justice system to begin with. Estimates for the prevalence of mental illness among girls in juvenile detention facilities are as high as 80 percent, compared with 20 percent among the total adolescent population. Suicide rates in juvenile detention facilities are more than four times higher than for adolescents overall.”

<http://www.mtv.com/news/2119680/13-seriously-f-cked-up-things-about-women-and-girls-in-prison/>

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

We have standards to stop prison rape. Why were rapists allowed to enforce them?

By Lovisa Stannow

When three prison officials at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) in Brooklyn were charged in May with sexually assaulting [at least six women in their custody](#), it did not come as a surprise. The federal prison has been plagued by scandal in recent years, including two [high-profile](#) cases of staff sexual misconduct.

It hardly seems necessary to point out that when prison officials tasked with rape prevention are unqualified — or when they themselves are raping inmates — it leads to wider staff dysfunction. [A 2015 investigation by the Justice Department's Inspector General Office](#) found that MDC officers were confused about rules on how to ensure that prisoners' reports of abuse were handled confidentially, a prerequisite for any safe facility and a cornerstone of PREA. Little wonder that victims did not feel safe coming forward.

Yet bad leadership and flawed PREA implementation tell only part of the story of what went wrong at MDC. The PREA standards stipulate that prisons and jails have to be audited every three years on compliance with the rules. These audits have a crucial oversight role. They highlight strengths and expose weaknesses at a facility, so that officials can make changes as needed, and they provide advocates, the press and the public at large a rare glimpse inside prison walls. That is, if they are done properly.

The PREA audit tool is reasonably robust, spelling out what a facility must do to comply with the PREA standards. The problem is with the auditors themselves. A handful dominate the market, offering cheap audits and quick assessments of facilities. This results in auditors who do little advance research, relying only on documents provided by the agency. [Auditors are supposed to contact local advocates](#), who often have knowledge on conditions inside facilities.

The flawed auditing process should not overshadow the fact that the PREA standards are working in agencies whose leaders take them seriously and commit to them. But PREA's effectiveness will be limited unless an adequate monitoring system is developed. The Justice Department has a plan to beef up the auditing process, but it needs to be funded and implemented courageously. Fortunately, the [House Appropriations Committee](#) and [Justice Department](#) have requested PREA funding that could cover the new audit plan, as well as vital local and state programs to address prisoner rape.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2017/08/09/we-have-standards-to-stop-prison-rape-why-were-rapists-allowed-to-enforce-them/?utm_term=.0db5e5de9d03

The Daily Abuse of Women at Rikers

Mitchell A. Lowenthal, New York Law Journal

Daily, guards sexually abuse women at New York City's Rikers Island jails. Even if, as recommended by the Lippman Commission, those jails are torn down and replaced, that will take at least 10 years. Reforms are needed now.

Only women are housed in Rikers Island's Rose M. Singer Center jail. Yet, men guard them. This practice is condemned by a clear consensus of corrections experts. One leading expert (Tim Ryan), who recently submitted a report in a lawsuit brought by two women who said they were repeatedly raped by an RMSC guard, explained that, *for years*, nationally accepted correctional practices have

prohibited female inmates from being supervised by male guards—unless female guards accompany them. That rule is also mandated by New York law and the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA). RMSC thus operates in a recklessly dangerous—and illegal—manner.

Those RMSC women able to navigate the system and with the fortitude to report their abuse are often retaliated against; their victimizers are virtually never punished. Of 56 investigations of staff-on-inmate sexual abuse between 2011 and 2013, only three (5 percent) were substantiated; between one-third and one-half the national substantiation rate. Recently, one woman (Jacqueline Healy) reported an abusive guard (Jose Cosme), and coupled that report with physical evidence—she sent clothes with Cosme's DNA outside of the jail, so that she would have physical evidence to corroborate her allegations. Even with this unassailable physical evidence, Cosme was offered a plea agreement limiting his punishment to probation. He, at least, was fired.

Sadly, the problems are getting worse. In fiscal year 2015 there were 131 allegations of staff-on-inmate sexual abuse. For 2016, the number jumped to 321. Of those 450 allegations, only one was substantiated. Just one. This is shocking statistic bluntly explains why RMSC correction officers have little to fear from raping inmates, and why sexual abuse is so prevalent there. While the DOC touts new guidelines and recent PREA training for guards, words are meaningless unless there is sure and meaningful punishment for their violation. The mayor must soon appoint a new DOC commissioner. Unlike the prior one, the new commissioner must commit to be physically present on Rikers Island, and have a concrete plan to root out the unconstitutional practices that now, and for far too long, describe it. The mayor must also clean up the DOI and its investigators, who, for years, have reliably failed to find rampant rape and sexual abuse at RMSC.

<http://www.newyorklawjournal.com/this-weeks-news/id=1202795792332/The-Daily-Abuse-of-Women-at-Rikers>

Another officer at N.J. women's prison charged with sex abuse

By S.P. Sullivan

A corrections officer was indicted Thursday on charges he sexually abused two inmates at New Jersey's only women's prison, a facility that has grappled with sexual misconduct among its staff in recent months. Joel Mercado, 36, faces two counts of official misconduct and two counts of sexual assault, according to Hunterdon County Prosecutor Anthony Kearns. Authorities say Mercado, of Lyndhurst, "engaged in a sexual relationship with two different inmates" at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in Union Township. Public payroll records show the 10-year veteran worked as a senior corrections officer at the women's prison, where he received a \$72,933 salary.

An [NJ Advance Media special report](#) earlier this year found a troubling history of sexual abuse at the facility, including one officer who was fired for sexually abusing multiple women but never criminally charged. Under state law, any sexual contact between prison staff and inmates is considered sexual assault

Public payroll records show the 10-year veteran worked as a senior corrections officer at the women's prison, where he received a \$72,933 salary.

State Department of Corrections Commissioner Gary Lanigan [told state lawmakers](#) earlier this year the department was revamping sexual assault training for its staff to stem allegations of abuse.

Kearns said in a statement Thursday the charges against Mercado resulted from a joint investigation between prosecutors and internal investigators at the prison.

"All inmates have a right to be safe within the institutions where we as a society demand they be detained," Kearns said. "It is our responsibility to ensure that public servants, who betray their oath, and the public trust, are held accountable and prosecuted to fullest extent of the law."

http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2017/08/another_officer_at_nj_womens_prison_charged_with_s.html#incart_river_home

AGING INSIDE



Jessica Earnshaw | Jessica Earnshaw

Norma, 77 years old, has been in prison for 14 years and has never had a visitor. Inside, younger women have adopted her as a mother and grandmother. New York photographer Jessica Earnshaw spent several days with Norma as part of her Aging in Prison photo documentary.

New York photographer points lens at aging Maine inmates

When [Jessica Earnshaw](#) first visited the Maine State Prison in late 2015 as part of her Aging in Prison photo documentary project, she thought she was prepared for what she'd see and experience. Earnshaw spent close to two weeks over two months in late 2015 and early 2016 photographing aging inmates at the Maine State Prison in Warren and the Maine Correctional Center in Windham for her project funded by the Rita and Alex Hillman Foundation.

Earnshaw, 33, who often focuses on issues related to criminal justice and healthcare, said her initial plan was to follow aging inmates and produce a photographic account of what it's like to grow old behind bars. She came to Maine in February to spend three days photographing Maine's oldest female inmate at the Maine Correctional Center.

"I would arrive there around 6 a.m. and just stay with them until they went in for their first evening count around 6 or 7 p.m.," Earnshaw said.

"I thought this was a unique project," said Amanda Woolford, director of women's services at the [Maine Correctional Center](#). "The issue of aging in prison is definitely worth a conversation and [Earnshaw] touched on a lot of issues."

"Part of what I was doing was exploring 'Are these people a threat to society at this point?'," she said. "I am not trying to say they should not be punished — of course they should be — but our system really has this 'eye for an eye' component."

When she sat down to talk to, record and photograph the elderly inmates, Earnshaw said something unexpected happened. "I felt they had not had a connection to anyone for so long [and] I could see that in their eyes," she said. "The fact I was asking so many questions about their lives meant so much to them."

But there is no denying people age at a faster rate in prison, Earnshaw said. "From what I read, 55 is considered elderly in the prison system," she said. It's a stressful environment and people just age faster, there is a constant turnover of people, you don't know who is going to be sleeping in your room, or when a door will slam or an alarm will go off [and] that all takes a toll."

"She colors and she is an amazing knitter who makes these doilies that are very intricate," Woolford said. "But her hands are starting to lose that ability so she is starting to lose that self-identity and is not able to do a lot of things she once could and that is scaring her." "My goal is to create compassion for these people," she said. "There is a real perception in this country that people in prison don't deserve anything if they are in for committing violent crimes, but what if they are more than what they did? I think they are and I just hope other people will see them as human beings."

<http://bangordailynews.com/2016/12/05/next/new-york-photographer-points-lens-at-aging-maine-inmates/>

REHABILITATION (OR WHAT'S NEXT?)

When Twisted Justice Stops Prisoners from Starting Over

Men, women and children all get caught in the system at high rates, and they do so in different ways. Men return to prison more frequently than women do. But when women re-enter society, they often face issues that affect job stability, including difficulty finding childcare. Kids who land in juvenile detention are more likely to return to the system as adults.

The U.S. has one of the most restrictive justice systems in the world. Inmates are sentenced longer than in most countries and for infractions that elsewhere may not even bring jail time. More than 300,000 offenses are considered criminal in the U.S.

And after inmates leave the system, there are 48,000 legal restrictions that make it difficult for most to rebuild their lives. People with a criminal record are often barred from accessing housing along with certain jobs and professional licenses. In Washington, D.C., a person with a criminal record is ineligible for housing vouchers. In Wyoming, former prisoners are ineligible to operate a funeral home or hold certain county and municipal offices. In Missouri, some former convicts can't work in a state agency. Ex-offenders are often hindered from voting.

More than three-quarters of former felons are rearrested within five years of their release, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. On the federal level alone, about 45% are arrested again. Those who are more likely to be rearrested haven't finished high school and are under 21, African American and have been convicted of crimes involving guns, according to a 2016 report published by the U.S.

Sentencing Commission. The data also showed that of the federal offenders released in 2005, when the study began, more than half were rearrested within two years

Rebecca Vallas, managing director of the Center for American Progress' poverty-to-prosperity program, helped craft the report.

"While most attention over the past several years has been paid to the need for sentencing reform ... we will fail to solve the larger set of problems if we ignore the need to remove barriers to re-entry that people face when they're returning to their communities and trying to get back on their feet," Vallas said. "That's really going to be critical to break the cycle of recidivism that can so often result when people find every door closed in their face while they're trying to do everything right and get back on their feet."

<http://justicenotjails.org/starting-over/>

Susan Burton: A Modern-Day Harriet Tubman

She was 4 years old when her aunt's boyfriend began to abuse her sexually. Then at 14, she had a baby girl, the result of a gang rape.

Soon she fell under the control of a violent pimp and began cycling through jails, prisons, addiction and crime for more than 20 years.

Yet today, Susan Burton is a national treasure. She leads a nonprofit helping people escape poverty and start over after prison, she's a powerful advocate for providing drug treatment and ending mass incarceration — and her life story is testimony to the human capacity for resilience and recovery.

"We keep a woman in prison for decade after decade at a cost of \$60,000 a year, and then give them \$200 when they hit the gates for release," she said, shaking her head. "And, adios. People have to get their IDs, Social Security cards. They have to get clothing, housing, apply for benefits and services, and it's impossible to do with 200 bucks."

The upshot, she said, is that people re-offend — and then get locked up once more, at a huge expense.

Burton showed me the homes she has set up, and the women in them are a reminder of how difficult it can be to start over after years in prison. One woman, Unique, confided that she hears voices in her head shouting at her, and Burton asked her why she didn't keep a doctor's appointment. "I'm afraid to go out," Unique explained, so Burton worked out an escort so that Unique could see the doctor and get her medicines.

"If we don't help her with those voices, she'll be right back in prison," Burton said when we were outside. Another former prisoner proudly gave her full name: Mary Mitchell. Now 53, she had been behind bars for her entire adult life and has never had an official ID card. With Burton's help she is getting one and looking for a job. But Mitchell has forgotten how to walk in a city.

"I was so scared," she said. "I didn't know how to cross a crosswalk."

Burton told me that a trigger in her own downward spiral was the gang rape that resulted in her pregnancy; if she had received counseling, she thinks, she might have avoided unraveling.

Too often, we miss these chances to help wounded young people, and we invest only in jailing them.

By [Nicholas Kristof New York Times](#)

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/opinion/susan-burton-modern-day-harriet-tubman.html?ref=todayspaper&_r=0

The rehabilitation process may differ depending on one's circumstances. Nevertheless, personal growth is necessary to survive inside in a healthy way. Below are a few excerpts of what some women have achieved or are currently accomplishing in order to come out as intact as possible.

"If your house is crumbled in an earthquake or hurricane, you wouldn't just lie down in the mud and muck and give up. Start the process of rebuilding our lives. As a motivator to help be part of the change that together we can make as the backbone of this community",

[Kelly Savage. \(Life without Parole\) California Correctional Facility for Women](#)

Change Can Help

1. Find things you can do to take care of yourself
2. Join a self-help group that feels safe and explore what is causing you pain
3. Get to the root of the problem in a gentle and loving way.
4. Try not to judge yourself or be ashamed of your feelings.
5. If you have supportive family or friends let them know you need their help



Recidivism for women

About 25% of women released from prison fail within six months.

About 33% fail within a year.

About 70% fail within five years.

SOURCE National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women
Alejandro Gonzalez, USA TODAY



VIDEO LINKS:

<https://youtu.be/y7uhdYcO2Ek>

This first link is from the David Pakman Show

titled: "Fastest Growing Group in Prison: Women" in this edition, David speaks with Liz Swavola, Senior Program Associate at the Vera Institute of Justice and author of the recent report "Overlooked: Women and Jails in an Era of Reform," to discuss women in the prison system

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQogydu76Nk>

The above link is a highlight of Indiana's Women's Prison Wee One's Nursery. Mothers are allowed to stay with their infants. This synopsis comes directly from the institution "In March 2008, the Indiana Women's Prison implemented the Wee Ones Nursery (W.O.N.), a voluntary program available for pregnant offenders who met eligibility criteria. The intent of the W.O.N. program is to provide parenting education and to ensure quality time to strengthen the mother-infant bond during the initial months after the infant's birth.

Contact Information: Indiana Women's Prison, 2596 N Girls School Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46214 **Phone:** (317) 244-3387

<https://letsgetfree.info/2017/05/30/women-lifers-resume-project-slideshow/>

Women Lifer's Resume Project Slideshow This slideshow was created for the Contraband Art Show. It features women in prison who participated in the Women Lifer's Resume Project. Produced by "Let's Get Free: The Women and Trans Prisoner Defense Committee" a group in Western PA that works to shine a light on gender-based violence that contributes to the incarceration of women and trans* people.

<https://vimeo.com/120430549>

"Locked Apart: Impact of Incarceration on Family"

More than 2.7 million children in the U.S. have an incarcerated parent and approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives. According to the Urban Institute, the experience of a parent going to prison will have a "significant impact on the emotional, psychological, developmental, and financial well-being of the child." Children have difficulty visiting their parents and often lose contact. They drop out of school more frequently and are more likely to be incarcerated than their peers.



BO ROBINSON (WOMEN'S SIDE)

Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
TB.	Feb 2017	Overall Treatment	<p>I have never in my life, had to endure such hostile inhuman conditions that management has no desire to change.</p> <p>Our rights at Bo-Bob are violated violated on a daily basis and no resolutions to cease, change or improve those unbearable conditions. Communication is very poor between staff and residents</p> <p>Demearing treatment dehumanizes residents</p> <p>Contradicting staff programs message of hope & success</p> <p>Unwritten rules are made up to suit staffs needs & to maintain power & control</p>
TK.	Feb 2017	Hygiene	<p>Hair found in food</p> <p>Mop head not replaced frequently</p> <p>No proper cleaning chemicals supplied(No real bleach allowed)</p> <p>Feminine pad- only 20/- insufficient for us - and no feminine pads available on commissary</p>
TS.	Feb 2017	Food/Dietary	<p>Mealtimes are often up to 1 hour late- some of us are diabetic 1 hypoglycemic</p> <p>Vegetarian Meals - No variety beyond beans</p> <p>Lunch bags for workers/ students are only bologna</p>
TP.	Feb 2017	Physical Plant	<p>The heat in there was activated but not properly had the thermostat balanced in a liveable indoor climate to maintain comfort the temperature inside reached to 95- 100 degrees.</p> <p>Maintenance do absolutely nothing for much needed repairs</p>
TL.	Feb 2017	Staff Professionalism	<p>Staff often interferes with grievances about them</p> <p>Won't allow grievances to go to the head director</p>
TR.	Feb 2017	Assault	<p>Staff sexually abused same gender residents</p>



HUDSON COUNTY JAIL

By [Caitlin Mota](#)

The Jersey Journal

The 48-year-old woman who died at the Hudson County jail last week had a head injury and inedible objects in her stomach, sources with knowledge of the investigation say.

Jennifer Towle, of Union City, was [serving a mandatory six-month sentence for a DWI](#) charge out of the Weehawken Municipal Court when she was found dead in the jail's infirmary at about 2 a.m. July 14, 2017 Hudson County spokesman Jim Kennelly has said.

Medical staff and a corrections officer had checked on Towle about an hour before she was found "unresponsive" and she appeared to be "OK," a source said. The county jail has faced heavy scrutiny in recent weeks, with Towle being the [second inmate](#) in just over a month [to die](#) while in custody.[http www.nj.com/hudson/index.ssf/2017/07/inmate_who_died_had_head_injury_pieces_of_plastic.html](http://www.nj.com/hudson/index.ssf/2017/07/inmate_who_died_had_head_injury_pieces_of_plastic.html)



EDNA MAHAN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
T	Feb 2017	Abuse	I tell you the truth this is something I do not wish to experience ever again. Actually I have suffered mental, physical, verbal abuse from a CO here. Some of them are very disrespectful, calling you bitches, whores, crackheads, and a host of other disrespectful, degrading names. They are quick to write you up for no reason, they lie on the blue sheets. They are very abusive here verbally, physically. Women need an outside voice of reason. The prison system is designed to break you down.



CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
Y	July 2017	Overall conditions	In CMCF you will find hair and bugs in your food sometimes. Vegetables have bugs sometimes.



BEDFORD HILLS (NY)

Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
D	Jan 2016	PREA	Prison officials are very unjust. Many expect sexual favors- in return for not receiving a charge, and this practice is often accepted...
D	Jan 2016	Medical	Medical Personnel tries to drug up prisoners. This makes everything so much easier for them and prison officials. Because the prisoner sleeps most of the time, and staff isn't bothered by them... If you have an untreatable disease, they will not tell you
N	Jan 2017	Isolation	I have to say that it is the hardest thing I've ever had to endure in my life is to mentally adapt in Solitary Confinement. After mental breakdowns over and over, I have learned to survive somewhat while in here.
N	Jan 2017	Abuse	Being mentally ill is a devastating challenge I have to deal with every day. Every day I have to wake up to this monster. And on top of all that, in here I have to deal with mental abuse, physical abuse, sensory deprivation, family deprivation, everything stripped of me, my humanity and my dignity. I wish I can save the world from what I'm going through...This is pure evil in its fullest force...



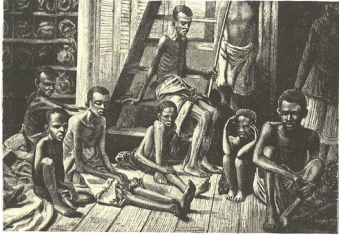
WARREN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION (OH)

Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
K	N/A	Discrimination	I would like to share an experience with you about how the state constantly negates my rights as a transgender prisoner. One day there was a fundraiser and we could pay for pictures at \$4.00 per photo. I was so excited because I was taking pictures for the first time as a woman. None of my family has seen me as K, they only knew me as A. So I got dressed, did my hair and makeup, and damn I looked fierce!...So I took the pictures and was so relieved that they provided me with the same dignity that is afforded to the male prisoners...for once...Two days later, a c/o came and shook my cell down looking ONLY for makeup. He found my stash and wrote me a ticket. When it came time to receive the photos, they said that I couldn't have mine because "male inmates are not permitted to wear or possess cosmetics". WTF?!? I am not a male, I am a transgender female. So now I am being criminalized for my gender identity...That gives me the message that I am less than a human being and something is wrong with me. Is it any wonder why the suicide rate for transgender teens is through the roof? We are constantly being bombarded with the message of inferiority everywhere we turn.
K	N/A	Discrimination, Retaliation	After I accused the [Department of Rehabilitation and Correction] of sexual discrimination based on my gender identity, they have retaliated in a few different ways. First [the warden] put out a memo...The memo told them to be on the look-out for anyone wearing make-up, unauthorized sunglasses, and purses. If they find any of these items, they are to search the inmate's property and take all of the above as contraband...For the past year and a half I have worn and displayed these items on a daily basis. It had never been an issue until I filed a grievance against [the warden] for sexual discrimination. Does that seem like retaliation to you?

"Mental torture is here
 This feelings, despair
 Repeated psychological games by people with unknown names
 Brain in limbo, this state of mind,
 There's no escape, running to something I can't find
 I'm lost nowhere to turn
 This part of my brain, I have to learn
 The holding cell within me I never knew
 A world I never knew
 They ripped up a part of me and dug a hole that's left me empty
 My respect, my heart, the human part of me
 I've turned into something indescribable of something not capable
 They're darkness has seeped in, uninvited paranoia it's a deadly euphoria
 Nothing left of me
 Only existence
 And they're evil persistence

 I've faded away in this torture chamber and lost my way
 Am I still human, will I make it through today
 This is truly my hell "

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OWNERS ROOM AT
GARDEN SPYING


TACKLING 21st CENTURY SLAVERY

13th Amendment


Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, **except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted**, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.


America's only all-female chain gang toils in Phoenix heat



HERE AS I WALK THROUGH THE PROPER AS TO THE OVER 210 BLACK WOMEN AND GIRLS WERE LYNCHED IN AMERICA, OF THE KNOWN BLACK WOMEN WHO WERE LYNCHED.



BLACK WOMEN
LYNCHED IN
AMERICA:



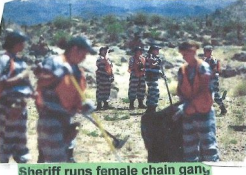
21st CENTURY
ESCAPED
SLAVE
ASSATA SHAKUR




THE
SLAVE
SHIPS



ABDUCTED
BY WAY OF
COURT ORDER
STILL ON THE PLANTATION
THE COTTON PICKIN' TRUTH



Sheriff runs female chain gang



Slavery

Chain Gang
Women

URGENT - We NEED your KNOWLEDGE!!!!!!

We are actively seeking art, poetry, and essays (survival skills) on how YOU are surviving prison in as healthy a way as possible.
 We are seeking women who can, by sharing their thoughts, help other women cope and come out whole....
 This will be shared via our "From Our Mouth to your Ears - A Survivors Manual by and for Women" to be published in early 2018.
 Please share these to:
AFSC Prison Watch
 89 Market Street, 6th floor Newark, NJ 07102