

THE WORD IS OUT

:a newsletter of the Prisoner Correspondence Project

Welcome, welcome to a very belated summer issue of The Word Is Out, the newsletter of the Prisoner Correspondence Project. Our sincerest apologies for the delay.

"Goddammit" you may say, "Give it up already! Call it the Fall issue!" But we just can't let go of the best parts of summer - namely hot cars and pretty girls, brought to you this month by the generous submissions of Dave Beveridge and Countess Sha'uri. We hope you enjoy them as much as we do.

The theme for Issue Three is "Creating Communities of Choice" and by that we mean that communities don't just form, that they're more than a collection of individuals with a common trait. To build shared structures of mutual support and defense takes hard work and happens because of a series of dedicated choices that individuals make. Choosing to share knowledge and lessons learned, choosing to see oneself in a shared history and taking up that mantle, and choosing that a common desire or poise can transcend the coincidental and common.

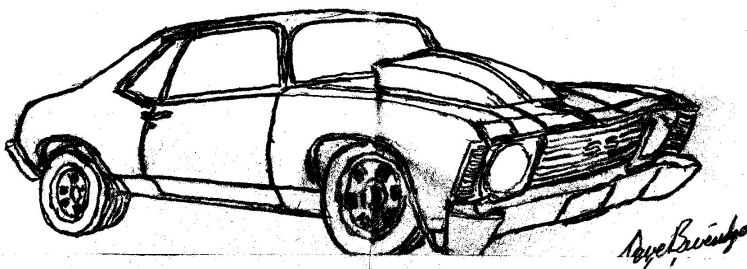
And it's through owning the choices that we make as a community that forms the basis of community pride.

So hopefully the articles throughout the issue can speak to some of these choices. There's a callout for workshops passing knowledge down to a new generation of queers; a recap of a panel we helped put on of community responses to HIV/AIDS; the next round of *Fucking Without Fear*, asking you to share your stories and insight; reflections on identity and community, image and substance by Countess Sha'uri; and a feature on the Trans Health Network - some of the concrete hard work to building community and mutual support. And then there's the gossip. We ARE queers after all.

Enjoy, nos amies,

Until Issue Four.....

Your friends at the Prisoner Correspondence Project



IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome

- 1 -

Since We've Been Gone: Updates

- 2 -

Callout: *Fucking Without Fear*

- 3 -

Callout: Criminal Queers, Renegade Youth

- 4 -

Improvise to Survive: The Article
Erased Histories Panel

- 5 -

Featured Resource: THN

- 6 -

List of Resources We Have on Hand

- 7/8 -

Gay Celebrity Gossip

- 9 -

Hot Summer Homoscopes

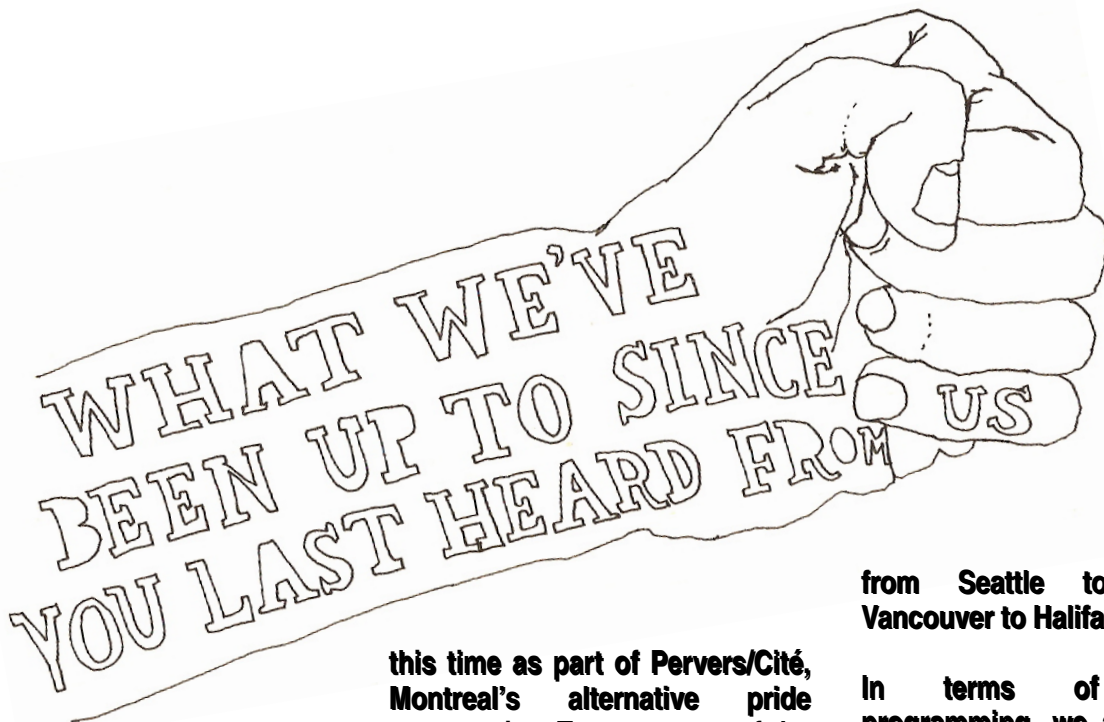
- 10 -

"Identity Politics" by Countess Sha'uri

- 11 -

Send Us Yr Art
Unnamed Poem by Clider

- 12 -



The collective has been busy as ever these past few months, keeping up with the day to day correspondence, working away at ongoing projects, trying to find ways to make sure we are growing at a steady yet sustainable rate, and still finding the time to get started on some new and exciting programming ideas.

The safer sex in prisons resource series continues to be one of our main focuses. The first pamphlet (safer bare-backing and safer sex without barriers for those housed in male institutions) is in the final editing stages and ready to distribute shortly. This past May, we self-published the first version of the "Improvise to Survive" anthology with submissions from many of you. We are still encouraging people to share with us their perspectives on safer sex in prisons both for the remaining resources (see page 3) and for future versions of the anthology, which we use in the Improvise to Survive workshop. We have given the workshop based on these submissions four times now, most recently in August,

this time as part of Pervers/Cité, Montreal's alternative pride event series. To get a copy of the anthology, check out the Resource Library!

Our resource library continues to grow, and we are working to make more and more of it available online so that our penpals on the outside who do not live in Montreal will still have access to it, as well as other folks doing similar work as us across the continent and across the world. We've also been trying to do an informal reading group as a collective to help build our own knowledge of the various issues relating to queer and trans prisoner support and, starting recently, spending an awful lot of time elbow-deep in Smut, attempting to expand that section of our library.

While much of what we've been doing this summer has been internal work, we are also in the process of developing broader outreach strategies to get more penpals involved. We developed and printed a new glossy outreach flyer, tabled with it at Montreal Pride and the celebrations for the 40th anniversary of Stonewall, and have mailed it to be distributed at bookfairs and pride events

from Seattle to Edmonton, Vancouver to Halifax.

In terms of upcoming programming, we are hoping to screen a new documentary about the New Jersey 4 sometime in the upcoming year, and we are also going to be putting on a very exciting panel discussion about doing direct advocacy work with queer and trans prisoners from a prison abolition perspective. This panel will include contributions from both incarcerated folks as well as those working directly with them. It is planned for October 24 and we hope to record the audio as well as take pictures in order to eventually share it with all of you.

Like we've said before, we are always trying to make sure our work reflects your ideas, needs, and priorities. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please don't hesitate to share them with us!

Prisoner Correspondence Project
ATTN Resource Library
c/o QPIRG-Concordia
1455 de Maisonneuve W.
Montreal (QC) H3G 1M8 CANADA
or
queertrans.prisonersolidarity@gmail.com



STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL:

CALLOUT TO WOMEN PRISONERS!
WE'RE LOOKING FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS
TO OUR RESOURCE SERIES!

Over the course of the fall, the Prisoner Correspondence Project will be putting together the third and fourth resource in our safer sex / hiv prevention resource series Fucking Without Fear. The first two resources are aimed at gay, queer and bisexual men housed in men's prisons, about safer barebacking, safer sex without condoms, and reducing the risk of transmitting hiv/aids (ready soon!). The third resource will be aimed at women housed in women's prisons, and the fourth at trans women housed in men's prisons. We're relying on your collaboration to make these resources relevant, and to reflect the fierceness and resilience of all those in prison living, fighting, and surviving!

For folks housed in women's prisons - We're hoping to create a resource guide on reducing the risk of getting Hepatitis C and HIV while serving your sentence, and other ways to have sex safely. We're looking for your stories, anecdotes, personal strategies, and other tools or tactics you use to protect yourself and your lovers or sexual partners, and strategies to survive and navigate the prison system sexually. We are also looking for personal tips and advice you might have to share about ways to reduce the chances of transmitting HIV or Hep C while shooting up, tattooing, etc.

For trans women housed in men's prisons - The fourth resource guide will be directed to trans women who are housed in men's prisons, mostly around HIV prevention. For this resource, we're hoping to hear ways you protect yourself or your partners, lovers, etc, even when you don't have access to condoms or dams. Again, we're looking both for personal stories you'd like to share, as well as specific strategies that help you navigate the prison system. We also want to hear about what you'd like to see included in these resources, what specific ideas you have for them, and what questions you'd like answered.

Here are some questions to reflect on when responding to this callout...

1. What does sexual health, safety, or wellness mean to you in prison? What did it mean to you outside of prison? (How were these different or the same?)
2. How do you see other lesbian and transwomen prisoners responding to this? Is there support?
3. How could folks who do HIV AIDS prevention work outside of prisons better support the needs of people inside prisons?
4. What do fear and risk mean to you in prisons, sexually or otherwise?
5. What is your experience of AIDS (or Hep C) in prison, and the risk of transmitting HIV or Hep C in prison? Is this similar or different than from how you saw AIDS in the 90s? in the 80s?

Please indicate what name you would like to be credited, (feel free to use a chosen name) or if you would prefer the submission remain anonymous. Keep in mind that once finished, these resources will be distributed in prisons across the U.S. and Canada - potentially including the prison you are in. If you are not out as gay/lesbian/trans, or if you are not out about your HIV status, take that into consideration. You may want to use a fake name or a chosen name other than one you're known by.



Drawings by
Candace Spigore

criminal queers, renegade youth!
CALLOUT FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
WORKSHOP & DISCUSSION WITH GAY,
LESBIAN, QUEER & TRANS YOUTH

If you were given the opportunity, what would you say to a roomful of gay and trans youth?

About a year ago, the Prisoner Correspondence Project did a workshop at Project 10, a Montreal-area organization that works to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex, queer, trans, two-spirit, and questioning youth. The workshop was called "Kings and Queens and Criminal Queer" and focused on the ways that the lives of gay/lesbian and transgender youth are made or labeled "criminal" in different ways by police, the courts, and different youth and juvenile correctional systems. What we meant by this was that

gay, queer and trans youth are over-exposed to policing and prisons less because of whatever "wrongdoing" they commit, and more because of experiences of discrimination and marginalization related to being queer and trans.

The workshop was a huge success, and we are hoping to do a second part, this time with active participation from all our penpals and other contacts on the inside! We are hoping to have the focus set by all of YOU, and invite you to submit a write up for us to read out at the workshop.

Here are some questions to reflect when putting together your submission:

What would you say, if given the chance, to a room full of gay and trans youth? Do you have any advice to give? Reflections on what it was like being a gay, lesbian, or trans youth?

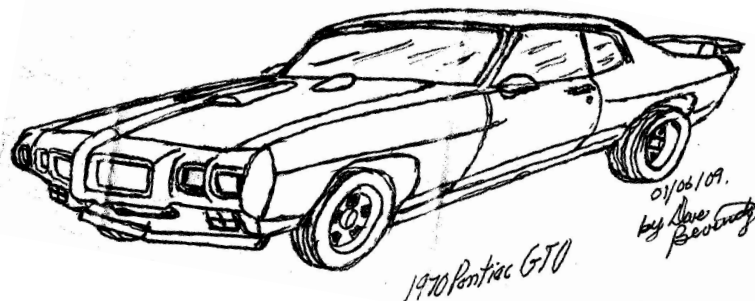
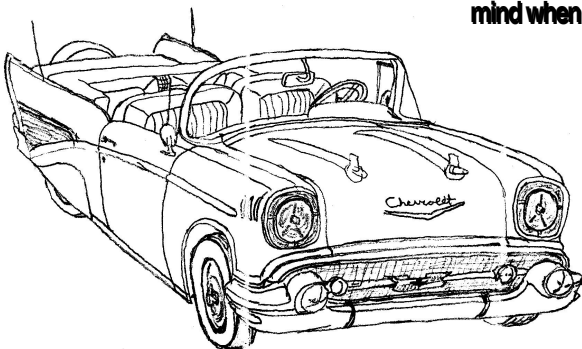
What kinds of experiences did you have with police, the courts, or prisons, when you were a youth (adolescent / young adult)? Do you think this is at all connected to being in prison today? Why or why not?

Why do you think the idea of gay or queer "community" is important for prisoners and youth? Is it? Do you think that prisoners and queer youth face similar challenges or obstacles (isolation, etc) or not?

What are some ways that you saw support happening among gay and queer and trans youth when you were younger? (Or, if you didn't see this happening, what kinds of support do you WISH had existed?)

What are your ideas of a healthy and safe world for gay and trans and queer youth? How do we work toward making this happen, both inside and outside of prisons?

As with all submissions, please make sure to indicate how you want to be credited (legal name/ chosen name/ etc). Note that a collection of these writings will eventually be in our resource library, and distributed to prisons - including potentially your prison. Keep this in mind when deciding whether you want your submission to be anonymous or not.



YOU IMPROVISE TO SURVIVE

HIV PREVENTION, SURVIVAL STRATEGIES & QUEER SELF DEFENSE

This summer, the project wrote an article for the Journal of Prisoners on Prisons, a prison abolition journal from Ottawa that publishes the writing of prisoners, anti-prison academics and people supporting prisoners. This is an excerpt from that longer article.

THE RESOURCES

In response to violently anti queer prison and policing systems across the US and Canada, and in response to the sexual and emotional health risks faced by our inside penpals, the Prisoner Correspondence Project has begun to coordinate a series of resources addressing harm reduction strategies directly relevant to the lives and survival of gay, queer and trans inmates.

While many important resources do exist in support of prisoners, there remains a gap surrounding issues that have particular relevance among gay, trans and queer prisoners. The work that we do is rooted in the belief that forging informal, personal circuits of communication and exchange is essential in supporting our communities both inside and out. We intend for these resources to link gay, queer and trans people between institutions and across national borders. We intend as well that these resources act not only as a model for harm reduction and education, but as a tool for community building and self-preservation.

HISTORIES

It is important to know first how AIDS and prisons are related. So many people on the inside are serving time for drug offenses as a result of the war on drugs. Both AIDS and the war on drugs served to: (a) target specific communities, working together to ensure the removal and disappearance of the same communities already targeted along lines of race, class, sexual orientation and gender, and (b) play a central role in interrupting and demobilizing militant gay liberation and black liberation movements. In revisiting such histories, we can see how officials in power structured and exacerbated the course of the epidemic by allowing HIV to spread among those same communities already targeted by policing and incarceration, actively nurturing the conditions for "the right people" (to borrow the words of Ronald Reagan) to transmit the virus. Once inside, many among these same communities, jointly devastated by AIDS and mass incarceration, found themselves without treatment, medication, or adequate healthcare.

The realities we face today as a community reflect the lived effects of legacies of thirty years of AIDS decimation

and prison expansion. That this information has become clear to us through our correspondence and resource development shows us how these histories exist in people's very bodies, and in people's daily negotiations of violence, risk, and sexual safety.

PICKING UP WHERE THESE HISTORIES LEFT

OFF!

There also exist movements nurturing resistance, survival, and queer cultures of self-defense. Alongside these histories of queer containment and epidemic, there exist histories of community resilience and gay and queer solidarities emanating from both the inside and the outside. If we acknowledge how prisons continue to ensure that people transmit HIV, what would it look like for every AIDS service organization to integrate as part of its mandate a decrease in the number of people

locked up behind bars? To declare a national moratorium on incarceration? Through these histories, and imagining gay futures without prisons, we move closer to creating trans and gay and queer cultures of self-preservation, community affirmation, and self-defense.

For more information about the Journal of Prisoners on Prisons contact them directly at: Journal of Prisoners on Prisons, c/o University of Ottawa Press, 542 King Edward Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 6N5. If you would like to receive a copy of the article in full, contact us at the address listed at the end of this newsletter and we'll send you once right away.

erased histories & HIV : recap of event last winter

This past February, the Correspondence Project, with the 2110 Centre for Gender Advocacy (see page 6) organized an event entitled "Erased Histories: Community Responses to HIV/AIDS." The event is part of the programming the Correspondence Project does amongst outside communities to create broader cultures of awareness and action in relation to prisons, policing, criminalization, HIV/AIDS, and health. These events also give us the opportunity to talk about the work we're doing, and find penpals for folks on the inside.

The panel consisted of a range of speakers: multi-disciplinary artists, prevention workers, activists around the bathhouse raids, and sex worker organizers. They discussed the ways their work interacts with HIV/AIDS issues, with histories of AIDS in gay and queer and trans

communities, and with how they try and make sure these histories are not forgotten.

The role of community, arose again and again, perhaps most explicitly, when Mikiki, one of the panelists closed their portion by saying "So what I would like to pose to y'all is to start thinking about what your most beautiful life looks like. We found that moments of community, and of supporting each other in group pride have the most significant impacts on success of HIV prevention. We know that we can look after each other when we form communities, and that is something we've been very good at."

For a full transcription of the event, check out the Resource Library under the section "Our Events."

FEATURED RESOURCE

TRANS HEALTH NETWORK

The Trans Health Network works to promote health, well-being and social justice for trans people in Québec. The network is made up of the following members: Project 10, The 2110 Centre for Gender Advocacy, Stella and ASTT(e)Q (Action Santee Travesti(e)s & Transsexual(e)s du Quebec).

These community organizations work with one another in order to facilitate access to health care and the ability for individuals to self-determine. Through this coalition-building, the Trans Health Network strengthens the links between the work that these different organizations do in response to the issues faced by trans-identified people. It will likely expand as they continue to collaborate and work alongside other groups, such as those doing prison advocacy, whose values and missions are aligned with the THN. As these networks continue to grow, the services and resources provided by each of the organizations will become easier to access for those seeking the support. For now, their work revolves mainly around a health care provider database, other relevant resources, and advocacy around policy issues relating to trans health.

The Trans Health Network is in the process of formalizing a database of health care providers in Quebec. In addition to offering basic information about these services, the experiences of the people who have accessed

these services will be made available. The database can currently only be accessed by contacting the organizations.

The network is also in the process of coordinating resources and directories relevant to trans people and are continuously expanding their information on topics such as:

- how to navigate the (Quebec) health care system to access hormones and surgery,
- information about hormones, details about identification, documentation, legal name and sex designation changes,
- materials specifically for youth,
- information about immigration, sexual health, sex work, mental health and drug use.
- accessing information on sexual assault and support and resources for survivors (in development),
- resources for self-advocacy, (as it relates to doctors, cops, social services, etc) (in development),
- resources and information for prisoners and

recently released individuals (in development),
 - housing information and resources, employment & social assistance information (in development).
 The group works with a harm reduction approach, meaning that they work to amass a whole variety of resources so that people can access the resources that are most appropriate to their needs.

As a network the THN also works to lobby the government to ensure that the resources currently provided are being changed in a way that considers the realities of trans people and ensures that trans voices are present in major policies and decisions.

For those of you wishing to access the services provided by the organizations belonging to the Trans Health Network, each of their addresses can be found below. Though much of the information available will be Quebec-specific, still some of it is transferable and some resources are available to direct you to other organizations in other regions. If there is information you would like to see made available, the Trans Health Network would gladly try to accommodate these suggestions.

The 2110 Centre is an independent, student-funded, Concordia University organization, mandated to promoting gender equality and empowerment, particularly as it relates to marginalized communities. This mandate is achieved through on-going programming, campaigns, resources, services, and advocacy.

 The 2110 Centre for Gender Advocacy
 c/o Concordia University
 1455 de Maisonneuve O. - Annex v-01
 Montréal, Québec, Canada

Project 10 works to promote the personal, social, sexual and mental well being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, intersexed and questioning youth and adults 14-25. Through advocacy and education, Project 10 aims to facilitate the empowerment of youth at individual, community, and institutional levels.

 Project 10
 2000 Northcliffe #218
 Montréal, Québec, Canada
 H4A 3K5
 514 989-4585

Stella's goals are to provide support and information to sex-workers so that they may live in safety and with dignity; to sensitize and educate the public about sex work and the realities faced by sex workers; to fight discrimination against sex workers and to promote the decriminalisation of sex work.

 Stella
 2065 Parthenais Suite 404
 Montréal, Québec, Canada
 H2K 3T1
 514-285-1599 or 514-285-8889

ASTT(e)Q works to encourage the health and well-being of trans people through access to resources and support. They aim to develop and strengthen trans people's social and medical support networks. They promote healthy living and quality of life for trans people living with HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis, and work to prevent HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections.

 ASTT(e)Q c/o Cactus Montréal
 1300 Sanguinet
 Montréal, Québec, Canada
 H2X 3E7
 514.847.0067



Stella, Project 10, and ASTT(e)Q are all able to accept collect calls from prisoners.

LIST OF RESOURCES WE HAVE ON HAND

1. All resources are provided free of charge. To request a resource (or several) please contact us at the address below clearly stating which resource(s) you are requesting and how many copies you would like to receive.

2. Please note that this list is current as of September 2009, and is constantly in the process of being updated. Please also forward us suggestions of resources you would like to see included, or, resources you have access to that you would like to share.

3. Any resource that is marked by a star ☆ is a book, that we then make photocopies of and send to folks inside. Please only request one of these starred resources at a time.

Prisoner Correspondence Project
ATTN Resource Library
c/o QPIRG-Concordia
1455 de Maisonneuve W.
Montreal (QC) H3G 1M8 CANADA
OR
queertrans.prisonersolidarity@gmail.com

organized in the summer of 2008, during montreal Pride festivities; an anthology of writing by queer and trans prisoners about pride.

You improvise to survive: negotiating sexual "safety" for queer and trans folks inside and out - a short compilation put together by the prisoner correspondence project of the first submissions we received for the "fucking without fear" resource series. these submissions were the focus of several workshops and events we have put on with folks on the outside.

Erased Histories: community responses to hiv/aids - the transcription of a panel of different (mostly gay and lesbian) community activists about their work around hiv and aids in the earlier days of the epidemic, including how aids issues interact with courts, cops, and prison issues.

The Word is Out! Issues 1, 2, and 3 - our very own prisoner correspondence project newsletter. includes featured resource, prisoner art and writing, callouts for our different projects, and a list of all our services.

Cellcount - a general newsletter with services and resources offered by pasan, the prisoner hiv/ aids support action network. also includes tips on safer drug use, etc. we will send you the most recent edition, though you can also request backissues (canada).

A Resource List for the Incarcerated Native American - includes listings for newspapers for native american prisoners, book program listings, legal resources, and education programs for prisoners (usa).

The Criminal's Handbook - a list of halfway houses and re-entry resource across canada, region by region (canada).

Bisexual Resource List - national organizations that work on issues faced by bisexual communities (usa).

EMOTIONAL SELF CARE

Taking Care of Your Body and Mind by PASAN - a pamphlet on safer slashing/cutting in prison.

Survival in Solitary: a manual written by and for people living in control units by California Prison Focus - a collection of writing, poetry, and information about coping with solitary confinement and life sentences.

Trying to Understand Self-harm by Black Ice Press - a short zine about disassociation and the reasons why folks might choose to use self-injury to cope.

SAFER SEX

Beyond Appearances (aussi disponible en français) - for prisoners, sex workers and other "high risk" communities, on hiv/aids issues, including prevention.

C it's no joke: Hep C (aussi disponible en français) - a guide explaining how to transmit hep c, including tips on safer tattooing, sex, and drug use

Queersafe - a zine by head and hands in montreal about safer sex (not specific to prisons) for queer men and women, different sexually transmitted diseases, and taking care of specific body parts.

Turnover: a collection of hiv prevention comics - comics that explore issues of youth and hiv transmission, barebacking, and physical and emotional wellness. ☆

Risk in Prison - two articles written by matthew jones (incarcerated) and liam and bridget from the prisoner correspondence project (non-incarcerated) talking about the concept of "risk", and "risky sexual behavior" in prison.

You improvise to survive: addressing sexual "safety" for queers inside and outside of prisons - a short compilation put together by the prisoner correspondence project of the first submissions we received for the "fucking without fear" resource series.

What if I'm HIV positive? - a general, non-prison specific resource about what you should know if you test hiv positive.

AIDS and Hepatitis C: straight up facts - a one-page overview of how you can transmit, and, avoid transmission of hep c and hiv/aids in prison.

Safer Barebacking (not prison specific) - an article about how to reduce the risk of transmitting hiv/aids and other stds/ sti's when fucking without condoms.

VII y el joint (Spanish only) - a basic resource sheet put together by pasan about reducing the chance of transmitting hiv in prison.

WRITING ON HIV & AIDS

If We Have To Take Tomorrow - a collection of writing about same-sex and same-gender desire, and hiv/aids by and for gay black men. ☆

To Be Left With the Body by AIDS Project Los Angeles - a collection dedicated to poetry, prose, and photography written by and for hiv positive folks about the marginalization and criminalization of queer and hiv positive communities. ☆

Corpus: volumes 4, 5, 6 by AIDS Project Los Angeles - an HIV prevention publication that brings together health information, politics, creative work, and essays all on issues related to hiv/aids and where health and aids intersects with other other issues faced by gay and queer communities: incarceration, racism, policing:
issue 4: women's relationships to gay men and aids;
issue 5: rural gay identity and aids;
issue 6: the international issue, the shifting global responses to aids among gay and queer men. ☆

The De-gaying of AIDS & Reclaiming Culture / La deshomosexualización del SIDA - available in both spanish and english, these short essays speak to how aids has been de-gayed, and the effects of this on, among others, prisoners and communities of colour.

Gay Boy Talk: stopping hiv infections among young gay men (Also available in Spanish) - not prison specific.

OUR EVENTS

Imprisoned Pride: how queer and trans prisoners get written out of mainstream pride movements - a zine put together by the prisoner correspondence project (us!) from the transcript of an event we

Queer and Trans Zine Resource List - a list of addresses and contact information for self-published zines.

Prisoner Resource Guide - includes primarily books-to-prisons chapters and legal resources (usa).

Prison Book Programs - national prisoner resource list: expanded version of the prisoner resource list (usa).

Montreal Resource List for LGBTQ Youth

Locked Out - resource for lgbtq prisoners (usa).

Canadian Publications for Prisoners - magazines and organizations that send to prisoners (canada).

Writing and Publishing Behind Bars (usa and canada).

Penpal Resources for Straight and Non-Queer Prisoners (usa and canada).

Back Issues of Prison Focus: a california-based publication about prison reform issues (usa).

Stella: Info Pamphlet on their Services (En anglais et en francais) - a resource list of the services offered by stella, a Montreal-specific sex worker organization.

HORMONES

Hormones Without a Doctor - a comprehensive guide to street hormone use / hormone use without a doctor. Includes a pill and patch identification guide, what dosage to take pills, and other general tips about safe hormone use. mostly mtf.

Trans Health Information Project - guide to hormones and self-injection - a resource sheet that includes info about where to inject, preparing the shot, and safely doing the injection.

Gender Anarchy: a translesbian/2spirit zine - issues march 2007 or december 2008. a short zine put together by u.s. transsexual prisoner about trans issues and hormone access in u.s. and california prisons

TransLezbos - a short zine, including poetry, for transsexual lesbians, put together by trans lesbian prisoner lolofora, who is on the inside in california.

Hepatitis C and Hormone Therapy (aussi disponible en francais)

- a pamphlet about how you can transmit hepatitis c while injecting hormones (not specific to prisons).

MTF Hormone Therapy (Aussi disponible en francais) - some basic information about taking hormones for people who are thinking of transitioning male-to-female.

FTM Hormone Therapy (Aussi disponible en francais) - some basic information about taking hormones for people who are thinking of transitioning female-to-male.

FAQ on Transitioning (Aussi disponible en francais) - a basic guide that answers frequently asked questions about transitioning, hormone use, and gender transition.

alliance - the first issue of clean shaven which includes information about the trans day of remembrance, ways that non-trans people can be better allies, etc.

DRUG USE

My Crack Kit (Aussi disponible en francais) - a short pamphlet showing how to safely use crack, and reduce the risk to your body and your lungs.

TIP Guide to Hormones and Self-injection - by the transhealth information project

Guide DOPE: travail du sexe, drogues, alcool et autres substances (francais seulement) - un guide (non particulier au milieu carceral) comprehensif au sujet de la reduction des mefaits en utilisant les drogues et des autres substances.

Trippin - a comprehensive guide to drug use, and ways to reduce the risk of overdose, and other harm to your body. also describes which drugs are safe and unsafe to take in combination with hivmeds. not prison specific, but useful in showing what drugs counteract with others.

Safer Shooting - a postcard with short descriptions about how to shoot up safely with injection drugs.

Be Kind to your Veins - a guide to caring for your veins while fixing in prison, where to shoot up, etc, put out by PASAN

Keeping Fit - a prisoners guide to syringe care, cleaning your needles, and what to do to take better care of your body while shooting up in prison.

LEGAL RESOURCES

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network - information about the work AIDS LAW does and how to contact them (canada).

TGI Justice Project - a brief overview of the programs and services offered by the transgender, gendervariant, and intersex justice project, and how to contact them (usa).

The Sylvia Rivera Law Project - an overview of SRLP, its mandate and programs, and ways to contact them for more information (usa).

COMING OUT & LGBTQ IDENTITY

African Americans Coming Out - a basic, non-prison specific guide to coming out for gay and lesbian african americans.

FAQ on Transitioning - general information on transitioning for transgender, transsexual, and gender nonconforming people (not prison specific).

A Resource Guide to Coming Out (not prison specific).

FTM International - the organizational and resource issue of the magazine FTM International, includes resource list for female-to-male trans folks

Trans Factsheets and general information about trans identities and terminology

Intro to Intersex Activism: a guide to gay, lesbian and bisexual allies - a short guide for people who are interested in knowing more about intersex identities and intersex activism.

Out of the Closets and into the Libraries: a collection of radical queer moments - a zine put together archiving different moments in queer / gay history and snapshots of queer struggle (not prison specific).

Being Gay / Being Lesbian - a pamphlet (not prison specific) on the basics of gay and lesbian identity.

Clean Shaven: brought to you by transgender

QUEER & TRANS

PRISONER LITERATURE

Building Bridges - a short article written by lin eliott in the mid 1990s that provides a brief overview of the realities of being queer in prison.

Prisons and Closets - an article written by jason lyon about his experience being in prison as queer, and about negotiating outness.

Ultraviolet: the case of the jersey 4 - a small newspaper about the case of the new jersey 4 - four black lesbians who were convicted for defending themselves against a homophobic assault.

A View from Treblinka Dungeon, Pelican Bay - an article written by lolofora contreraz about her time spent incarcerated at the shu (security housing unit) at pelican bay as a transsexual woman, and about communities of trans prisoners coming together to support one another in the face of torture.

Wiener Society - a gay punk zine put together by neil, prisoner in the us, includes poetry, music reviews, etc.

Left Back Issue 3 - gay punk prisoner zine distributed by fanorama; includes poetry and writing about prison life.

One Woman's Journey by Kebby Warner - a short zine about one woman's struggle with the doc, medical neglect, and about being a mother.

Thoughts of my Liberation: Issue 5 - a zine put together by two-spirit native american prisoner iron tipi warrior about his experience of prison.

TATTOOING

Tattooing and You: the safe-guards within prison walls - a guide to safe tattooing inside prisons, things to consider, and materials to use.

SEX WORK

Audacious: the reality of being a transsexual or transvestite sex worker (aussi disponible en francais) - an article written by a member of the prisoner correspondence project about her experiences as a transsexual sex worker dealing with the montreal policing, court and prison systems.

Hey Girls! safer sex for sex workers (aussi disponible en francais)

Tenacious: art and writing by women in prison

SMUT

Meatus: a pornzine for queers outside the box - a collection of erotic writing about gay bio men.

GRAY → CELEB → GOSSIP

R.I.P. MICHAEL JACKSON

Died: June 25

Of: prescription drugs?

Age: 50!!!

So young, yet so old (Michael Jackson was 50? I thought he was made of plastic!)

How are YOU dealing with Michael Jackson's death? What did he mean to you? We want to know!

I don't care if he was straight, gay, or asexual. One thing I know: he was definitely queer. And that is a beautiful thing!

I miss him a lot.

Introducing...Chaz Bono!!

Former lesbian Chastity Bono, Sonny and Cher's kid, has announced his intention to transition to a man, Chaz Bono! He actually began his transition last June (2008), but is now publicizing it, and expects to be fully transitioned by 2010. Of course he wanted his dignity and privacy, but the press is all over it, taking photos of his trips to the gym, his trips to the mall, blah blah blah. We say: we're glad that you're finally realizing your dreams - we got you, babe!

Father Anthony? Meet Big Mama Capretta.

Oh wait, they're the same person! Live from Columbus, Ohio, it's a Catholic priest by day, drag queen by night! Big Mama Capretta has a hit single on the U.S. Billboard Club Play dance chart called "Big Mama's House". In honour of gay pride month, she revealed her true identity, saying: "It's Big Mama y'all! And, I am no longer afraid to come out of the closet as a gay Catholic Priest! Thank you everyone for buying, playing and charting 'Big Mama's House.' I am living proof that a person can do anything they set their mind to. We have to love and enjoy ourselves in this world. And, I am enjoying my life being who I am and who God intended me to be! Now, let's DANCE y'all!" Wooooohoooooo! (For their part, Catholic groups are saying that he is NOT a Roman Catholic priest, but rather an Independent Old Catholic priest, which is another thing entirely. Well, Roman Catholic, Old Catholic - I don't care, it's a drag queen priest!!)

There is no longer One Life(style) to Live!

That's right, the popular daytime soap opera One Life to Live is going to feature a gay storyline soon, in which charmingly-awkward-conservative-cop Fish (Scott Evans) and steamy-med-student Kyle (Brett Claywell) "shared a sexual past during college" that will come to get them this season. What!!!! In these desperate times, the soaps are finally admitting how much more spicy things would be with - gay intrigue!

Gaga for Gaga

I don't know about you, but at this point I am pretty much completely obsessed with Lady Gaga. We know she loves the queers, but can you believe how much she loves leather gear? Practically every photo of her these days has her in some sort of constrictive shiny leather getup and then....she holds a press conference in Malta wearing a gimp mask over her entire face. Though she says, "It's not just a mask, it's a contemporary art piece", later on in the interview she reveals, "I'm inspired by the moonlight. I'm inspired by sex, and pornography, and slasher films...I'm inspired by all sorts of things". We know you are baby, that's why we love you!

Dream Teaming

I'm sure you already suspected this, but now a new book is out to dish the real dirt. Though he kept it secret until the day he died (August 12, 2007), everyone knew that Merv Griffin was a total gay. Now, Merv Griffin: A Life in the Closet gets up close and personal with Merv and his love affairs. And what love affairs! Rock Hudson, James Dean, Liberace, and "a prolonged sexual affair" with Marlon Brando!! Seriously folks, the guy didn't have a chance. The only thing that comes close to a good James Dean sex fantasy is a Rock Hudson one....what I'm saying is, that dream team is enough to turn anyone over to the other side, if you ask me. Too bad we can't ask Merv. Guess we'll have to settle for the book!

Queer Customs

Michael Lucas, legendary gay porn magnate, was recently stopped while trying to cross the border into Canada. His account: "Every other person was an Asian foreigner who needed a translator. The ever-so clever and sluggish customs workers seemed to enjoy mocking them...Then he got his amateur Scooby-Doo sleuth on...I was to have all my bags emptied and rummaged through. Of course I had my movies on me, a stack of nude pictures to sign, and lube. The essentials. Homophobia was running rampant with these captors and they were highly offended by said essentials."

2000 and late

At this point, if you're a female pop star who hasn't admitted she likes girls, you are sooo 2008. Well, Fergie from the Black Eyed Peas just admitted in an interview that she has "experimented definitely" with women, though she's "never had a steady girlfriend". Okay, so she kissed a girl and she liked it...and she wants everybody to know. Yawn. C'mon, doesn't everyone want the type of publicity Lindsay got for actually dating a woman? Maybe someone could do it without a concurrent eating disorder and heroin addiction? Wishful thinking?

Gay Day

Harvey Milk, California's first openly gay elected official, now has a day all to himself! May 22, Harvey's birthday, is now Harvey Milk Day in California.

March of the Gay Penguins!

Harvey and Pepper, two male penguins, had a loving six year relationship in the San Francisco zoo, until recently when some homewrecker - "Linda" - stole Harvey away, devastating poor Pepper. But all is not lost - Z and Vielpunkt in Germany's Bremerhaven zoo are going strong, and have begun raising a chick together. In fact, there are three same-sex pairs of Humboldt penguins at the Bremerhaven zoo, making one third of the 20 penguins there homos! Homo penguins are also hanging out in zoos in Japan, Scotland, and New York!



HOMOSCOPIES

OR HEY! WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?

Aries (March 21-April 19)

It's summertime, Aries, which is the perfect opportunity for you to cool down friend. You are simply TOO HOT! Aries, you are completely fabulous and courageous, but of course, you already know that. Mars is your planet, and let me tell you: it may be red hot, but it's completely unlivable. So take a walk, get in touch with your creative side, and listen hard! Some good advice will be coming your way at the end of August, and if you are too busy pumping iron and playing the Control Queen to your minions, you will miss it completely.

Cancer (June 22-July 22)

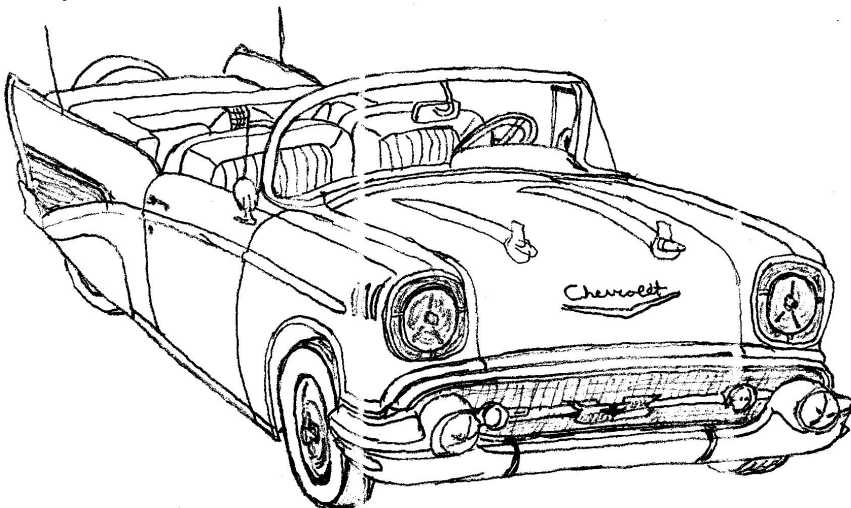
Hey Cancer, this summer you're getting a makeover! I mean, who decided to make your sign a crab, anyhow? So insulting! Why not give you a better symbol, like a unicorn or a teddy bear? Because everyone should know just how magnificent you are, and you deserve nothing less than love and fun all summer long. But be patient Cancer, and keep your calm. Like in grade school, the ones that tease and hurt the most are the ones who secretly pine after you in their journals at night. They may not deserve you, but at least don't let them get you down.

Libra (September 23-October 24)

Summer finds you, Libra, in the sixth house of the zodiac, and you know what that means... flirting! What better time of year to give a slick smile or a head nod or two? It's all about balance for Librans, and no one is quite so adept at keeping the scales tipped just right. You know the difference between innocent flirtation and coming on strong, and that's why you do both. You are ruled by Venus, so you sure can deliver love. But before you do, you must remember that you will have to make an important decision before September, so quit being charming for just one minute and weigh your options well. You won't regret it.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Ruled by Saturn, Capricorns are cool, cautious and always calm. But Capricorn, it's summer! Don't you think it's time to take a walk on the wild side? I mean, fine, no one's telling you to lose your marbles or anything, but this could be the perfect time for you to find a creative outlet to go completely wild. Even if it's only in fantasy, in private, or with someone you trust. Although you hide your crazy side from the world, letting it loose once in a while will be completely worth it, even if the only person you surprise is yourself.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Taurus, you've been putting the "Bull" back in "bulldogger" since 1929. And let me tell you, your solid, calm, and rugged fine self is nothing short of impressive. Venus, your ruler, will spend the summer luring you out of slumber with temptations of exciting new strangers that have recently entered your life. And what are you to do with these temptations? Go for it Taurus! A little kindness to an exciting acquaintance will go a long way.

Leo (July 23-August 22)

Leo, you are so spectacular, it's a wonder you even have time to read this right now. Shouldn't you be out dancing and showing everyone what it means to be the "life of the party"? That's a trick question Leo, because you ARE the party. So if you're here reading this, the party is obviously on hold. So my advice to you, sunny Leo, is to get back out there and make that party happen! Paint the town gay, because no one does it better than you.

Scorpio (October 24-November 22)

You are a water sign Scorpio, which means that people don't see all the fabulous treasures hidden just under your surface. People think you are aloof and calm, when really you are full of untapped mystery, intensity, and emotion. This summer is the perfect time to let some of that passion out. You may find yourself shedding a tear for Michael Jackson or dancing the Limbo under a broomstick. It is these seemingly silly summer moments, however brief, that will let others see what a total Jackpot you are - and how lucky they'd be if only they just took the time to get to know you better.

Gemini (May 21-June 21)

Gemini, stop being so two-faced! Just kidding Gemini, no one would ever ask you to be more upfront. You are so charming and wonderful, a little duplicity isn't going to stop anyone from crushing over your sweet self all summer long. With Mercury in retrograde, the masses of hotties who could use a little time in your day will be everywhere. So what's the downside of all this good news? Drama, Gemini, so proceed with caution and shine on.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Virgo, you are a babe! Seriously, Virgos are ruled by Mercury and you know what that means... No? Well, I'll tell you: it means you are a total hearthrob dreamboat extravaganza, as if you've never been told that before. You are looking quite fine this summer, which I guess is no different from spring, winter, and fall. But do take some advice- Mercury is in retrograde so keeping up to your usual standard of organization is not in the cards. Now is not the time to be a Control Queen. Let loose and leave a thing or two up to fate. You might find that those who come into your life will be almost as studly as you.

Sagittarius (November 23-December 21)

Hey there, Sagittarius. You are the centaur, which means you are magical, mythical and generally fantastic. But of course all that fabulousness leaves you feeling a little too obsessed over, as your independence is more important than all the glory in the world. Guided by Jupiter, you seek the wisdom to balance your avid summer social life with the solitary alone time you require to function at the pace that is truly your best. This summer, concentrate on completing tasks and taking some time to yourself. Your admirers will hate me for taking you out of the limelight, but when you return, you'll be more beautiful than ever before.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Aquarius, you are the David Bowie of the astrological system- the Ziggy Stardust of the stars. A rebel, a sex-god and a rockstar all rolled into one, you are as irresistible as you are charming, as rare and imaginative as you are inspirational. Some advice for you this summer: you can never be too friendly or too gay. So get out there, do your thing, and everyone will be smitten. And wanting a glimmer of what you are and what you've got.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Pisces, your sign is ruled by the Unconscious, which this summer can mean only one thing: temptation and lots of it. And watch out, because the prospects that seem most delicious can also be the most fleeting. In order to get what you really want, you need to stop blowing things up so big in your imagination and really figure out who and what will make you happy for the long term. What I'm saying is: follow your gut when you're hungry, but in matters of love, use your lovely head. The gains may not be quite as fantastic but at least the results will last 'till the fall.

IDENTITY POLITICS

by Countess Sha'uri

Identity politics is the name of a political trend which has emerged in gay, lesbian, bisexual white feminist and countercultural communities. Identity politics place an emphasis on creating and maintaining a distinct cultural identity as a means of opposing the dominant culture.

The very notion of a "Queer Nation" is an example of identity politics. The name of a liberal/radical gay liberation/rights group. The idea of gays as a nation or national liberation for gays is a manufactured idea with no historical basis. The title is basically an appropriation of Black Nationalist rhetoric. The difference between Black Nationalism and "Gay Nationalism" is that the idea that a Black Nation exists inside Amerika, has a historical basis, while the idea of a Gay Nation has no such basis. The historical basis of Black Nationalism is that there has been a colonial relationship first between the white American nation and the Great Black Nations of Africa, then between the white nation and the forcible relocation of Black Africans.

Revolutionary black nationalists maintain that the colonial relationship continues to this day, and that a Black struggle for national liberation from American colonization is no different from Arab or any other Revolutionary Struggle for national liberation for oppressed colonies, or people or ethnic groups around the world.

Gay Nationalism, by contrast, is not based on a history of gays as a nation. "Gay Nation" is a militant-sounding designation for an organization whose membership doesn't argue that a gay nation exists, except as the name of their organization. The reason that the name sounds militant is that it imitates the rhetoric of Black Nationalism, a political trend with revolutionary practitioners, martyrs, and political prisoners, prisoners of war. Gay Nation has its own image of identity and revolutions; death and glory, heroes and martyrs. But the identity is all that Gay Nation, a predominantly reformist organization, claims.

Without revolutionary practices, Gay Nation reduces itself to all glory, no death: "Gay Nation" who plays a leadership role in Gay Nation/DC said "every time you make love in D.C., you're breaking the law. Every gay kiss is a revolutionary act! This is your revolution and Gay Nation needs you to put those kisses on the line."

To call kissing "revolutionary" when the kiss is gay - contrary to the dominant cultures understanding of what a kiss is and should be - is, in my opinion, an insult to the many real revolutionaries who have died in struggle or been tortured in prison. Subversion is subversion, revolution is revolution, and identity politics, due to its emphasis on image over substance, often elevates cultural opposition to the status of "revolutionary."

The difference between revolutionary politics and identity politics is that revolutionary politics emphasize material conditions and the political practices necessary to change those material conditions, while identity politics emphasize

identity and cultural practices. An example of revolutionary politics is the 10-point program of the Black Panther Party, which calls for self-determination for the black community, repayment of financial debt owed to the black community, full employment, decent housing, honest education, exemption from military service, an end to police brutality, freedom for black prisoners, trial by jury of racial/socio-economic peers, and "land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, and peace."

This program does not concern itself with what is and is not "a revolutionary act." Rather, it recognizes the material conditions of black people's lives in the inner cities. In the full text of the 10th point, the BPP program quotes America's declaration of independence to explain that the aforementioned demands should be met by the means of national liberation through armed revolution if necessary. BPP texts indicate that the Panthers did indeed believe that revolutionary violence would be necessary for the attainment of their goals. They did not believe that their goals could be met through cultural subversion.

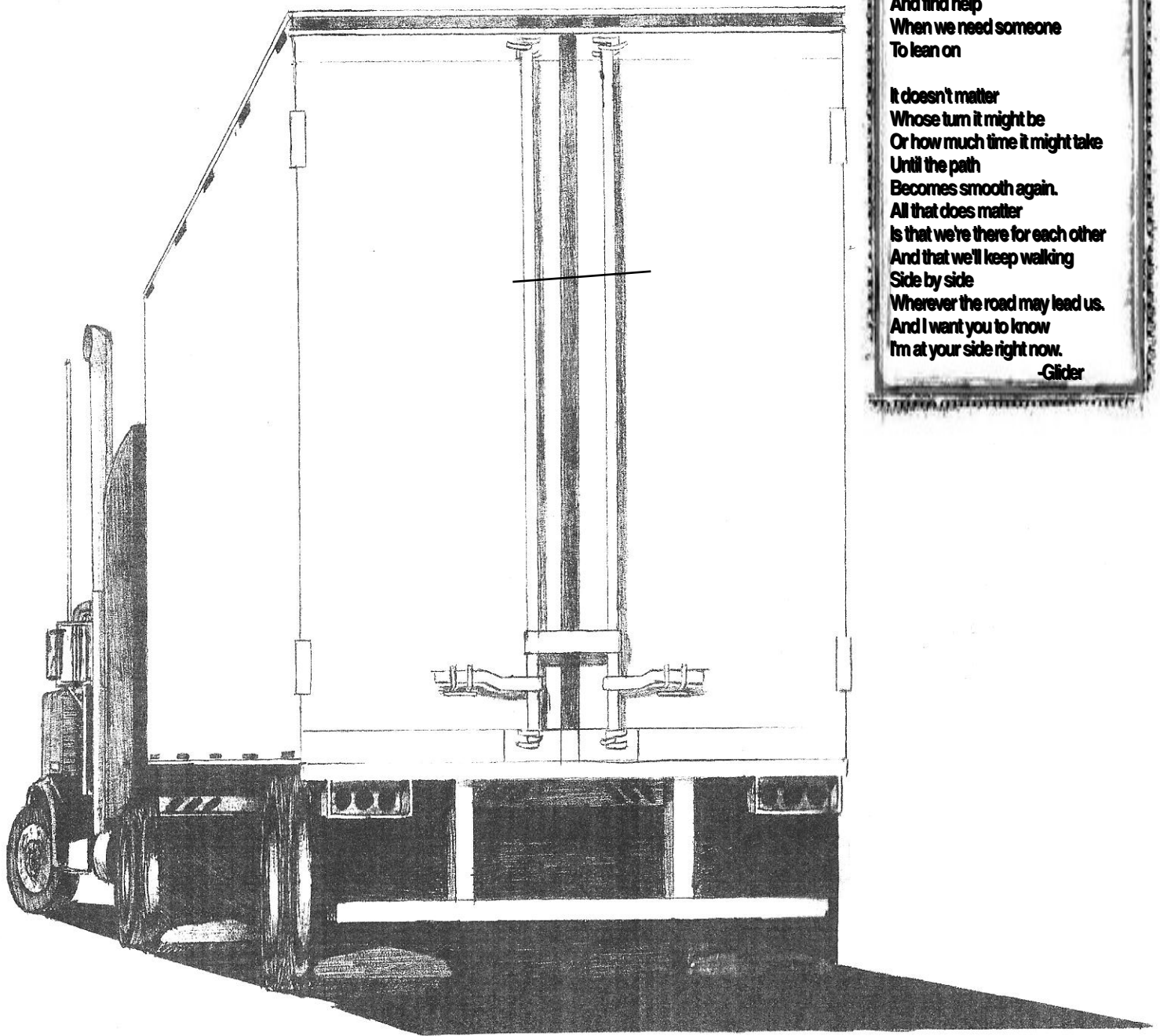
The Panthers, in fact, polemicized against cultural nationalism, which is the new Afrikan/Black community's equivalent of identity politics: "The BPP,

which is a revolutionary group of black people, realizes that we have an identity. We have to realize our black or Afrikan heritage in order to give us the strength to move on and progress. But as far as returning to the old Afrikan culture, it's unnecessary and it's not advantageous in many respects. We believe that culture itself will not liberate us. We're going to need some stronger stuff!" Talking of gays.

An organization of gay people could follow the model of the Panthers by studying what material conditions affecting gay people's lives need to be changed. Whether such an organization opted for reform or revolution, it would have no need for empty, decontextualized rhetoric about national oppression and revolution.

The Panthers used such rhetoric only in the context of explaining their politics, whereas the use of such rhetoric by Gay Nation and other practitioners of identity politics tends to obfuscate, not enlighten. Gay Nation's use of the word "revolution," for instance, obscures the reality of their basically reformist stance. Their use of the word "nation" obscures the difference between the Black liberation and gay liberation movement. Identity politics place an emphasis on image which interferes with the clear advancement of a substantive political agenda.





Life is a journey
That sometimes leads us
Through rough places...
But the walk
Is so much easier
When we travel
Beside one another.
That way we can reach out
And find help
When we need someone
To lean on

It doesn't matter
Whose turn it might be
Or how much time it might take
Until the path
Becomes smooth again.
All that does matter
Is that we're there for each other
And that we'll keep walking
Side by side
Wherever the road may lead us.
And I want you to know
I'm at your side right now.

-Glider

We have a number of upcoming projects in the works and need your art! The art will be used in upcoming issues of our newsletter, for posters promoting the project, for upcoming events and workshops, and for our Fucking Without Fear resources. Anything you're able to send is appreciated, whether it's sketches, doodles, simple line drawings, or anything else! Even if you've never drawn before, we would love to receive something. A few things to keep in mind when sending art:

- If you can't make copies, you can send us the original, we can make copies, and return the original to you right away
- Please let us know if you want your name credited where it is used, and what name you want to appear (chosen name or legal name)
- Please let us know if you want your art used for a specific purpose (ie. in the newsletter, etc), or if there are specific purposes you don't want your art used for.
- Line drawings and black and white images work the best when being photocopied.
- Don't be shy to send drawings with nudity or of sexuality! But since some won't be allowed into certain prisons, that they will likely be used for materials on the outside.