

The Word is Out



Issue 15: Winter 2015

Greetings beautiful members,

We're back!!! And sending all you wonderful butterflies our love in these holidays. And hello to all those new followers, thanks for signing up, cuties!

So we've got some fabulous stuff for your this issue. Widow gets down to the grit to talk about health and safety for penises on page 4. We've also got you covered with more work from the wonderful Lavender & Red series on page 13. And finally, Laverne Cox is making a quick appearance in an interview she did about her character Sophia on *Orange is the New Black* (OITNB) and her documentary *Free CeCe* on page 5.

Issue 15 is The Housing Issue. We asked you to gather up all your knowledge around housing. How do you find prisons with other LGBTQ? Is it even worth it? What

does LGBTQ housing look like outside prison? Check out page 14 for this special section.

A special thank you to our writers and artists: Craig Massey II, Jiordi Russell, Divine, CHRis Riley, Brittany, Tart-Ti Smith, Micheal Shields, michael desmarais, Cherrie, Benito, and John. And a shout-out to folks at Warkworth Institution who wrote a beautiful note for their friend and our member, Jordy MacKay, who passed away this August in prison.

We hope you enjoy our holiday card which features artwork by the marvelous James M. Sepesi. Stay warm and stay fabulous!

Happy holidays,
your friends at the Prisoner Correspondence Project

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Since We've Been Gone

So I guess we haven't been gone all that long, given how the last newsletter went out at the end of the summer, but we have a few things to report to you all.

Tragically, we bid farewell to Amber at the end of August as she moved back to Massachusetts. But she's been making some connections with Black and Pink since getting there. After a little recruitment drive, we are pleased to welcome Adam, Bruiser, and Sanjeevan onto the collective. And as we do every fall, we are happy to welcome some students from the Concordia HIV class to work with us, so you may have also been getting letters or packages signed by Savannah, Claire, and Eduardo.

Towards the end of the summer, we did some Pride tabling, both in Montreal and Ottawa. Other events have included Olivia sitting on a panel about grassroots research, a presentation to a law class about anti-prison work, and a couple of fundraisers including a dance party in September, the reading of a play written by our own Kristin ("Dead Wives Club" - A Nancy Meyers revenge fantasy meets Sartre's No Exit in an unholy marriage of low camp and Greek tragedy), and an upcoming Bingo night fundraiser.

As always, we've been trying to expand on the Emotional Care section of the Resource Library and are excited to introduce you to the new resources we've added. Finding things that are written particularly with a prison audience in mind can sometimes be difficult, but we've got three new prisoner self-help guides on Anxiety, Depression, and Post-Traumatic Stress. They are put out by a regional health service in the UK, and developed in conjunction with prisoners.

One of the big projects that we've been working on has been a complete remake of the website and we are on track to launch it with the new year. Along with being slicker and more up-to-date, the big change is that we'll have the resource library online for outside penpals to be able to download and print off to send inside. This means that if you've got a penpal, you can write to them directly to request things, meaning less wait time for everybody.

Your friends in struggle and solidarity,
Adam, Bruiser, EK, Estelle, Josh, Kristin, Olivia, Sanjeevan,
and Sasha

Trans Prisoner Reforms

California, USA

On October 20th, new guidelines surrounding trans prisoners' access to medical transitioning processes came into effect. California is now the first state to regularly provide and pay for medical transition treatments such as hormones and surgery for those approved.

In order to be approved for surgeries, prisoners would need to be evaluated by medical and mental health professionals and then present their cases to a committee of health care professionals. The guidelines also require trans prisoners to have lived for one year in their preferred gender roles and undergo hormone therapy before they can be granted access to surgeries. Additionally prisoners can be housed in facilities according to their gender identities after surgery: trans women in women's prisons and trans men in men's prisons. We believe that further exploration is needed into the question of whether trans men would be truly safer in men's prisons.

Finally, the new guidelines also make it possible for transgender people in prison to be given clothing, toiletries and other items consistent with their gender. These victories are a result of the efforts of the Transgender Law Centre and the case of Shiloh Quine, a transgender woman held in a men's prison. **We also want to recognize the work of all of the trans folks inside prisons and the many people outside doing work to make these victories possible.: we know that change often results from the efforts of many people and over generations of resisting and creating—new possibilities?**

British Columbia, Canada

On September 30th 2015, the province of British Columbia made history when the first ever transgender person was transferred to a facility that matches her gender identity rather than assigning her to a facility based on her assigned sex at birth. Bianca Sawyer's transfer reflects the undergoing policy changes in BC. Prior to this, an inmate was not permitted to make such a transfer unless they had undergone a "surgical removal of sex organs". Technically, this policy is still in place but BC justice Minister Suzanne Anton has stated that changes are imminent: corrections will also improve transgender individuals' access to medical treatment, and provide enhanced training to staff for how they should accommodate transgender inmates. The housing changes are especially important to transgender women who are at a huge risk for violence, sexual assault and harassment when housed in men's prisons.

Celebrity Gossip: The Historical Edition



As I was sitting around wondering what the heck I was supposed to write about this edition, a flash suddenly entered my brain. As I have been endlessly scouring the internet for the latest, up to date, juiciest celebrity gossip the world has ever seen, I had never even once considered the historical origins of this phenomenon. Who was the first gay Hollywood celebrity I wondered? Answer: one William Haines. Even though Haines' story appears to be a distant one to us in 2015, it is in no way irrelevant. In many ways, the very real fear of a ruined career that surrounds the coming out process for Hollywood performers can be traced back to the homophobia that William Haines had to endure during his time as one of Hollywood's most successful actors in the 1920s and 1930s.

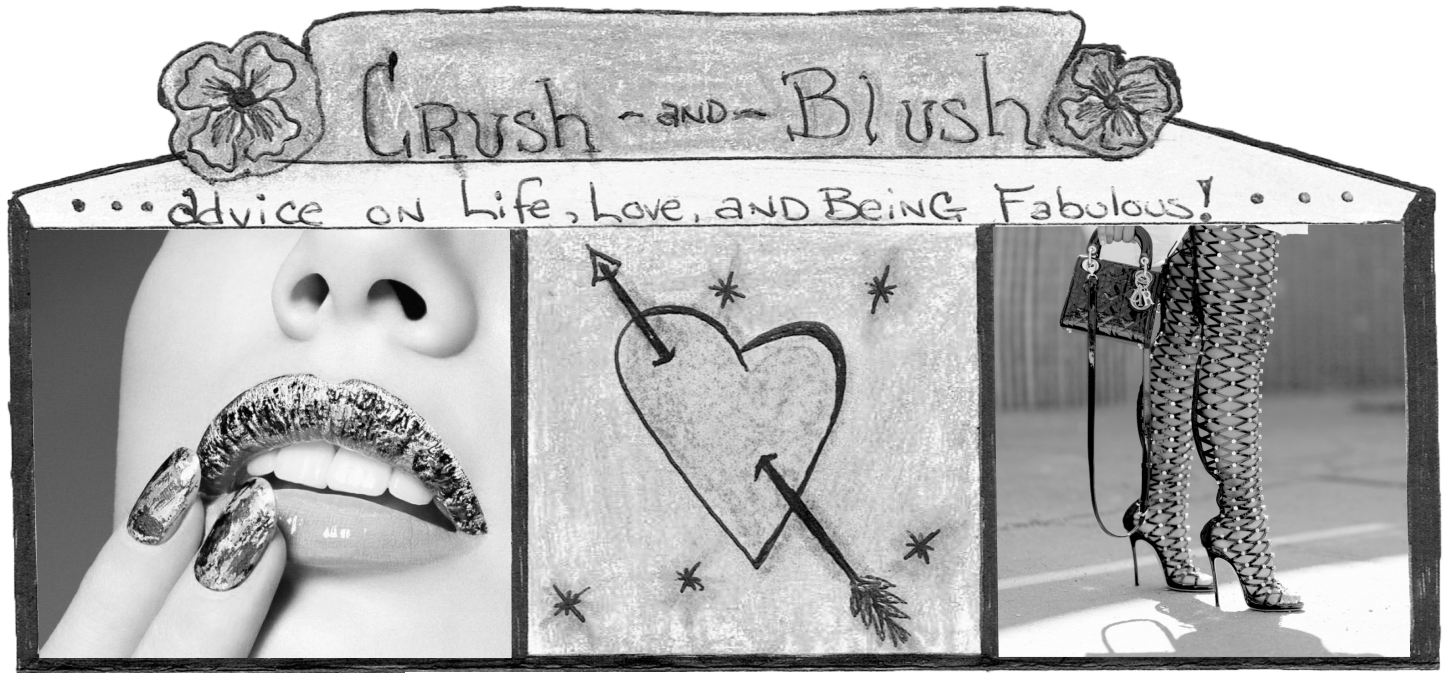
William Haines was born in Staunton Virginia on January 2 1900, the son of Virginia and George Haines, a cigar maker by trade. As a young child, William became extremely fascinated with stage performance and motion pictures, spending hours watching early Hollywood silent films at local theatres in Staunton. At the tender yet rebellious age of fourteen, William ran away from his home with an unknown young man, which many suspect was his first teenage love. The pair travelled to Hopewell, Virginia a town that was known to flirt with "immorality". In order to make ends meet, they both began to work at a DuPont factory making nitrocellulose, which (foreshadowing anyone???) was a component used to fabricate motion picture film. Since this work only pulled in 50 dollars a week, they also opened a dance hall together, which is reported to have been a front to operate a brothel. Then, and this is completely unbearable to me by the way because, well, the bible, but the "immoral" Hopewell BURNED DOWN in 1915 and they were forced to move.

In New York City, William and his boyfriend split up. For a time William worked odd jobs here and there while simultaneously settling into the burgeoning gay community forming in Greenwich Village. Afterwards, he became a "kept man" to a wealthier older woman and then achieved considerable success as a model. In 1922, William caught a humongous break and won a contest put on by the Samuel Goldwyn Company called "New Faces of 1922" and was

immediately signed to a 40 dollar a week contract. He moved to Hollywood in order to fulfill the contract and was put to work by the company as an extra in various silent films. His career took off pretty quickly however, and after a significant role in the 1923 film called *Three Wise Fools* Samuel Goldwyn began to build him up into a studio star. In the following few years, William played lead roles in popular Hollywood films like *The Desert Outlaw*, *The Midnight Express*, and *Brown of Harvard*. As his success was skyrocketing and he was quickly becoming one of the top leading men in Hollywood, William also found love. In 1926, during a trip to New York City, William picked up Jimmie Shields who was working as a hustler at that time. After spending some time together, William convinced Jimmie to move to Los Angeles with him, promising him work as an extra with the Samuel Goldwyn Company. They immediately moved in together and developed a committed and loving relationship.

From 1928 to 1932, William was a top five box office star in Hollywood. During this period, he starred in both silent and sound films such as *Show People*, *Alias Jimmy Valentine*, *Navy Blues*, and *Way Out West* being one of the rare talents that survived the transition into sound pictures. In the 1930 Quigley Poll, William was rated number one as the top box office draw in the country. Then in 1933, William was arrested at the YMCA with a sailor he had picked up in LA's Pershing Square. Even though William lived an openly homosexual lifestyle in Hollywood, this incident forced his homosexuality into the public eye in a way it had not been before. Due to the recent implementation of the Motion Picture Production Code in 1930 which attempted to steer Hollywood away from "immorality" (which of course included any form of what they called "sex perversion"), MGM decided to intervene. The head of the production company gave William a choice, either enter into a sham heterosexual marriage (a "Lavender Marriage") and continue working with MGM or stay with Jimmie Shields and his contract would be terminated. William chose to stay with Jimmie and his career with MGM was immediately over. Besides a few minor films with other production companies, William's acting career was over.

Luckily enough, William and Jimmie had considerable support from friends involved in Hollywood and were able to start up a successful interior design business that catered to their friends in Hollywood. They continued with this endeavor up until their retirement in the early 1970s and their subsequent deaths. William passed away in 1973 from lung cancer and Jimmie took his own life shortly afterwards, suffering from severe loneliness and depression after William's death. Despite William being openly gay in Hollywood in the 1920s, it wasn't until the 1960s that other performers would take a similar position, most likely because they knew what could happen to their careers if they did. This celebrity gossip columnist does not think it is shameful however to be in the closet. Why do we put so much emphasis on the individual to "come out" of the closet, when really, it should be up to society as a collective to eliminate the closet altogether. Let's stop assuming that everyone is straight and cis-gendered, how about that for an idea?



As a transgendered woman, I've come to see the world in a clearer way; I've learned to cut through the BS, have an open heart and mind, and above all else always be fierce and fabulous! So, do you have a burning question or need an honest opinion from someone who truly understands? Then spill your inner thoughts to me, Widow, and I'll tell you just how it is; no shade!

Dear Widow, what's the deal with "penis enhancement"? Do they really work? Bashfully yours, Woefully Unendowed!

Here's the real T, Woefully Unendowed, where do I even begin my size-aholic boys? All of us have been blessed with those colorful "penis enhancement" emails, and have seen those awkward, and painful TV commercials and magazine ads. Damn, if I had grown half an inch for everyone I've seen, Guinness would be kicking down the door to name me "Woman with the mile long dong!" but, seriously Woefully, penis enhancement is a man's "pipe-dream" (pun-intended)... Kind of like having a "real" orgasm is sadly a woman's pipe-dream. Every man, and oddly some women, are obsessed with the size of their sausage, or lack their of; it all depends on who "owns" that disco-stick in your relationship. Many of them are therefore willing to go to hell and back for that extra inch. *But*, I say, *please* stop and think! Consider all those nasty little side affects you could cause for you and/or your lover.

Penile enhancement come in creams, pills, pumps, and surgery; I've seen an advertisement for a device that *stretches*, yes *stretches* that tootsie-pop. Yeeesh, now thats a special kind of desperation. In these painful pursuits, there's a real likelihood that you could cause some horrible things to yourself or your partner, like... a) erectile dysfunction b) loss of sensation c) serious disfigurement! Even Viagra is a nasty little number. It can kill you... or makes you wish it had; just ask any man who's had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours, and had to get a needle in the dong! Yes, that really

happens, its called aspirating and it hurts like a b****.

So face the music boys, if you're not diagnosed with micro-penile syndrome (smaller than one inch), then you need to stay far away from those penis vultures. At best, you'll lose good money and at worst you can be stuck with having a closed casket viewing funeral cause' you're flag is still at full mast! Worth it? I think not! Any person worth their grain in salt will tell you that there is such a thing as too big! If they require a "louisville slugger" they are not anyone you'd want to take home to mama. Take them to the local adult toy store-show them the "purple monster" and get the heck outta Dodge! Personally, I prefer to stick with them about six and a half, seven inches man... but that's just my humble preference. On average, a vagina and anus can only accommodate in a safe and healthy manner. A max of seven a half inches! Bigger and you risk terrors-non-reversible stretching and bleeding... So an average penis is always best.

So stop fretting, no one really needs a nine inch dong, unless you're a porn star and lets be honest, you know you're not; plus let's be realistic, even if you did, you still wouldn't be able to give anyone a real orgasm. We'll take care of that, later on our own time!

So stop going crazy, don't be stupid and keep it natural. Use what you go and it'll be great! Fake breasts, may be good, but fake penises-not so much! Just be confident, that's sexy!

Widow

The Trans Issues We're All Ignoring

Laverne Cox

(interview excerpted from Refinery29's June 2015 interview with Laverne Cox, star of *Orange is the New Black* and trans rights advocate)

When researching your role, did you meet any trans women in prison?

"I've met people who have been incarcerated. I'm executive-producing a documentary now called *Free CeCe*, about CeCe McDonald, who is an African-American transgender woman who spent 19 months of a 41-month prison sentence in a men's prison for defending herself against a racist and transphobic attack that happened on June 5, 2011. We started shooting in the fall of 2013, and CeCe was still in prison then, in St. Cloud, Minnesota. That was the first time I had ever been in a prison, visiting her to interview her. She was released that next January. So she's been out of prison for over a year, and we've been following her — in Minnesota and traveling the country, speaking and trying to survive as a person with a felony conviction."

When can we expect to see *Free CeCe*?

"Probably in the beginning of 2016, that's what we're aiming for. We just started editing; it's very exciting."

How similar are CeCe's and Sophia's stories?

"CeCe's story is only similar to Sophia's because they're both black trans women who were incarcerated, but CeCe was incarcerated in a men's prison. What's really interesting to me is that in women's prisons, women are allowed to have weaves and hair products, but in men's prisons, trans women are not. CeCe talked so eloquently and painfully about how men's prison worked tirelessly to strip her of her womanhood...Her being taken off her hormones, actually, does mirror Sophia's story. There are other things, too."

How did CeCe inspire your portrayal of Sophia in *OITNB*?

"Particularly, the first season, whenever I would go to set, I thought about CeCe, and I thought about other trans women who are incarcerated all over the country. Ideally, as an actor, when you are in a place where you are channeling something, the character takes over, and you are just sort of observing the character. That is, ideally, where I'd like to be. I don't always get there, let's face it, but there were definitely some moments when I felt like I was able to channel and be a vessel for these other women's stories."

The transgender community has made huge strides for equality, but what are the biggest issues today?

"A lot of us are dealing with violence; particularly trans women of color. Violence is really pervasive, and it's something I hear a lot about. It's so disproportionate. In the first eight weeks of 2015, seven transgender women were murdered. Almost one a week. They were all trans women of color, and it's not getting the media attention I think it *should* be getting. Our lives are endangered simply for being who we are."

Then, being employed as a transgender person is very difficult. Getting access to healthcare, getting your name changed so you can have documentation to reflect who you are. Particularly, trans people who aren't in big cities where the services are done for free. I spoke at the national AIDS conference last year, and all of the research on HIV on trans folks is insufficient because we're not generally counted at all. The CDC still counts trans women as men who have sex with men, so when you do that, you're totally mis-gendering and mis-recognizing who transgender people are, and you're not getting the real research about how HIV is being transmitted. Apparently, we're a very high-risk group for HIV, and our partners are not gay-identified men, they're straight-identified men. Because of the system's inability to acknowledge our existence fully, there are whole pieces of data in terms of research that are missing.

Let alone resources: Homelessness is pervasive. The *T Word* is a documentary special I did for MTV that won a daytime Emmy. We looked at police profiling of transgender women in New Orleans. We look at homelessness of trans folks through particular characters on the show. So these are major, major issues. And the criminalizing of trans folks leads to us being disproportionately incarcerated."



Homoscopes

Cancer

Aries



It's getting cold outside! Aries, we all know how adorable you will look in your puffy winter coat and earmuffs and all of it. Try to think of this outside layer as a form of protection that also feels warm, cozy, and soft. This sexy winter attire look could be just the concept you need to face the challenges that the planets are hurling your way like a stream of icy snowballs arching directly toward your head. Take comfort in knowing that the protection you require is not just a hypothetical fashion concept but an emotional resource you already have right at your disposal.

Taurus

Everyone loves a Taurus when it starts getting cold outside. A Taurus like you provides all that you let close with that warm embrace, those heartmelting smiles, those sturdy "sitting on a bearskin rug by a fireplace kissing a hot babe" sort of feelings. Are you feeling appreciated by all of your admirers? Are the queens around you giving back some of the warmth and comfort you so effortlessly dispense to all of us? If not, you may consider shifting your presence to those who know how lucky they have it to be near someone so darling.



Gemini

Gemini you are finally calming down a little. The movement of Saturn and Pluto have asked you to pause, take stock of things, and to let all your feelings- the elation of falling in love; the pain of betrayal; just wash over you like watercolour paintbrushes or a chocolate cake batter as it drips into a well-buttered baking tin. I know that this moment of pausing for a breath are not generally your style, but this whole "moment's reflection" is working well at powering up your future fabulousness.



Leo

Leo you are doing everything right. You are like a sweet lighting storm that we all get to watch while staying dry on the porch. You are magnetic, brilliant, and confrontational, and you sound good. You are coming on strong but your directness comes to us right now as such a relief. We love that you state what you are thinking. We get hot because you approach without second guessing your intentions. You have been loyal to all of us for so long, it is your time to be clear on what you deserve and make all of us get ready to listen.



Virgo

You, like Venus, have been sending out subtle hints, flirtatious glimpses, and tiny stares that create a lasting buzz for hours like a hot kiss or a punch to the stomach. Your messages of desire and impending romance have not been lost on the steady stream of babes who are waiting ever so patiently for you to come on out and become available. We have chased you, we have pined alone, we have altered our routes just to get to walk past where you might be sitting. A little more attention to us and from you might be the gayest possibility for all.



Libra

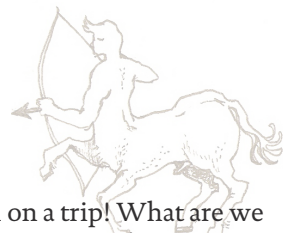


Caught again in a whirlwind of potential outcomes, you might currently be missing some of the best options around you. But Jupiter is coming your way, bringing immense luck, power, and opportunity. Now is the time to start that project or get that momentum that might have been off your radar entirely, when what was possible all seemed a little more dreary. You are a sweetheart and you will deserve that's galloping down the horizon. Remember that it will all be yours with ponies, and sprinkles, and a cherry on top. Yum.



Scorpio

Scorpio, as the sun moves through your sign, it brings with it a little ocean beach scene filled with sand covered babes, flip flops and other unsubstantial shoes, ice creamsicles, sandy thighs, tiny seahorses, and a perfect seashell just for you. The shell will tell you all kinds of dirty secrets but the best one (always true) is that you are unstoppable.



Sagittarius

Your wild ways are taking us all on a trip! What are we packing? I'll tell you what Sagittarius, you have everyone around you waiting eagerly for what you have to offer, so let us all aboard for the ride and our time together will be super special. As Mars conjuncts Pluto in your chart, we are all ready and eager for the challenges and change you are all fired up to offer. More, please.

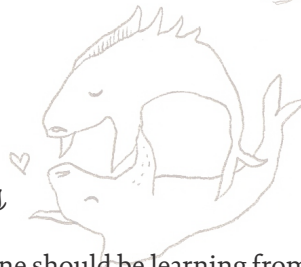


Capricorn

Happy birthday, baby. I hope you are feeling appreciated and that everyone around makes you feel like you are a piping hot soup, a table full of hot fudge sundaes, and pure gold hoop jewelry on the cutest little ears. Because I'll tell you this: everyone who gets to see your radiant face light up feels as special and as delightful as you are. You are driven, you are solid, and although responsible, you are even so much fun. Capricorn homo, you are magic.

Aquarius

Everyone wishes they could understand you, Aquarius. What makes you raise your eyebrows? What do you find delicious? Everyone near you is taking notes and observing and trying to figure out the secret formula to make you impressed. You are glitter and marshmallows and giant willowy trees. No one can quite figure out how to please you but we will keep on flagging on the right for you and doing our best.



Pisces

Everyone should be learning from you this winter, Pisces. You are feeling all the things we all need to access. Your love is tender. Your heart is open. Your watery ways are beautiful, accessible, and sweet. Thanks for pointing everyone around you in the direction of wet hankies and salty faces. The vulnerability it brings will also bring you homo devotion and little gems of support, because you always deserve it.

Call For Submissions!

Looking for advice, stories, poetry and art by HIV/AIDS positive inmates for a zine! Anonymity and/or pseudonyms welcomed – zine would be by and for poz inmates and become a resource of the Prisoner Correspondence Project as well as a tool to raise awareness on the outside about conditions for seropositive inmates.

Paid Art Contract

Looking for HIV positive artist to design a cover for a resource guide for HIV positive survivors of sexual assault (survivors encouraged to apply but disclosure is not necessary). Honorarium of 40\$ (CAD) – Please send sample of work.

Attn: Olivia
Prisoner Correspondence Project
c/o QPIRG Concordia
1455 de Maisonneuve W.
Montreal, Qc H3G 1M8 Canada

International Day of Solidarity with Trans Prisoners

Communities all over the world will be gathering together on January 22nd to show solidarity with queer and trans people behind bars. With events taking place in cities from Texas to Montreal and beyond, this day represents a chance for queer and trans people, inside and outside of prison, to stand in solidarity and fight for a better and more just world. This grassroots project was initiated by Marius Mason, a trans prisoner in Texas, US.

The collective spearheading this event is also seeking submissions for a small zine featuring writing and artwork from trans prisoners and former prisoners from around the world. This zine will be distributed to those inside as well as at the events happening on Jan. 22nd. They are also producing a postcard series featuring artwork by trans prisoners.

If you want to send them a piece of writing or artwork, please mail them directly at:

Sacramento Prisoner Support
PO Box 163126
Sacramento, CA 95816

We will be thinking of all of you on January 22nd. The Prisoner Correspondence Project is planning to host a film screening or other event as we join others in standing in solidarity with our queer and trans PCP family. The International Day of Solidarity with Trans Prisoners may only be one day, but we will continue to stand with our queer and trans communities in prison all year round.

“this is a fight against a society that is killing us, one way or the other. Live your life with pride, joy and freedom, and extend those feelings to others; don’t let the walls of prison or society act as a limit.”

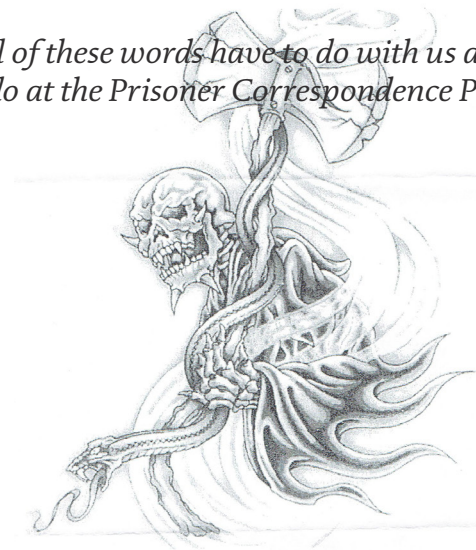
- Marius Mason
& the Sacramento Prison Support Collective

The Word is Out Word Search

Try to find all 18 words hidden below!

Q	P	L	E	T	T	E	R	B	G	E	G	P	L	O
E	P	E	W	Z	Q	W	I	Z	C	K	O	W	X	F
P	N	J	N	U	L	S	O	N	M	G	G	N	J	P
Y	N	I	E	P	E	R	E	S	O	U	R	C	E	S
C	T	E	Z	X	A	I	C	T	P	O	R	U	L	E
O	R	I	U	Z	L	L	R	E	C	I	T	S	U	J
M	V	A	R	I	V	X	E	G	G	N	R	W	N	Y
M	L	N	S	A	O	P	T	K	N	A	X	I	Q	A
U	D	E	Y	H	D	S	T	Y	X	I	O	T	T	G
N	R	Q	T	Q	D	I	E	Y	E	B	S	F	H	X
I	P	E	V	N	K	T	L	A	O	S	T	U	M	S
T	D	I	E	Z	P	R	S	O	M	E	K	R	O	Y
Y	N	I	F	U	L	A	W	Q	S	L	E	C	W	H
J	R	I	C	Z	D	N	E	T	R	X	M	Q	O	S
F	A	O	M	D	F	S	N	T	Z	W	Y	Z	B	Q

hint: all of these words have to do with us and what we do at the Prisoner Correspondence Project



BISEXUAL • COMMUNITY • FRIENDS • GAY • HOUSING
JUSTICE • LESBIAN • LETTER • NEWLETTER • PENPAL
QUEER • RESILIENCE • RESOURCES • SMUT
SOLIDARITY • TRANS • TWSPIRIT • ZINE

RESOURCE LIBRARY OF THE PRISONER CORRESPONDENCE PROJECT

This is a list of resources available through our Resource Library as of Winter-Spring 2016. All resources are provided free-of-charge to prisoners and are yours to keep. Stamp donations are always appreciated, but never required. We are always updating this library, so please send us any suggestions of things you would like to see added or any resources that you have access to and would like to share with others.

Please note that we are only able to send five or six at a time. If you request more than that, they will be sent in batches over several weeks, so please indicate which are the highest priority and we will attempt to send them in that order. Lately we've been having particular difficulty with returned packages from Florida due to the limit on pages. All resources that are underlined are over the limit and will need to be sent in several packages, so please take that into consideration when ordering.

The full resource library is being put up on our website, so if you have a penpal through the project or other outside support, consider asking them to go to www.prisonercorrespondenceproject.com to print it and send. It will get to you faster and help us be a little less behind.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Support (sexual abuse & survivorship)

In a time when sexual assault and abuse are an increasing problem; even in so-called radical and punk communities, and when most women have been sexually abused in one way or another, Cindy Crabb (Doris Zine) brings us a document showing ways to prevent sexual violence and support survivors of sexual abuse.

Taking Care of Your Body and Mind

A pamphlet on safer slashing / safer cutting in prison put out by PASAN

Survival in Solitary

A collection of writing, poetry, and information about coping with solitary confinement and life sentences

Trying to understand self-injury

A short zine written by Black Ice Press, about disassociation, and the reasons why folks might choose to use self-injury to cope

Freeing the Human Spirit Through Meditation and Yoga

a one-page illustrated guide to some basic yoga poses and meditation that can be done in prison

Prisoner Rape Support Package

put together by the Preventing Prisoner Rape Project in Australia

Hope for Healing - information for survivors of sexual assault in prison

a kit out together by US group Just Detention International

Hurting Yourself

a workbook that aims at encouraging reflection awareness of various different aspects of self-injury. Written by the Icarus Project.

Staying Out of the Hospital: A Guide to Surviving Psychosis

a pamphlet which provides support and guidance for people who are going through mental health crises from a non-judgemental and holistic perspective. Written by the Icarus Project.

Anxiety: a self-help guide for people in prison

this guide aims to help you recognize if you may be suffering from symptoms of anxiety, understand what anxiety is, what can cause it and keep it going, and how to overcome your anxiety

Depression and Low Mood: a self-help guide for people in prison

this guide aims to help you cope with depression and offer practical suggestions to help you cope.

Post Traumatic Stress: a self-help guide for people in prison

this guide aims to help you understand reactions to post-traumatic stress and offers practical suggestions to help you cope.

SAFER SEX

Beyond Appearances

For prisoners, sex workers and other "high risk" communities, on HIV AIDS issues, including prevention.

Queersafe

A zine (not specific to prisons) about safer sex for queer men and women, different sexually transmitted diseases, and taking care of specific body parts put out by Head and Hands in Montreal

Turnover:

A collection of HIV prevention comics

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.

Safer barebacking

(not prison specific) - An article about how to reduce the risk of transmitting HIV/AIDS and other STD's/STI's when fucking without condoms

VIH y el joint

(Spanish only) - A basic resource sheet put together by PASAN about reducing the chance of transmitting HIV in prison

The Bottom Line

(not prison specific) - A gay man's guide to anal health: how the ass works, what it does, how it relates to other parts of the body, and how to get maximum pleasure from sex with minimal pain or damage

Women Lovin'

Developed, designed and written by women; solid information on sexual health issues for queer women combined with practical tips and risk-reduction strategies. Only sent to women's prisons.

Reading this can save your ass

Safer rimming tips

Use your head when giving it

Safer blow job tips

50 things you should know about hiv & safer sex (abstract)

My Sex Life: Info for young poz people

A sexual health resource designed to help people living with HIV navigate and explore sex, but contains useful info for everyone. No nudity.

Brazen

a safer sex guide by and for trans women (not prison specific)

LIVING WITH HIV/ HEPC

What if I'm HIV positive?

A general, non-prison specific resource about what you should know if you test HIV positive

Living with HIV: starting points

information on HIV and AIDS, how to stay healthy, what does CD4 count and viral load tell you, next steps

Positively healthy

(not prison specific) - a gay man's guide to sex and health in Canada

A practical guide to complement therapies

for people living with HIV

A practical guide to herbal therapies

for people living with HIV

A practical guide to HIV drug side effects

for people living with HIV/AIDS

A practical guide to HIV drug treatment

for people living with HIV

A practical guide to Nutrition

for people living with HIV

HIV and Hep C coinfection

answer some basic questions about living with HIV and hepatitis C

HIV disclosure

a legal guide for gay man in Canada

HIV viral load testing

explains viral load testing and answers questions about how it fits into a treatment plan

Hep C Peer support group manual

(non prison specific) tips and tricks for starting a support group

Hepatitis C Pamphlet

Newly diagnosed, the basic facts, and treatment options

HepC Managing Common Symptoms and Treatment Side Effects

for people living with Hep C

Hepatitis C: Get the Facts

all of the info in plain language and detailed illustrations

Living with HIV and HepC Coinfection

offers key information on living with both viruses, covering useful topics such as HIV and Hepatitis C basics, the effects of co-infection, ways to stay healthy, treatment strategies, and preventing transmission.

HIV and Aging

Advice on staying healthy for those in their 50s, 60s, and 70s

Clinical Trials: what you need to know

some basic information about clinical trials: how they're conducted, how people can join a trial, and what to expect if they decide to participate.

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

put out by AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) is 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:

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. Issues 1-7 available.

Issue 4 is about women's relationships to gay men and AIDS;

Issue 5 is about rural gay identity and AIDS;

Issue 6 is the International issues, and explores shifting global responses among gay and queer men to AIDS.

The De-gaying of AIDS & Reclaiming Culture

(Spanish/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

Not prison specific - The purpose of this article is to discuss the importance of influencing discourse about homosexuality at the social and cultural levels in HIV-prevention efforts targeting young gay men.

Latino Sexual Rebellions

Art and writing by Latino men on family, sexuality, and HIV.

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!) that is a transcript and photos from an event we organized in 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.

Beyond prisons, towards community strategies

the transcription of a panel we held in the fall of 2009 on supporting work within and against prisons

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.

Building abolition futures the transcription of a panel from spring 2010 about how sex offender panic is linked to homophobia and the recent push for sex offender registries

Hell No, We Won't Go: In Conversation with Laura Whitehorn

the transcription of an interview we conducted with former political prisoner Laura Whitehorn, on anti-prison organizing, HIV mobilizing, and being gay in prison.

RESOURCE LISTS

Back issues of The Word is Out!

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. Issues one through fifteen available. Most recent sent unless others requested.

Cellcount:

A general newsletter / list of 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)

Queer and trans zine resource list:

a list of addresses and contact information for self-published 'zines

P.A.R.C. Prisoner Activist Resource Guide.

a collection of organizations and services offered to prisoners (USA) (Previously listed as "Prisoner resource guide")

Prison Book Programs:

National prisoner resource list: expanded version of the prisoner resource list (USA)

Straight/non-queer penpals

list of organizations

Canadian publications for prisoners

Black & Pink LGBTQ Prisoner Resource List

list of organizations who offer resources to people in prison and is focused on Queer/Trans issues and/or prison activism & survival resources in the U.S. Compiled by members of Black & Pink.

TATTOOING

Tattooing and you: the safe-guards within prison walls

A pamphlet on safe tattooing inside prisons, things to consider, and materials to use

Think Before You Ink
prisoners perpetual calendar

LEGAL

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, it's mandate and programs, and ways to contact them for more information (USA)

Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual

a handbook of legal rights and procedures for use by people in prison. 36 chapters informing prisoners of their legal rights and how to secure these rights through the judicial process.(USA)

Pennsylvania Legal Aid

a resource list of legal aid and pro bono organizations in Pennsylvania

Texas Legal Aid

a resource list of legal aid and pro bono organizations in Texas

Florida Legal Aid

a resource list of legal aid and pro bono organizations in Florida

DRUG USE

My crack kit

a short guide (pamphlet size) showing how to safely use crack, and reduce the risk to your body and your lungs.

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 PAS-AN

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

COMING OUT/IDENTITY

African Americans Coming Out

A basic, non-prison specific guide to coming out for gay and lesbian African Americans

FTM International: the chest issue

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

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)

Tim Tum, a trans jew zine

concentrates on the struggle with being a transgender young man, issues of identity, and visibility among both queer and heterosexual groups. Highlights being a boy in Jewish American culture, and the struggle for identity when interfacing with normalizing power that attempts to gender you inappropriately.

Making the lives of transsexual people visible: Addressing the politics of social erasure

An examination of how social institutions and theoretical approaches have led to the erasure of transsexual and transgendered experiences and begins to counter this

Bent bars

from our sister org in the UK, a compilation of stories or coming out in prison

Getting Together

the ins and outs of dating & relationships for gay and bisexual men.

Bisexuality 101

a great collection of articles compiled by PFLAG on history, and on bisexuality and biphobia along with some answers to frequently asked questions.

How to be an ally to a Bisexual Person

Bisexual Resource Centre - A brochure of tips and conversation starters for bisexual people for talking about bisexuality with straight and gay people alike.

I Think I Might Be Bisexual, Fluid, Pansexual, or Queer-Identified (so Now What?)

BiNet USA - An article about bisexual, fluid, pansexual, and queer experience, with quotes from bisexual people, safer sex tips, and thoughts on confronting bophobia.

My Gender Booklet

a short booklet introducing terms, concepts, and history around gender and transsexuality.

Preguntas frecuentes sobre las identidades LGBT

información sobre las identidades gay y transgénero en español.

We Are Part of a Tradition

Information on 2 Spirit identity, history and interaction with Native American communities

LGBTQ PRISONER WRITING

Building Bridges

A short article written by Lin Elliot 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 Lydon about his experience being in prison as queer, and about negotiating outness.

A view from Treblinka Dungeon, Pelican Bay

An article written by Lofofora Contreras 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

Thoughts of my liberation: Issues 4 and 5

A zine put together by two-spirit Native American prisoner Iron Tipi Warrior about his experience of prison

GLBT? Going to a Federal Prison

A booklet put together by Catherine Lynn Quick.a longtime member of the project, on what to expect for LGBT people when first going to a federal prison.

Enter the Cat House

Two short zines put together by Catherine Lynn Quick.a longtime member of the project. Words of wisdom from Mother Cat.

Transitions

a zine by Fatima Shayla Pearl featuring some spoken word, erotica, book reviews, and truth.

Men Against Sexism

the story of a group of prisoners in Washington state who successfully organized to fight homophobia and violence in their prison.

The Power and Politics of Pride - a zine containing several articles about queer politics from an unapologetically in-your-face perspective, including criticisms of gay marriage.

Some Thoughts on Being a Trans Woman in Prison.

a new zine by Catherine Lynn Quick

HORMONES/TRANS

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

Gender Anarky: a translesbigay 2 spirit zine

A short zine put together by US transsexual prisoner about trans issues and hormone access in US and California prisons

TranzLezbos

A short zine, including poetry, for transsexual lesbians, put together by trans lesbian prisoner Amazon, who is on the inside in California.

Hepatitis C and hormone therapy

A pamphlet about how you can transmit hepatitis C while injecting hormones (not specific to prisons)

FAQ About Transitioning

This guide is meant to help people who are trans or questioning their gender to navigate their options for further steps to take. Includes info on trans identity, medical transition options (surgery & hormones) and dating

Tracing this body & new flesh struggles

An article about kink and radical politics written by a trans woman

Trans health information project: TIP Guide to hormones and self-injection

Still We Rise: a Resource Packet for Transgender People in Prison

(from the TGI Justice Project) - a comprehensive guide on access to medical care, information, and referrals.

Fucking Transwomen

a zine about sex by Mira Bellweather by and for transwomen on everything from anatomy to communication to touch to orgasms.

Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries, Survival, Revolt, and Queer Antagonist Struggle

a collection of writings by Sylvia Rivera

SMUT

Meatus: A pornzine for queers outside the box

A collection of erotic writing about gay men (words only)

Reversed Seduction

short erotic fiction by longtime contributor promethea. A younger female inmate develops a plan to seduce her beautiful friend with a titillating surprise ending (words only)

Read me a story

new pieces by Promethea (words only)

Fagpunk

a collection of sexual experiences of a gay boy that digs boots, bondage and mohawks (words and non-explicit pictures). Issues 9, 10, 11

Straight to Hell

one of the longest running (man-on-man) smut zines out there. (words and explicit pictures with the genitals blacked out)

The Visible Woman

by Rachel K Zall - two transwomen find comfort & pleasure in each other's company (just words)

Payback's a Bitch

by S. Bear Bergman - short smut story about giving control (& taking it back) (just words)

Heavenly Bodies

by Andrea Miller - a series of short pieces in which a lesbian fucks her way through all 12 zodiac signs (just words)

A Taste of Sin

Fiona Zedde - Two black butches are picked up by an eager-to-please femme (just words)

Big Gifts in Small Boxes

by Patrick Califia - a trans man visiting home for Christmas finds a way to keep things interesting

Hot Pink

a compilation smut zine put together by Black and Pink (words and non-explicit pictures)

Wanted Issue #1

a compilation of erotic writing by prisoners put together by the Tranzmission Prison Project (words and non-explicit pictures)

Wanted Issue #2

a compilation of erotic writing by prisoners put together by the Tranzmission Prison Project (words and non-explicit pictures)

Wanted Issue #3

a compilation of erotic writing by prisoners put together by the Tranzmission Prison Project (words and non-explicit pictures)

WOMEN/FEMINISM

Pocket guide for women living with HIV

(not prison specific) - A pocket guide for HIV-positive women. Topics include healthy living, nutrition, getting care, treatment basics, relationships and pregnancy. It also addresses street drugs and touches on hepatitis C co-infection. (by Positive Women's Network)

Never Innocent: Feminist trouble with sex offender registries and protection in a prison nation

(by Erica R. Meiners) Using recent work by anti-prison theorists and community-based activists, this article links prison abolition to feminist frameworks to question escalating sex offender registries and community notification laws that are the state's response to sexual violence against children and women.

Tenacious:

art and writings from women in prison

Women Prisoners' Resource Guide

a list of addresses and contact information for incarcerated women

One women's struggle

By Kebby Warner, a short zine about one women's struggle with the DOC, medical neglect, and about being a mother

Women in Prison: How It Is With Us

Author, Assata Shakur was a member of the Black Panther Party who went underground. She was captured in 1973 and held as a political prisoner until 1979, when she was broken out of prison by a unit of the Black Liberation Army.

SEX WORK

Audacious: the reality of being a transsexual or transvestite sex worker

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

SPIRITUALITY

The Holy Male

a queerzine encouraging the exploration of the spiritual, sexual and artistic lives of queer men past and present. Issues 1,2,3 available, most recent will be sent unless specified.

The Bent Pentacle

A zine for queer pagans of all genders, sexualities and paths. Issue 1.

HISTORY

Lavender & Red

a 120 part series on the history of socialism and LGBT organizing by Leslie Feinberg. Request a listing of which parts we have on hand.

NEW THIS ISSUE

Anxiety: a self-help guide for people in prison

this guide aims to help you recognize if you may be suffering from symptoms of anxiety, understand what anxiety is, what can cause it and keep it going, and how to overcome your anxiety

Depression and Low Mood: a self-help guide for people in prison

this guide aims to help you cope with depression and offer practical suggestions to help you cope.

Post Traumatic Stress: a self-help guide for people in prison

this guide aims to help you understand reactions to post-traumatic stress and offers practical suggestions to help you cope.

**Prisoner Correspondence Project
c/o QPIRG Concordia
1455 de Maisonneuve Ouest
Montreal QC H3G 1M8
CANADA**

Why 1960s Gay Rebellions Had to Erupt 'from Below'

Leslie Feinberg (*Lavender & Red* #60)

The 1960s rebellions that erupted in response to police raids on gay/trans bars, culminating in the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion in Greenwich Village in Manhattan, were not led or supported by the national gay and lesbian organizations. The politics of these primarily white, middle-class organizations—Mattachine and Daughters of Bilitis—had kept them from uniting with the most oppressed.

Leaders from both Mattachine and DOB, in their appeal to the establishment for rights, had stressed the need to adhere to manners of dress and gender behavior. The dress code enforced by both organizations excluded gender-variant lesbians and gay men, drawing to their ranks instead those who could “fit in.”

Those whose gender expression could not conform were drawn to the social strength of community found in the gay/lesbian bars. As a result, the bars were often difficult to categorize as gay/lesbian as distinct from drag (transgender, in today’s language) bars, since those who were gender-variant as well as same-sex-loving forged social alliances there. In an era of overall racist segregation, the bars were often integrated—Black, Latin@, Native and white—in some cities, as well.

The leaderships of both Mattachine and DOB blamed the dress and behavior and social visibility of cross-dressing butch lesbians and drag queens in the working-class bar crowd for drawing violent police raids.

The same political approach that kept Mattachine and DOB from defending the most oppressed ended up dividing them from each other as well. Some of the Mattachine men blamed the lesbians for being “splitters” by forming their own organization. This argument ignored the additional burden that lesbians face as women. It also let the men off their own hook for struggling against sexism.

On the other hand, rather than uniting with the men to confront police brutality head on, some of the DOB leadership blamed the gay men in Mattachine for getting arrested while having sex outside their homes.

Ken Burns, who rose to president of Mattachine on a wave of anti-communism, argued that “we must blame ourselves for much of our plight. When will the homosexual ever realize that social reform, to be effective, must be preceded by personal reform?”

Editorials in the Ladder—the widely circulated DOB newsletter—denounced lesbians who wore pants and short haircuts, advising them to do “a little ‘policing’ on their own.”

Class struggle

Lesbian library worker Barbara Gittings, who

founded the first East Coast DOB chapter in Manhattan in 1958 and who edited the Ladder for three years, talked to historian Jonathan Katz in a 1974 interview about the DOB drive to “fit in.” Gittings represented a left current in DOB and she later headed the Task Force on Gay Liberation of the American Library Association.

Gittings recalled, “Appearance and behavior were very important. We needed the acceptance of society, we thought, so we geared ourselves to getting it. There was an incident at an early Daughters of Bilitis national convention (in Los Angeles, I think), where a woman who had been living pretty much as a transvestite most of her life was persuaded, for the purposes of attending that convention, to don female garb, to deck herself out in as ‘feminine’ a manner as she could, given that female clothes were totally alien to her.

“Everybody rejoiced over this as though some great victory had been accomplished—the ‘feminizing’ of this woman. Today we would be horrified at anyone who thought this kind of evangelism had a legitimate purpose. Yet at the time, I remember, I joined in the rejoicing. At the same time there was some kind of mental reservation in me; I felt there was something grotesque about this women’s trying to look ‘normal’ for the purposes of appearances at this convention.”

Both Mattachine and DOB argued that the dress code created safe space for gay men and lesbians since cross-dressing was against the law. Of course, so was same-sex love. Trying to distance themselves from gender-variance did not protect the organization from the state. Lillian Faderman noted in her book “Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers” that police informants had infiltrated DOB during the Cold War and were channeling the names of the group’s membership to the FBI and CIA.

In reality, the demand to adhere to gender conformity was just one expression of a class struggle within what was to become the modern lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) movement. The dress code itself revealed the distance between the needs and demands of the working class and most oppressed sectors of the LGBT population and those of the middle class. Historian John D’Emilio noted, “DOB took special pains to dissociate most lesbians from patrons of the bars. Gay women ‘aren’t bar hoppers,’ one officer declared, ‘but people with steady jobs, most of them good positions.’”

In addition, this call to “fit in” laid bare that the leadership of DOB and Mattachine looked to the rulers of society to lead them to their well-deserved rights, not to the ruled.

However, letters to the editor of the Ladder revealed that not everyone agreed with the political approach of scapegoating those who fell outside the organization’s dress code.

For example, African-American playwright Lorraine Hansberry—author of “Raisin in the Sun”—wrote several letters to the Ladder. She called for an end to the “lecturing . . . about how to appear acceptable to the dominant social group. . . . One is oppressed or discriminated against because one is different, not ‘wrong’ or ‘bad.’”

More Safety In Numbers

CHRIS RILEY

Hello, and warmest regards to all at the Prisoner Correspondence Project, and also to all who may be reading my humble responses.

Please allow me to respond to a few of the articles in issue 14, summer '15 "The Safety in Numbers" issue.

My name is CHRIS RILEY R26419 Taylorville Corr. CTR. Taylorsville, Illinois. 62568. I have lived my entire life almost as a repressed and shelled gay/bi man to my own, and most deserved detriment. It took being accused of crimes that not only could I never commit, but of crimes that never even took place, to shock me out of my denial. Reading Ms. Jazzie's piece on "Injustice" hit me close to home. You see, I am living, breathing proof that there are in fact innocent men and women in America's prisons.

I didn't bargain or plea out. I took it all the way through trial because I was convinced that there was no way in hell I could be convicted of something I didn't do. It made no difference to anyone in the courts that not one shred of evidence of any kind existed, except the malicious and vindictive false accusations of a teenage hoochie in need of payback and attention. In today's witch hunt society, when it comes to sex crimes, you are guilty the very moment you are charged. I don't wish to make this response about me. I've recently finished my manuscript that'll put everything in its proper perspective. "But, I feel you Ms. Jazzie," and every other wrongfully imprisoned person who is suffering and languishing unjustly behind bars, just so the prosecutor can have another feather in his or her hat. They couldn't care less how many lives they destroy in their "convict at all costs" endeavors. YES, there needs to be more of an outcry at these injustices, because it's only empowering them to do it even more. My first few months in, I barely survived a brutal rape by two thug gangsters in the shower, while a third stood look out. My brief story can be viewed on the J-D-I website at their survivors stories/CHRIS. My full story, along with my coming out will be published, hopefully soon.

"We as gay individuals should be doing everything in our power to cherish and protect the hearts of each other. If not us, then who?"

In thinking of safety and visibility in prison, I can say that I've seen so much throughout the tumultuous years I've spent in prison unjustly. Most of what I've seen could have been avoided, if not for some novice behavior by some of our young and obviously hormonally charged youth that believe whoever smiles at you wants what's best for you. I'm all for letting those who refuse to listen make their own mistakes and hopefully learn from them. You can lead a dummy to knowledge, but you can't make them learn.

In reference to Jiordi Russel's article and the words of Mr. Pelletier, Mr. Riley, and Mr. Wilson, I do relate and completely understand their views. However, our community in prison is rife with "Joeys." And I fully

understand their desire to remain outside of the drama and bullying. As far as being able to be transferred to a more gay friendly facility, that really doesn't exist in my state. But, being sent to a minimum security is more conducive to one's safety; PC being the only other alternative. Ignorance is as rampant in here as the repression of one's true nature. As for our "Joeys" in the world, their need for self-preservation can be a powerful negotiator when it comes to being "out" in prison. Every dynamic is different. What is so wrong, I ask, in wanting to remain "undercover" and keep one's nose clean and the the f--- out of here? In my humble opinion he's not showing weakness, he is displaying intelligence at remaining outside of the drama. What is so wrong with that? I'm sure our "Joeys" are still there in spirit with us, and they shouldn't be ostracized for needing to feel safe and under the radar of the malevolence that is prison life. If he chooses to keep himself on "lock" it's his decision and we should respect it. I, for one, would never think anything less of him for doing so. Every one of us has it in them to know when their time is right to unconditionally capitulate to their undeniable nature. I am not trying to take out of context what you guys have said regarding the "Joeys" in amongst us. But there is, and has been, an unspoken prejudice in some corners of our community, and a certain preconception at the notion that some aren't "one of us" or shouldn't be considered as "full-fledged members" due in part that either they aren't gay enough, or too closeted to be included as full members. It saddens me because I have felt this most of my life. From the very moment we feel our same-sex attractions, we are "all" a part of this same oppressed group whose very existence is threatened daily. We in the gay community should be the first to abolish these passé and antiquated beliefs. We are all what God intended, NO LESS! I can relate to what "Rogue" said, that those of us that are not femme boys can walk in plain sight. If any of you were to see me on the street, you'd never, ever believe me to be anything other than totally straight. It's natural to me as it is to so many of us, and we shouldn't be made to feel ashamed or to be looked at any differently because we don't look the part, or some of us may deny who and what they are out of fear. What is that all about? Do I need to be seen fucking some male ass while sucking a dick to be believed? Because I'll gladly get down. So if "Joey" is to be taken to "task" because of what some may perceive to be inmate cowardice, then I'll stand with "Joey," because I am convinced that whether or not he or she is capable of standing up for him or herself, I have no doubt that he or she stands with all of us in our community. If he feels he needs to make excuses to "hide out," so what. Let him. He's a lover not a fighter. It's our sacred obligation to one another to protect and defend the Joeys and the Josephines in our community I agree with "Rogue," that there truly is a huge misconception that all any gay boy desires is dick, and it's usually by the ones we'd never give a second glance to that always seem to be the ones who feel they're being hawked the most by us. That's one of the biggest threats to us in here, because so many are gullible enough to buy into that B.S.

"Most people have no idea just how hard it can be to "come out" and embrace the very person you've been hiding from your whole life."

"This self-concealment is counterproductive in that, we have to alter our innate course through life just to be able to fit in, where we're not even welcome."

It is very true that none of us comes to prison with the thought of wanting to be a victim. No truer a statement can be made than was the one by "Rogue" on how we can and will be perceived by other prisoners. how we are perceived dictates how we will be treated and respected by the hierarchy in here.

Hearing "Rogue" admit that he has fear, but doesn't allow it to identify who he is as a gay/bi male, speaks volumes to the man behind the mystique, and gives credence to his words. Hearing one of my brothers admit to their struggles to maintain a sense of self for not just themselves but for those that do not yet have a voice is prophetic at best. BRAVO!! Now this is truly what propels our community forward.

"Fear is such a hard emotion to overcome, and maybe we as the mere mortals we are shouldn't try to expect that we ever can conquer fear. Maybe asll we can ever hope to do is just reason with it."

"No one should ever have to feel ashamed by their inborn and ingrained selves. Our rare and unmatched sexuality is not only unavoidable and involuntary, it is a prerequisite to building the kinds of thriving and prosperous relationships we all as human beings have an innate right to."

In closing, I would like to, if I may, speak to the unspeakable atrocities that have befallen so many of us while incarcerated. And also, my controversial thoughts on what I feel strongly, may be a contributing factor of such assaults. I can say with relative certainty that what I endured, and that what the countless men who've also been forced to endure by way of sexual assault, I believe is due in part to a man's or even a boy's hopeless inability to un-repress themselves, and not feel they have to hide from their true nature. When these emotions and desires that we inherently feel for one another are forced to be hidden by our need to fit in where we are not wanted, they lead to other evils. So much pressure is put on us as gay individuals, and these pressures are further propagated by society's flawed beliefs that have been ingrained in our minds that it is wrong to have love for one another. When a gay teen or a gay man is taught to fear, hide, and otherwise ignore who and what he is, he becomes a symbol of society's failures and fears of what they continually try to shun. As a result, guys such as my attackers become the very evil in which each of us shrouds the very thing we fear most. And that is, to just be ourselves. It's what people know about themselves that makes them afraid. how many out there have been forced to live in their caves of shame like common troglodytes, just for needing tactile contact that only their same sex attractions can provide? I believe my attacker's fears and weaknesses of accepting who they are drove them, somewhat helplessly, to do what they did. and so, just like when I was an eight year-old runaway in Chicago, I was once again forced to taste the horrible evil that is rape. Many in our society would say that it's my own fault for being a sodomite. Do they honestly believe that I'm ashamed any longer for sodomizing other guys or vice versa? To that I can only say, "try having it forced up your ass at age eight and let's see how you deal with that

mentally and emotionally." I'm not giving my attackers or the seventeen year-old who raped me when I was eight an excuse, because what they did was inexcusable. What I'm saying is, i understand how they may have come to feel they had no other means of expressing their true natures, due mainly to their fear of just being themselves. Society needs to recognize they've played a huge role in driving this lack of empathy. Does this make any sense to anyone?

In solidarity with you all.

Trans

Ebony Delaney

Translucent and transparent-opened for all to see.
Exposed to the world, hiding nothing that defines me.
A kaleidoscope of life's colors, a prism of life's glow.
A spectrum of the imagination, a dazzling and beautiful rainbow.

Transferred-the guilt with which you desire to define,
My spark, which love ignites; My spirit that's so divine.
A bellwether of inspiration, a trendsetter by design,
A renewer of hope, an enlightener of the mind.

Transforming-the minds of this transphobic world.
Graceful and dignified, a triumphant message to be herald.
Behold the beauty of a metamorphic change open for all to see,
Uncaged, unchained, uninhibited, unbound by acceptance of me.

Transporting-the hearts, eliminating the stereotypes.
A warrior for the inclusion, refusing to yield the fight.
Lifting the veils for discrimination, obliterating the disgraceful stains.
No longer tied to the shadows, but proud to be called Transgender by name.



The Housing Issue

This issue, we are taking up Shane's call to all come together and share our knowledge on housing. Where we are and who we're with can have such an effect on how bearable it all is.

1. **Some of us just land there, but, if not, how did you find out which were the prisons with the larger LGBTQ populations? Who told you, and how did they know?**
2. **Are they always the better place to be?**
3. **What are the tips and tricks to having your transfer approved?**
4. **What do you take into consideration when deciding if you should enter protective custody/administrative segregation?**
5. **What are steps we can take to make this knowledge more widely accessible? Or should we be trying to make change where we're at?**
6. **How were/are you able to find gay-friendly post-release housing? Is it something you worry about?**

Jiordi Russell

Hello again, everybody. It's Jiordi. I hope you're all well. I responded to the winter 2014-15 newsletter from our friends at the Prisoner Correspondence Project for the Queer Safety and Visibility installment of LGBTQ SAFETY, and was apparently well received since, when I turned again to the column in the summer 2015 issue, there I was. My cheeks are *still* aching from all the smiling.

So six bullet points for HOMO IS WHERE THE HEART IS; hmm...

"1. Some of us just land there, but if not, how did you find out which were the prisons with the larger LGBTQ populations? Who told you and how did they know?"

When I put this question to the guys I'm corresponding with from out here, they agreed they just land where they land, and only afterward find out the extent of the LGBTQ community in a particular facility, but they also indicated this "intel" as it were only reveals itself after placement. A substantial amount of stress is also connected to being forced to navigate the always-hostile "straight?" population in prison. Unfortunately, it's a trial-and-error proposition. In a prison environment, errors can be dangerous.

"2. Are they always the better place to be?"

Shane Knight was correct: "I think they [homophobes] are cowards... because I am physically imposing..."; *power achieved*. Start training; be visible...; *power perceived*; because you just don't know. I've been told, also, facilities with larger LGBTQ populations are not always better due to attitudes and competition

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creating drama, hurt feelings, etc. How well *would you* get along at an all- or mostly- queer facility where everyone competes for himself? If you're too busy competing for yourself, how can you compete for each other?

"3. What are the tips and tricks to having your transfer request approved?"

In the U.S., after the passage of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) by the U.S. congress, it is now possible for the LGBTQ, intersex, gender non-conforming, and others, to evaluate a facility relative to their personal safety. Observe your facility as a whole. During your observations, take concise notes; and also contact your district PREA investigator and ask them to send you information on facility compliance for your facility. Then, interview any LGBTQ peers you may have; ask them for their observations. Finally, compare your findings with the legislation itself to determine whether, and how much of a chance, you have to get a transfer request approved. This will be time consuming but you'll only have to do it once, because by process of elimination you'll become familiar with all of the facilities in your particular system and be able to do this again and again.

"4. What do you take into consideration when deciding if you should enter protective custody/administrative segregation?"

A lot of collective foot-shuffling and/or hem-hawing... generally though, responses were fairly consistent on this one: DON'T (unless you have to). I took this to mean, unless the danger to your health or welfare is substantial and imminent, avoid P.C./ad-seg like the plague. In a word I think the best description

is anathema because inmates tend always to think the worst, e.g., snitch, sex offender, gay, owe debts, especially gambling debts. But beside this, and in my opinion more important, the classification is highly restrictive of your liberty and isolating. In addition, in most cases education, programming, and socialization are non-existent.

“5. What are steps we can take to make this knowledge more widely accessible? Or should we be trying to make change where we’re at?”

Both, or, depending upon the relative politics of your facility, either. Again, as I said earlier, it’s a crapshoot. What works at one facility may not work at another, and a mistake can really ruin your day. That said, honesty and up-to-date intel from prisoners is key to getting truthful information. *This is serious*. There can be no “that bitch stole my man!” or anything else attached as a condition on who benefits from this information. The GLBTQ community, together, is a force to be reckoned with. Separately, we’re just a bunch of noncohesive individuals, lacking direction, not deserving of any serious consideration; easy to pick off one by one. It’s all or none.

As this information comes available it should be collated, compiled, and published in ‘zines on the Internet, and links should be provided for family and friends on the outside who are Internet-connected, and who may also use Internet-connected computers provided by public libraries, Internet cafes, etc.

“6. How were/are you able to find gay-friendly post-release housing? Is it something you worry about?”

After PREA, no post-release or transitional housing, designated as such or licensed by a state for the maintenance of former state prisoners transitioning from state custody back into society, may deny to individuals equal treatment commensurate with that enjoyed by similarly-situated individuals due to sexual identification or orientation. This becomes a slippery slope for sex offenders however, because, while any may identify as “gay,” “lesbian,” “bisexual,” etc. based on the relative gender of victims, state officials purposely limit post-release and transitional housing, one of the undeclared “parole restrictions” in addition to those declared against sex offenders’ liberty. A way to bash queers on the down-low as I see it since, if you come out in prison, parole counts a point against you and/or if caught for having a relationship in custody.

I propose our community inside and outside prison come together, pooling our knowledge and resources the same as we’ve always had to do when our backs were against the wall (a Stone wall, as it were), and *make a way* for ourselves. Because it is important and something we should all worry about if we’re serious about community. We’ve been here before. Just housing alone can provide liberty, and not only from the pic.

Hell yes, making changes where you are, ideally, is what you should be doing, not neglecting problems, allowing them persist, when it’s within your power to solve them.

Maybe for the next installment of LGBTQ SAFETY our friends at the PCP can be intrigued to a bulletpoint discussion on achieving power, what forms power may take, how you manage power, when to use power, and more importantly when not to.

All my love to you, and all my love to all of you,
Jiordi,

Standing in the gap...

Divine

Being from “Philly” (Philadelphia) and having been immersed in a very active LGBTQI community that is both out and aggressive, I’m used to being always able to readily find goods, services, and support. (Shout-out Washington Project). However, that is in the “free” world. Unfortunately such is not the case in the PA-DOC (especially the further you are removed from the geographical Philly area).

Now I am incarcerated in the Southern Baptist Bible Belt (NC-DOC) and it’s almost like pulling teeth getting help (inside). The administration(s) are non-responsive (at best) and openly hostile at worse! Support groups/educational avenues are near zero! The crazy part is that because I am straight “appearing”, it’s only through my constant requests for counselling (through mental health), access to services, educational materials (programs/medicinal), and my attempts to create groups, that I am recognized as being LGBTQI. Yet since I don’t “appear” gay or gender non-conforming I get a harder run around than the girls who have established trans status (through their own fights/battles). Trying to explain GNC-Pansexual to a NC good ol’ boy who is still working to understand how a “man” chops off his wood and acts like a “woman”, or a woman “grows” one! (The concept that genitalia does not equal gender ID is like speaking Klingon to a sea turtle! (lol) to them/him etc.). So let’s just say offering any/all of the individuals who committed acts that affront their pseudo-Christian beliefs any services at all is simply (for now) out of the question.

Any help you can offer on how to address such with the administration would be a blessing.

Sex, love, and solidarity,
(Lick u later...)
Divine

Brittany

The answer to the question of whether a girl in a men’s prison should ever seek Protective Custody protection is as varied as queers themselves. For example, while I’m not at all that effeminate in my actions, I am definitely feminine, and most prisoners and staff at my prison have no problem identifying me as a girl upon meeting (or even seeing) me. Other girls, however, are harder to spot, which gives options I don’t have. Likewise, while I’m not ashamed of who I am - in fact, I *love* being queer! - some girls are much more

flamboyant, while others prefer to remain in the shadows. Everyone's circumstances and disposition are different.

Ultimately it's the differences that will help you decide whether or not to seek Protective Custody protection. That said, based on nearly 15 years as a girl on state, I believe it should be last resort. Protective Custody (or Safe keeping, as it's often called) robs a girl of two important things: her dignity and the respect of the men around her, often making her a mark once she's returned to the general population.

At least here in North Carolina, Protective Custody is little more than another form of longterm lockup. PCers are locked in solitary confinement for up to 23 hours a day, eat all meals in their cells, are restricted from some of the perks of general population (such as ordering holiday food packages), are not allowed to use the phone or have contact visits, and are treated as though they are the *cause* of problems, rather than as the victims. Perhaps in severe situations this loss of dignity may indeed save a girl's life, but those are extreme cases. Otherwise, I can't imagine it's worth it. Protective Custody may very well protect my girly body, but it's a direct assault on my girly heart.

Also, a girl who seeks Protective Custody protection, or even files a PREA complaint, jeopardizes the already fragile respect of the men around her. (PREA, the Prison Rape Elimination Act, was signed into law in 2002 by president George W. Bush). Girls already have the stereotypical reputation as emotional whimps, and seeking PC protection can needlessly reinforce this view and, paradoxically, make future harassment worse and more violent.

Let's face it, unless you are at a truly oppressive prison that has somehow escaped the tentacles of the PREA mandates, actual violence against girls is rare. I personally believe PREA, like most prison-related legislation, does more harm than good, especially when it's misused by officials to harass LGBT prisoners and split up consensual relationships. It did, however, most certainly shift the balance of power from the predatorial men to us girls. Just knowing that all hell will break loose should I scream PREA keeps even the horniest alpha makes in check.

Yet that power ultimately pales in comparison to an even greater power: the respect I've earned by *not* yelling PREA, by *not* seeking Protective Custody protection. I was raped early in my bid and almost raped by two prisoners a few months after PREA became law. Since then, I've endured the harassment all feminine boys on state endure - the ass-grabbing, the pornographic letters handed to me in the chow hall, the juvenile taunts and obnoxious threats, the clandestine requests for blowjobs or to see my pussy, the hard dicks pulled out in my presence; all of which are punishable under PREA. yet I have never written a single statement against any of these men, nor have I ever "checked off" to escape a situation.

Recently, days after my man shipped, a prisoner who's wanted to fuck me for some time stormed into my cell, put his hands around my throat, and said that if he ever saw me talking to a certain dude again he'd kill me. I was *his* bitch, he said. It's common knowledge that I like strong, dominant men, so perhaps he thought I'd like his aggressive

approach, but I set him straight quickly. I ordered him out of my cell and told him that the next time he entered my room intending to put his hands on me, he should bring a shank and kill me, because if he left me alive I'd spend however much time was necessary - a week, month, year, decade - plotting my revenge until I killed *him*. "You'll never know what hit you," I warned as I stared into his dark eyes. "You crossed a line - never put your hands on a girl."

For a week this man tried to apologize, worried to death that I'd yell PREA or seek PC protection, which he knew would bring him down, unconvinced by my threat, but genuinely sorry for what he'd done. I refused to accept his apology, as much for myself as for the next girl, and swore I'd rather kill him than snitch. He finally checked off himself, amazed that I'd kept my word but unwilling to test the limits of that promise.

It wasn't my muscle that scared him away; I have the arms of a junior high girl. It wasn't even my brain, though I used it to outwit him often. It was my inner strength, made more evident by my refusal to be intimidated *and* my refusal to run to the police. I earned his respect, even as he lost mine, and sent a message to the other men in the block that I never could've sent from a PC cell.

Again, every situation (and every girl) is different. Just promise yourself you'll *never* underestimate your own inner fortitude, no matter how girly you are or how obnoxious the perverts and predators are. If possible, find that rare correction official you can confide in without writing statements (for me this is our prison psychologist), and use him or her as a release valve. If Protective Custody is truly your only option, don't hesitate to ask for it, but it will then be up to you to fight every second to maintain the dignity that is intrinsic to every human being - girls included - and you will have to work even harder to gain respect once you return to general population.

So choose wisely.

Signed,
Brittany

Tart-Ti Smith

A big shout out to our collective trans-identified imprisoned and free-world families. I hope most of you have found your own way to be safe and stay safe, and we must not accomplish this by becoming a rat or snitch to those whose livelihood is to keep us behind bars.

I write to share with you my eight years of insight from being held in administrative segregation housing. My intention is to give a list of a few critical circumstances that may give rise to dangerous conditions to those held in ad-seg housing, things that would be wise to consider before you opt to be segregated, permanently, from the general inmate population.

Once in ad-seg you will never be allowed back amongst general population inmates. You will be considered a rat, snitch, sex offender, gang drop-out, or worse, and dealt with accordingly. Why is this so important? Because gen.

pop. enjoys certain privileges and comforts denied to those in ad-seg.

Standard treatment in ad-seg includes meals that are much smaller and stripped of all extras (such as chips and nuts). Even the canteen list is stripped down to only a few basic items, and usually has a limit of fifty-dollars. You will certainly go many days hungry. The standard issue of clothing is curtailed to only boxers, T-shirts, and socks—no pants or shirts allowed. And sometimes, no jackets either, even during winter months. Law library is curtailed to once every two months. There is limited access to books (once a month), paper (5 sheets a month), ink pen fillers (once a month). If you're disliked, you could go for a year straight without laundry exchange and phone privileges. There is in-cell feeding with no communal tables or day-rooms for congregation. For outside recreation activities (usually once a week for 1 1/2 hours), there is no yard. Instead, you're locked, solitary, in a small cage that has no exercise equipment like weights or pull-up bars.

This, as described, is all bad. But the worst shock to come is the realization that this is exactly where the authorities want you to be, if you have been singled out for a covert beating or worse. For in ad-seg everyone is enemies, snitches, and a place for all types of creeps and scum to hide out. You are very likely surrounded by neighbors who loudly scream at their doors both day and night with total disrespect because everyone is chained or cuffed, or caged when not in their cells. Expect nothing from authorities. There is NO protection from them, and you will be vulnerable and subjected to being victimized.

In some cases, it may be better and safer to select the least of the undesirables who is controllable, and "put out" in a minimalist fashion for protection until you can be transferred to a better general population facility. I, personally, would not suggest nor recommend ad-seg nor "sensitive-needs-yards (SNY)" to anyone except those in imminent need of protection from a demonstrated threat, and as a last and desperate resource. Wisely think before you leap and ponder the path before placing the foot.

Wishing you the best LGBTQ. Stay safe and, always, resourceful.

Michael Shields

I have been in Solitary now for 15 months. Most guys are able to get their sentences suspended early on in their segregation sentence. That has been unavailable to me because I am gay and, in coming out, I pissed off a lot of people. Second, I am not from Nevada so I don't know a bunch of people. My seg time is up in January and I have worked hard to get set up with a move to a LGBTQ friendly prison. Most of the correctional staff were not helpful (not surprising). Eventually I developed a line of communication with the psychologist. He has a huge case load so it took months to really get the conversation onto the right topic.

The psychologist proved to be more empathetic to my situation and was finally able to help me get tagged for the right move. At the same time, I had a hateful caseworker

trying to have me moved in with 2 different inmates that would have ended in violence. They hate that I am gay. They hate that I am a paralegal and help guys file lawsuits. It has been a bumpy road. Finding the right advocate (in my case the psychologist) made my life safer and future housing less problematic. Try different angles to find that advocate where you are at. And if you have people on the streets, have them call in and help you find that right person.

michael desmarais

First, would like to say that this is not my first submission to "The Word is Out." In winter 2014-2015 (issue 13), I had a letter published in the "Importance of Queer Friendships" section. That letter was under the name "Michael Pelletier." After seeing it in print, I was ashamed--I felt hypocritical for hiding behind a false name. I vowed to henceforth use my name as it is.

I also wish to extend kudos to Jordi Russell for his honesty in his letter in summer 2015 (issue 14). What he wrote also impacted my decision to use my real name.

This issue is to be about "Homo is where the Heart Is." Some may not appreciate what I write. My words are based on my experiences and observations. My "truths" may differ from others.

While in prison in the state of Oregon, I saw that the more the gays and transgenders were out, they less risk they had to face. Again--strength in numbers. When alone, you're an easy target for predators (haters). But as the overall population realizes that there are quite a few gays, the acceptance level increases. Whether in a prison of 2,000 or 3,000 like I was in, the open gay population was a safety net. Personally, I felt no danger.

In Canada it is different. By contrast, the prisons are small. Populations of 200, 300, and 500. There is a lot more of "everybody knows everybody" or about everybody. Such a smaller environment creates more familiarity, which, as the saying goes, can "create contempt." One is more cautious in seeking out fellow gays. Fear and pain versus openness.

I transferred out of Alberta to BC. A main reason is the more liberal political atmosphere and a more open, metropolitan aura. I had been denied two previous transfer attempts. The third time, as part of "why do you want to transfer?", I made a bold decision. I openly stated that as a gay person, I needed to be in a place where I could reach out to gay support groups in the community. That is impossible in Alberta. I got my transfer.

I ask that you reach out. Discover the others within your own prison. They are there. Communicate with people in other prisons. If you just stay in your cell hoping but never trying, you'll do some hard time. You, we, are people too. Enjoy who you are. Sometimes the "straights" fear us more than we fear them. I've jokingly told some straight prisoners, "I'm lucky. I can have sex with my cellie!" Instead of them throwing you a punch, throw them a curve.

Prisoner Correspondence Project is a valuable source. Contact them.

Power

Alright, Jiordi asked for it, so the theme for the next issue is POWER. As always, submissions can be written or art. What forms does power take in prison? Physical, legal, financial, erotic? How do you get it? How do you lose it? When do you use it? When do you not? How do you build individual power into collective power?

Instead of prompting questions, this time round we're going to share a few quotes that people have said throughout history

"Power is not only what you have, but what the enemy thinks you have. Power is derived from 2 main sources – money and people. Have-Nots must build power from flesh and blood."

- Saul Alinsky

"Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment."

- Mahatma Gandhi

"We have to build our own power. We have to win every single political office we can, where we have a majority of black people... The question for black people is not, when is the white man going to give us our rights, or when is he going to give us good education for our children, or when is he going to give us jobs—if the white man gives you anything—just remember when he gets ready he will take it right back. We have to take for ourselves."

- Fannie Lou Hamer, spokeswoman for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party

Remember: include what name you want printed with the piece. Art is always appreciated! Drawings that are just ink or charcoal often reproduce better than full-colour images. We're still looking for images for the cover title. They should say THE WORD IS OUT, and be roughly the width of a page. Don't feel like you have to stick to the current topic. We love responses to what other people have written, too!

When I Think of LGBTQ Individuals

Dwight Hines

I think of our sense of humor, our
Caring and our compassion... All those
Things that remain so much a part of
Us, despite the obstacles we face.

When I think of LGBTQ individuals,
I think of our courage and our quiet
Strength.

Jordy Mackay

This letter comes with a heavy heart and tear-filled attentions over the sudden death of one of the members.

It saddens me to let you know that on August 16, 2015 in Warkworth Institution JORDY MACKAY, serving a DO, took his own life at the age of 31.

Jordy was pro-pride and had a flag on the inside of his door. He fought to arrange for an LGBTQ group and workshop here to support men/trans in prison life issues. Jordy was buried next to several family members in Saint John, NB.



IN MEMORIAM JORDY MACKAY
(August 18, 1983 - August 16, 2015)

He was an amazing young man, full of life, love, compassion, and understanding. He was the type of man to listen to your every word. So often he'd make everyone smile and if ever you were struggling in your life, he'd lend a full shoulder and a hand to wipe away your tears. He had an amazing outlook on life for such a young man.

His partner is well supported by friends, family and staff. It's changing how same-sex couples in prison are being dealt with more.

Love, Miss,
your friends at Warkworth Institution

When I think of LGBTQ individuals
Which I often do these days – I think
Of how many lives we have touched and
What a difference we have made in this
World, but most of all, I think of how
Much love, encouragement and hope we give
To everyone.