

Abolition is rooted in Love



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Our Purpose

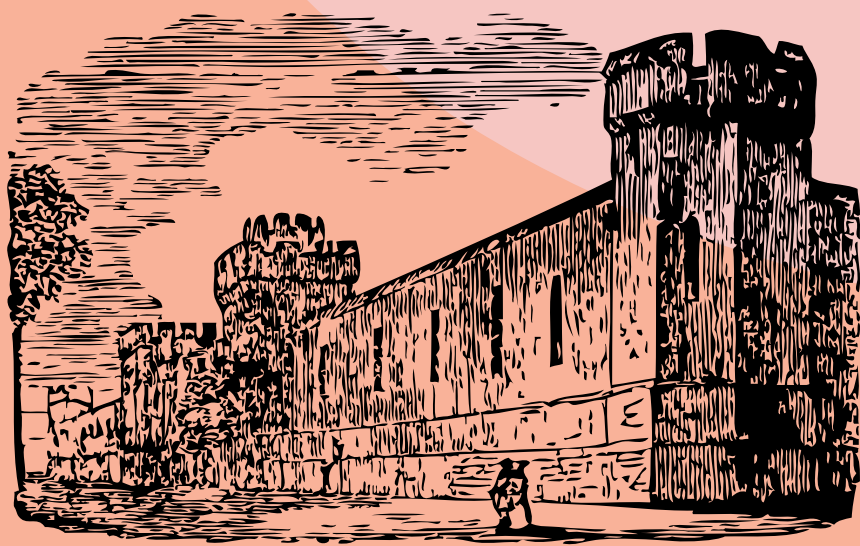
THE ZINE, "ABOLITION IS ROOTED IN LOVE", AIMS TO DECONSTRUCT HOW FEMME PEOPLE ARE OFTEN PLACED WITH EMOTIONAL, MENTAL, AND PHYSICAL LABORS THAT THEY PERFORM FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR LOVED ONES WHO ARE OR WERE FORMERLY INCARCERATED OR IMPACTED BY THE SYSTEM. WE LOOK INTO PAST AND CURRENT LABORS OF LOVE THAT FEMMES DO, AND HOW WE CAN SUPPORT THEM!



THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

- a form of a government facility in which "criminals" are incarcerated, imprisoned and policed in which there is no form of freedom.
- Serves as a means of capital by private and public sectors
- a way to vanish and get rid of "criminals" from society
- It argues to rehabilitate and restore criminals.

The PIC does not only affect those who are incarcerated but also those who are helping their incarcerated loved ones to get out of the system.



What is Femme Labor?

Femme meaning an individual with an appearance, behavior, or identity as feminine.



Labor will be understood as the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual work.

**UNSTOPPABLE
WOMEN**



Femme Labor is a form of labor that is performed by women who emotionally, physically, and mentally devote themselves to change the complexity of the world. By healing those they care about. Moreover, the work women perform in order to obtain justice for loved ones who have been affected by PIC and the social justice system. Femme Labor is endlessly rooted in love and care.

Femme Labor is everywhere in organizing for prison and police abolition and reform!!! Not everyone is for abolition and not everyone is for reform, so let's define them:

ABOLITION VS. REFORM

A prison abolitionist is one who believes the U.S. prison system as it is, is ineffective, abusive, and fosters racism through its practice.

Abolitionists vouch for **no prisons and policing** in favor of other methods that do not rely on isolation as punishment.

Prison and policing reform are **ideas to improve** prison conditions, improve the justice system, or propose alternatives to prisons and policing **by working with the existing systems and institutions in place**. Prison abolitionists, however, argue that prison reform only extends the power of prisons, not displace them (Parenti 164).



Abolition is important because it destroys structures and institutions that disempower the most vulnerable. The most vulnerable can be defined as those who carry multiple identities.



INTERSECTIONALITY



impacts Black, Brown, and Indigenous individuals, through the forms of race, class, sexuality, gender, and disabilities that harm their experiences in a world that holds hegemonic, colonial, and neoliberal ideologies.



INTERSECTIONAL STRUGGLES: WHY IS FEMME LABOR ESSENTIAL TO ORGANIZING?

FEMMES ARE LOVED ONES WHO CARRY NOT ONLY THEIR OWN INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES AND VULNERABILITIES, BUT ALSO THE LABORS OF CARING FOR LOVED ONES INCARCERATED, OR CARRY THE STRUGGLE OF HAVING BEEN INCARCERATED. THEIR VOICE IS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS/WANTS/DEMANDS OF PEOPLE WHO ARE CURRENTLY INCARCERATED, FORMERLY INCARCERATED AND/OR SYSTEM IMPACTED (AKA AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS HAD RELATIONSHIP WITH A LOVED ONE OR COMMUNITY MEMBER BEING INCARCERATED)



**DIFFERENT FORMS
OF LABOR THAT
FEMMES PRODUCE**

JUSTICE/SYSTEM IMPACTED
FORMERLY INCARCERATED

Femme Labor through Coalition



 INITIATE JUSTICE




Recognizing that voices are stronger in
numbers, advocates take to groups to vouch
for their loved ones

THEY CHAMPION CAUSES
LIKE...

End Money Bail



People unable to receive bond due to cash bail are at risk of losing their jobs and custody of children.



Cash bail is one of the ways that families lose their loved ones in a backwards, exploitative strategy for the state to gain money.



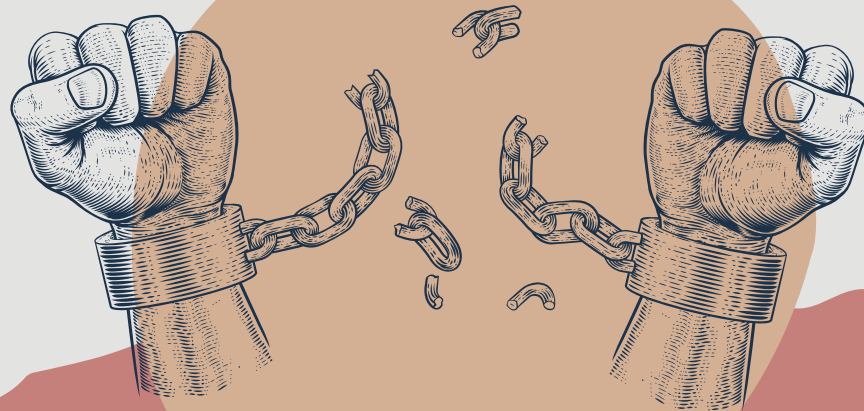
#ENDMONEYBAIL

Essie Justice Group states that 54% of women they surveyed are unable to afford bail and this makes them vulnerable to housing instability. They demand an end to corporate interest in incarceration, a nationwide change in legislation, and work to bail out those most vulnerable like #FreeBlackMamas

Reproductive Justice

REPRODUCTIVE
RIGHTS DON'T STOP
AT PRISON!

In 2018, North Carolina finally put an end to shackling pregnant inmates in the midst of labor after SisterSong's persistent protesting. Frustratingly though, the practice of chaining pregnant inmates through the duration of their pregnancy *still continues* in all states.



There is federal law against the use of chains on pregnant inmates, however, true change necessitates a cultural shift. Instead of violence towards drug users, sex workers, and shoplifters, etc, understanding and compassion should be utilized to ensure pregnant inmates make it out safely.

Restore Voting Rights

Proposition 17, the legislation to restore voting rights to Californians on parole, did pass in an overwhelming majority in the Nov. 2020 election, but voting rights should be granted to Americans on parole nationwide.


Because many incarcerated are POC, withholding the right for felons on parole to vote serves as voter suppression



People on parole participate in our communities in all ways without the tools to succeed, they should be heard at the voting polls

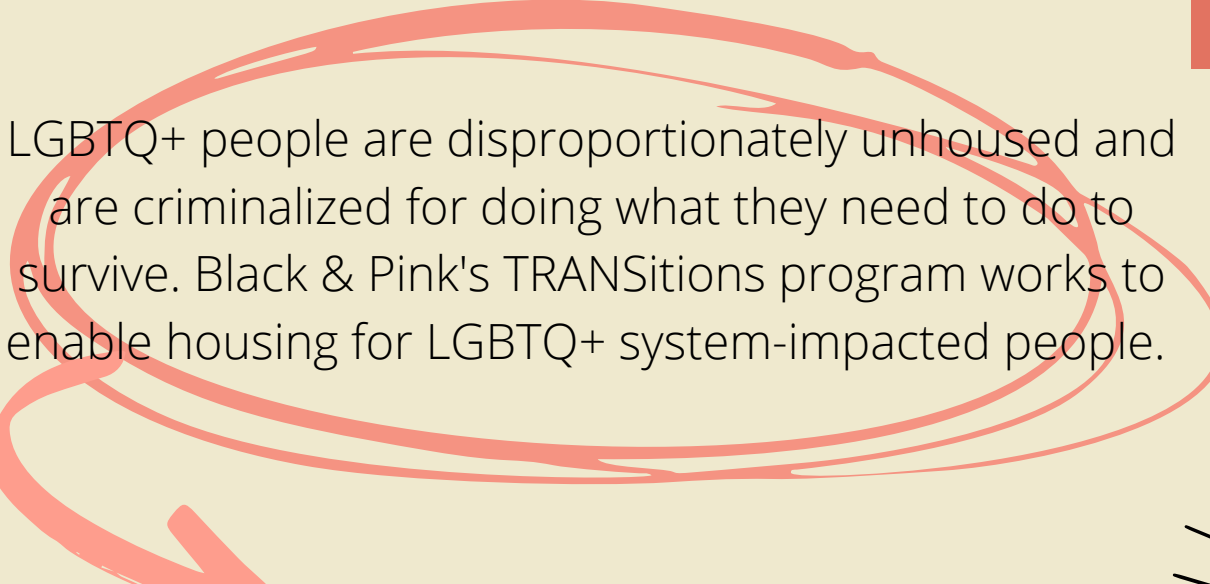
Transitions and Housing

the U.S. prison system inherently perpetuates queer violence by policing that disproportionately ends queer lives.



Black & Pink, a prison abolitionist group captained by LGBTQ+ currently or formerly incarcerated people and system-impacted, works towards a world without dependence on prisons and policing

LGBTQ+ people are disproportionately unhoused and are criminalized for doing what they need to do to survive. Black & Pink's TRANSitions program works to enable housing for LGBTQ+ system-impacted people.



They provide the down payment and 2 month's rent for participants, which waives background and credit checks that are frequent barriers to housing,



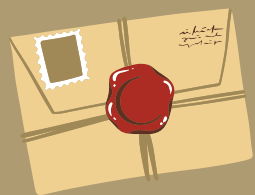
Pen Pal Programs



Lastly, a number of organizations use pen pal programs as a way to ensure those incarcerated receive a support network



It can be a way for folks outside the prison to challenge their notion of people inside prison walls and how they might be complicit in the prison/policing system



For incarcerated people, it can create harm reduction - being heard and validated can steer one away from negative thoughts and actions



This is not the end-all, be-all for groups that advocate for currently and formerly incarcerated people, but a few examples of femme labor through organizing!



Emotional & Mental Labor



For our loved ones who are incarcerated we try our best to stay present and positive emotionally. We stay present as "strong ties", and help aid their needs with what we're capable of.

We don't talk about the:

- STRESS
- ANXIETY
- NEEDS
- FEAR
- SADNESS
- WANTS
- HURT
- LOVE
- DESIRES

...of Femme loved ones and organizers.

Our Mental and Emotional Labors of Love



offering constant love
and support



paying and
requesting books
and necessities



letter writing and
letters of support



caring, educating and
loving little ones who are
system impacted



advocating for videocalls
or other ways of visiting
loved ones during a
pandemic



researching resources and legal
paperwork with no prior
knowledge or education in law



answering calls (even
though most of the time
you never know when to
expect them)



driving long
distances for
visitations

Letters & Art



Constantly advocating, educating, and humanizing people who have been or are incarcerated often requires us to bring up our own trauma, experiences and loved ones.



On the left is a drawing and letter by Hector Gil, the incarcerated loved one of Bibiana (one of the creators of this zine). Art, photos, and letters are key to humanizing incarcerated people and furthering advocacy efforts for abolition and reform. For instance, in 2019 Riverside County made plans to remove in-person visitation, but Bibiana, in a meeting with the county sheriffs, shared a collection of art, letters and photos of how in-person visitation was necessary for young children's to connect to their incarcerated loved ones.



Does the erosion of men's labor force participation due to mass incarceration have its counterweight in their female partners' increased employment? (Brun)



Femme Labor & It's Finacial Burden

1

“Incarceration intensifies the marginalization of disadvantaged families and communities, and the burden of these hardships is shouldered primarily by women” (Bruns)

- Women pick up the finacial responsibilities left behind by the men in their family
- Example: Two head households are now subjected to only the woman's salary
 - This causes financial burdens on the family
 - The source of income is limited
 - Women have to find new jobs
 - Women tend to work more hours (overtime) or often find 2 jobs to make up for the loss of the incarcerated's income

Financial Burden Cont...

2

“Ethnographic research has shown that incarceration is associated with a number of financial costs for families derived from replacing in-kind contributions to household labor, maintaining contact with prisoners, and supporting them financially” (Bruns)

Examples of Supporting Inmates through funds

- Traveling to see inmates
- Phone call charges
- Attorney Fees
- Legal Debt associates with criminal charges

Food Insecurity and It's Financial Burden

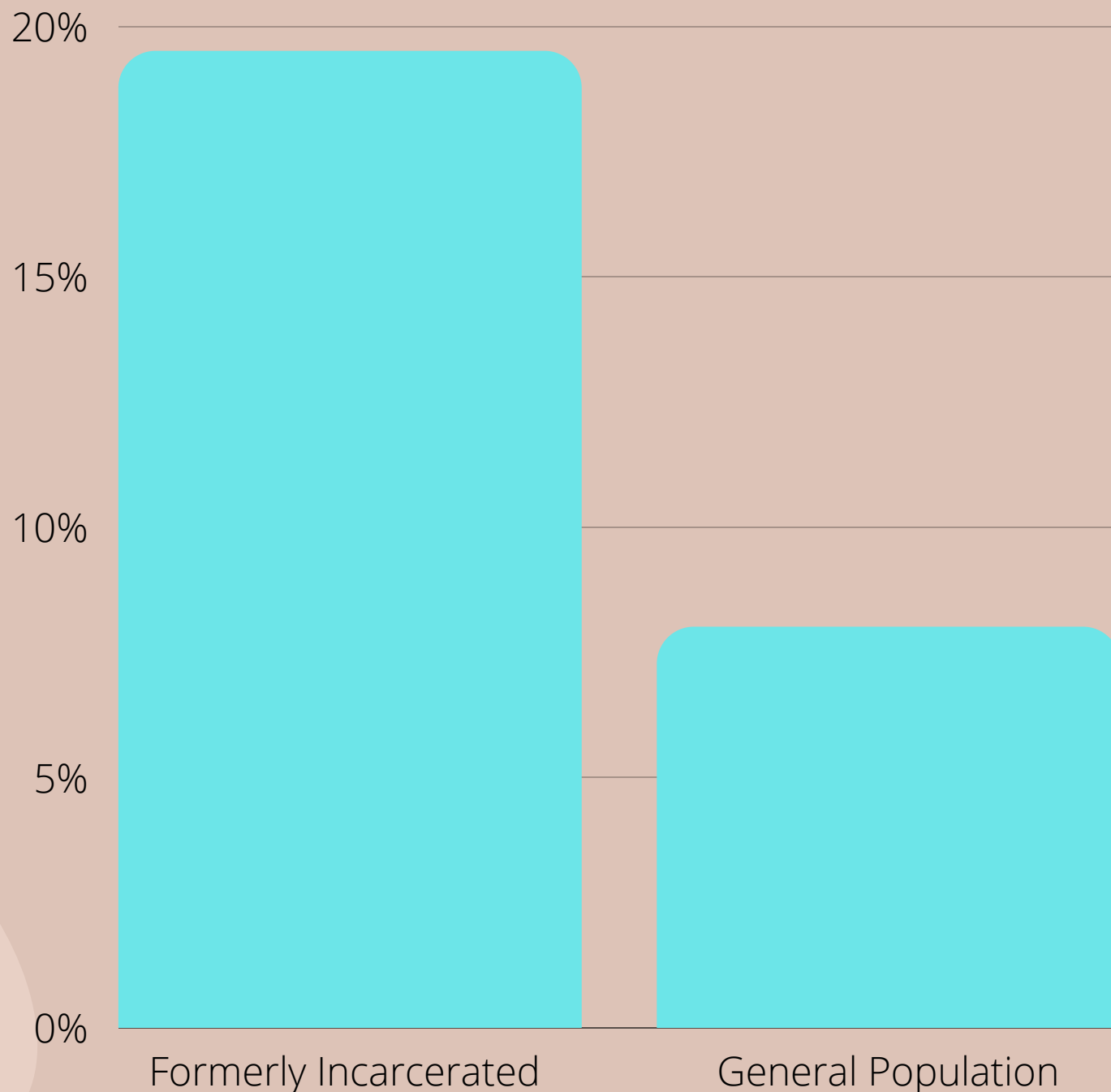
“Young children who live with their father before his incarceration are three times as likely to experience food insecurity, according to a study focused on the impact of paternal incarceration” (Turney)



Women find themselves obligated to find solutions to Food Insecurity

Statistics On Food Insecurity

Who Suffers Food Insecurity?



Work vs. Expenditures

3

When women cant pick up another job or more hours they cut back on expenditures...

What does this mean?

- Budgeting on Food
- Food Stamps
- Medicaid
- Informal Labor
 - Housekeepers
 - Babysitters
- Re-location
 - Moving to their parents house
 - Moving from a house to apartment

HIGHLIGHTS:

**FEMME LABOR NEVER STOPS! DRIVEN
TO DISMANTLING SYSTEMS OF
OPPRESSION AND POLICING!**

- SYBRINA FULTON
- SUSAN BURTON
- ANGELA DAVIS



SYBRINA FULTON.

- Sybrina is the mother of Travon Martin, a Black boy who was killed by police officer George Zimmerman.
- Sybrina is one of the examples in which femme labor can be detected.
- Since Travon's death, Sybrina has become an activist against police violence, brutality, and gun violence.
- She has run for Florida's country Commissioner. And has endlessly worked by becoming a book writer, speaker, and activist for the Black community (BLM).
- Her family also created Travon's Martin foundation to help families who have been affected by the same injustices.





"It's not about changing laws; a law is fairly easy to get changed. It's about changing mindsets. That's very hard to do."

Sybrina Fulton.

Susan Burton

- Susan Burton's son was murdered by an off-duty police officer. Burton got addicted to drugs because she was grieving and lead her to be incarcerated for the second time.
- Got help getting a job and joined a treatment facility.
- Burton's goal was to help, support, and create safe places for women who were impacted by PIC.

Supports women who were formerly incarcerated



Creates safe places for Women to live and start a new life after jail

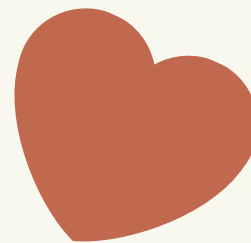


Focuses on rehabilitation and programs to help women impacted by PIC

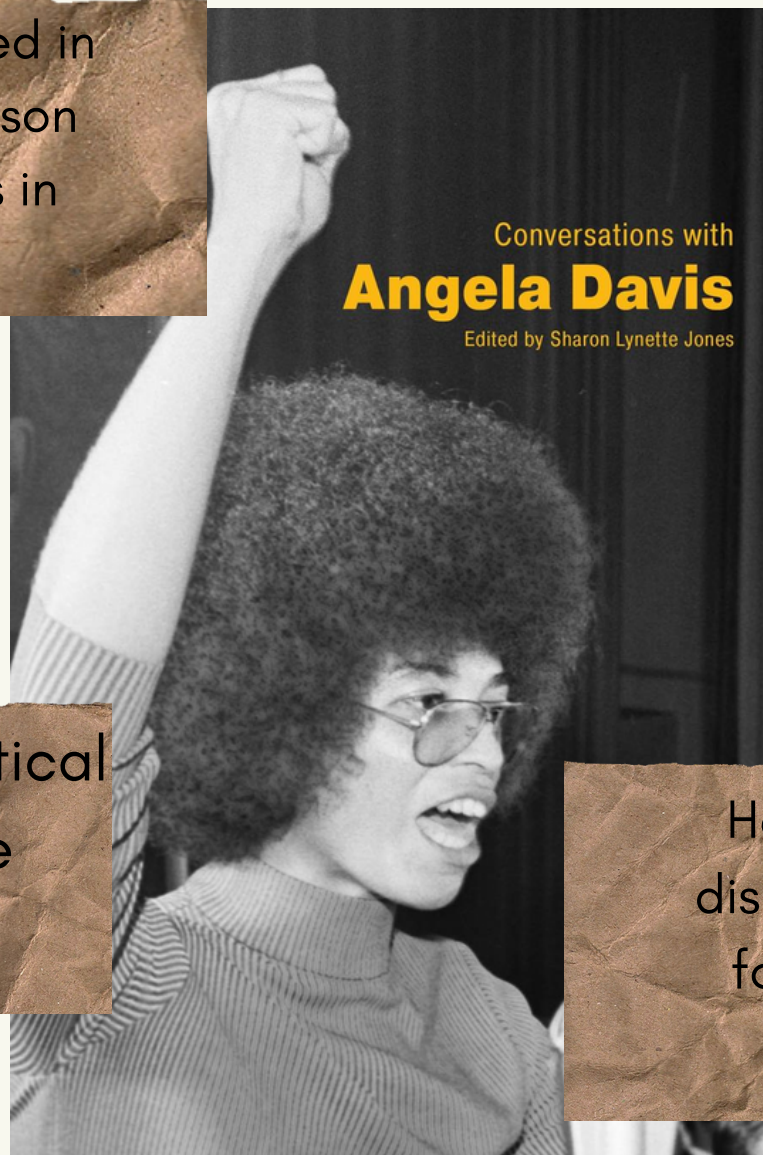


ANGELA DAVIS

is an activist-scholar who works to bring awareness to the PIC issues and change through her writing and speeches.



Davis was politically involved in the killing of Geroge Jackson and the Soledad Brothers in 1970's.



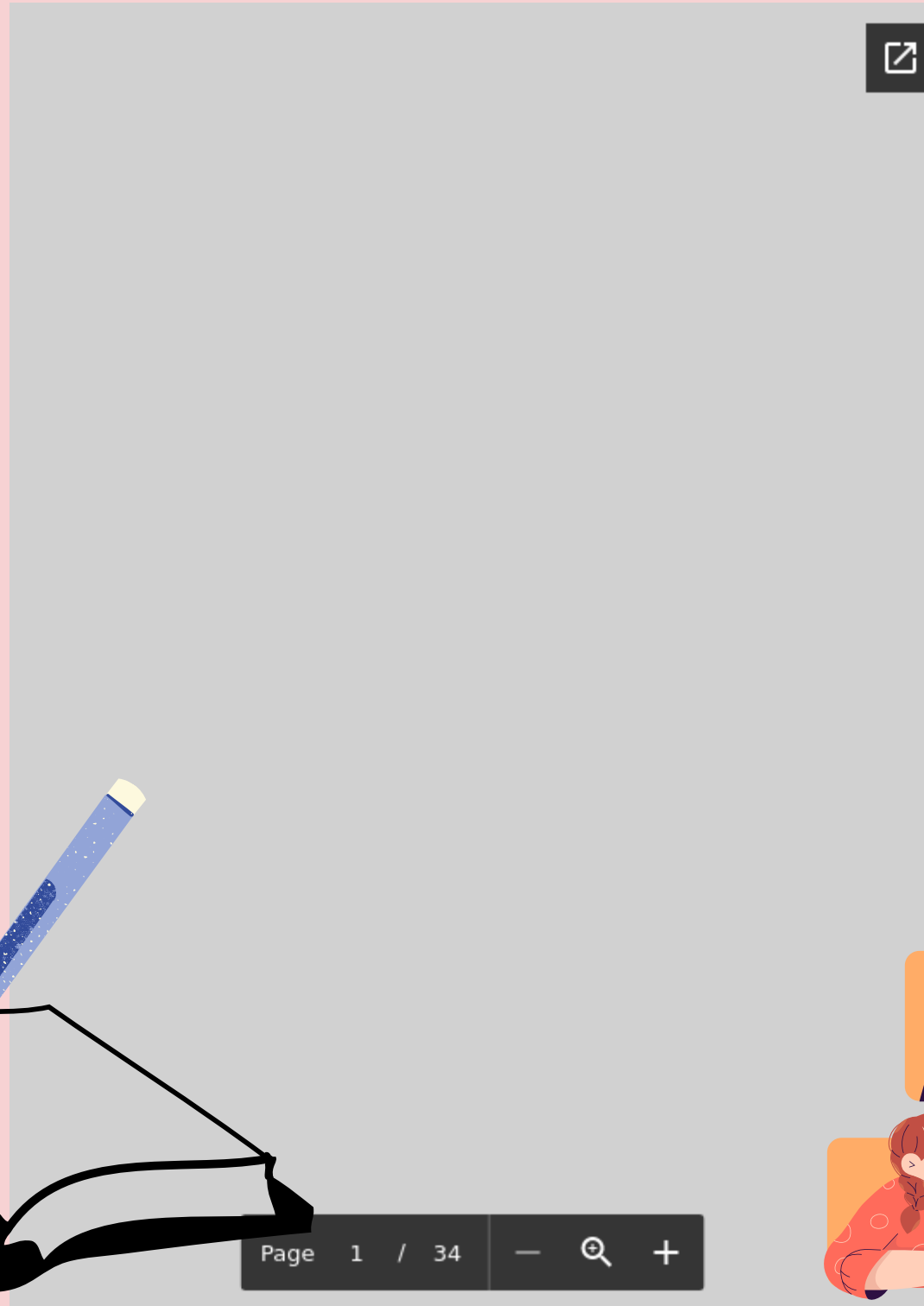
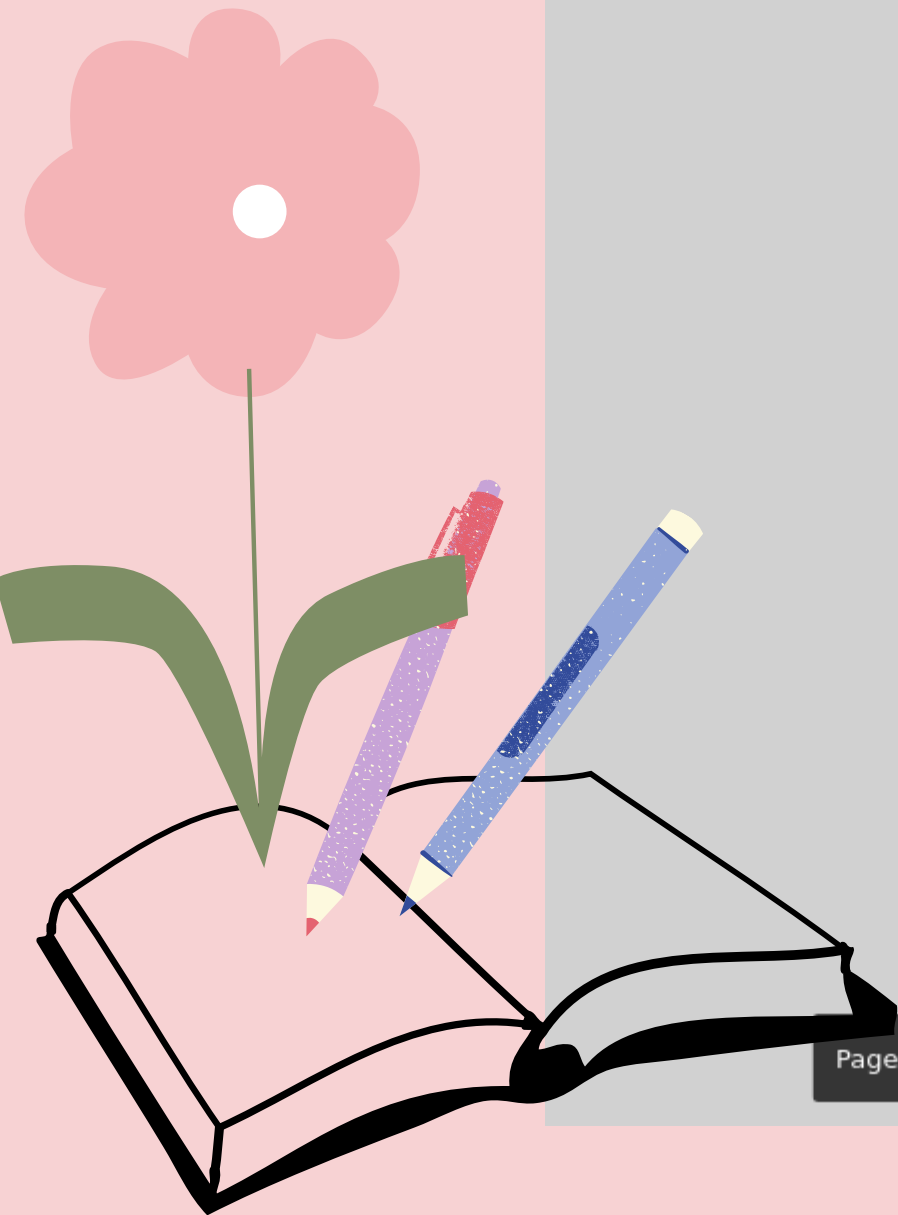
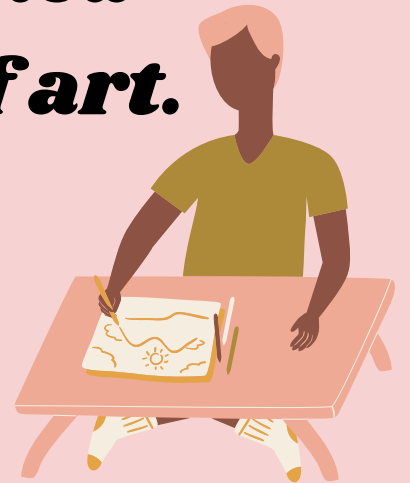
Arrested for being a political activist against police brutality in 1970s

Has worked to destroy and dismantle the PIC and policing for Black, Brown, and poor communities

Found ways to free political prisoners by organizing legal campaigns and justice.

Humanizing Incarcerated Women

Women in prison being humanized through poetry and their forms of art.





Call to Action

how to support femmes & advocate for prison abolition

Many ideas & resources were gotten from
Eliminating Mass Incarceration

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5cb8913037304900018a9672/t/5d0baaa51b9e050001448aa9/1561045674542/EMI+Resource+Toolkit.pdf>

**attending council
meetings & advocating
for positive change in
our institutions**



showing interest in
supporting certain
communities can influence
major changes

***Calling out the racial disparity,
racial discrimination, and related
concerns in the U.S. justice system***

helps to eliminate
prejudice towards
those incarcerated
in personal and
institutional levels



**educating family & friends on the
various flaws of our "justice"
system & how it
disproportionately affects BIPOC**

more funding allows for more resources and an expansion of services provided by these organizations

donating essentials, money, & more



Volunteering with and/or donating to organizations advocating for the end of mass incarceration

attending events, help with spreading awareness, & other support orgs may need



offering our physical time & energy can alleviate many organizations from other tasks & boost overall effectiveness

**improve mental health
support in prisons;
eliminating solitary
confinement**



incarcerated individuals also
require psychiatric treatment
offering support, guidance,
and love- NOT punishment

***Advocating for mental health services
for BIPOC directly & indirectly impacted
by the prison-industrial complex***

dealing with the effects
of PIC causes major
strain on various levels;
certain communities
stigmatize mental health
and seeking
professional help



**destigmatizing seeking
mental health services**

prevents families & loved ones from getting into debt; alleviates financial burden(s) that comes with being impacted by PIC

Reducing and/or eliminating fees & other costs to visit or reach out to incarcerated loved ones

Advocating for improved visitation procedures

eliminating hostile & restrictive policies

makes the overall visitation experience less distressful; allowing for family-friendly activities during visitation