



THE SPRING SCOOP

A PRISONER PUBLICATION FOR MISSOURI AND BEYOND / MAY 2015

REVOLUTIONARY LETTER #51

DIANE DI PRIMA

A SELF-CARE EXERCISE



While experiencing PTSD, we may feel scattered, broken, shattered, blown apart, chaotic, fractured, or split. Our thoughts & nervousness may become overwhelming, out of control, all over the place.

We may even forget we have edges.

The body is the container of all of our sensations & feelings. Being scattered, not knowing where we begin & end is unsettling, even if it is unconscious. When we can feel the container, then the emotions & sensations do not feel as overwhelming.

This exercise helps us feel “contained”, creating an internal state of calm & helps bring a “settling” feeling so we feel less overwhelmed.

AS SOON AS WE SUBMIT
TO A SYSTEM BASED ON CAUSALITY, LINEAR TIME
WE SUBMIT, AGAIN, TO THE OLD VALUES, PLUNGE AGAIN
INTO SLAVERY. BE STRONG. WE HAVE THE RIGHT
TO MAKE THE UNIVERSE WE DREAM.
NO NEED TO FEAR “SCIENCE”

.....GROVELING
APOLOGY FOR THINGS AS THEY ARE, ALL POWER
TO JOY, WHICH WILL REMAKE THE WORLD.

GOAL

To feel the body as container.
To develop a container.
To feel calmer in one's situation.

INSTRUCTIONS

Place one hand under the opposite arm, and then place the other hand over the upper part of the other arm; you are giving yourself a hug.

Pay attention to your body.

Let yourself settle into the position; allow yourself to feel supported by it. Allow yourself to feel contained.

Watch and see if anything shifts with your breathing, bodily sensations and how you feel in space. See if you can sit with it a while, and let it shift your perceptions of yourself and the world somewhat before coming out of it.

In doing so, you have just taken a step to nurture yourself and help soothe your trauma related symptoms.

HEY THERE



INCARCERATION NEWS DIGEST
MAY 2014 - APRIL 2015

ON THE INSIDE

After prisoners at Bledsoe County Correctional Complex, in Pikeville, TN, were told there would be no showers because of the Memorial Day holiday, they kicked doors, screamed, and generally raised hell for two hours. Prison officials then granted them shower access.

-Chattanooga Times Free Press, May 28

At least 8 prisoners at Polk Correctional Institution in Butler, NC, went on hunger strike- upset over unsanitary conditions, no library access, denial of outdoor recreation, and disciplinary practices. After 17 days, many of the demands were met.

-ABC11-Raleigh, June 16

The family and friends of detained immigrants imprisoned in Wisconsin chain themselves to the doors of the Immigration Enforcement office demanding their immediate release.

-Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, June 19

Around 1300 prisoners at SCI Coal Township in Coal Township, PA, refused to go to the dining hall from June 16 and June 22 in protest of cutbacks to food portions, the inability to hold cultural events, an ineffective grievance process, poor medical care, and policies that punish prisoners and their families.

-Harrisburg Patriot-News, June 24

Upset over a months-long lockdown, inmates at maximum-security Lieber Correctional Institution in Ridgeville, SC, assaulted an officer, took his keys and started unlocking cells. The 6-hour long disturbance sent 3 correctional officers and 5 inmates to the hospital. Two years ago, in the same wing of the prison, prisoners upset over steady meals of bologna, rampaged for five hours, smashing windows, trashing common areas and offices, and setting off water sprinklers. They broke off metal desk legs and used them to assault two officers.

-The Post & Courier, July 10

Mad about unfair treatment and the sending of two prisoners to segregation, 60 prisoners at Cibola County Detention Center in Grants, New Mexico, participated in a riot that caused \$75,000 in damages. For 45 minutes prisoners destroyed porcelain toilets and sinks, air ducts, bunks, windows, microwaves, televisions, and security cameras. They defended themselves from guards using plumbing fixtures ripped from walls and railings from bunks with shards of porcelain strapped to the ends with cloth.

-KOAT- Albuquerque, August 20

Frustrated by restrictive rules on their movements inside Arizona's Florence Correctional Center and upset about being sent so far from their families in Vermont, 13 prisoners refused to enter their cells and for 30 minutes, smashed televisions, microwaves, and other equipment.

-Vermont Public Radio, August 22

Juvenile inmates at VisionQuest Academy in South Mountain, PA, assaulted and threw rocks at guards, injuring one.

-ABC27-Harrisburg, September 8 *Continued on page 5*

Spring has arrived, and on some days, it even feels like summer here in St. Louis. The sun is warm on our faces, and we hope you can feel it from where you are. We have seen so many wild flowers emerge and trees grow new leaves to cover their branches once again. The magnolia trees bloomed several weeks back, the lilacs too, and their sweet fragrance filled the city air. We are still here, always trying to hold on to the sense that things are possible.

In this issue of the newsletter, there are bits of news telling stories of resistance in prison over the past year, as well as reports of people on the outside supporting prisoners throughout the country. Many of you probably heard on the radio or television about people's response to another death at the hands of Baltimore police in mid-April. We wanted to share some accounts that you may not have heard yet. We also included an account of people gathering in Ferguson in solidarity with the anti-police revolts in there. Since the writing of *Beyond Innocence: Recent Murders in and around the St Louis Area*, a few others have been killed by police here. While a culture of some sort has been built that when police shoot someone, people gather, sustained resistance has yet to persist again like we saw on the streets of Ferguson last summer. It can feel confined to fighting back only if the person dies or is perceived to be innocent. We hope for so much more.

Several weeks ago, we were bouncing off the walls with excitement as friends gathered to watch the news live in Baltimore, MD, where in broad daylight people took over city block after city block to smash, loot and burn handfuls of businesses. It seemed to start in part with high school students gathering to ditch school early. We have to think that the recent uprising in Ferguson reopened tangible ideas of revolt to those of us who are discontented and angry. Every scenario is different. And we saw this in Baltimore, where there were several days of relative calm before in the mid-afternoon people began to riot and loot spanning many city blocks. As always, we hope this unrest spreads both beyond the confines of a particular city and the limits of responding only when police kill yet another person. We wonder what it will take for masses of people to fight back – not just against police violence or even better, the very existence of police – but also against all the miserable aspects of everyday life – work, school, and the social roles that confine us.

We are energized by hearing your thoughts about what builds resistance and stories of your participation in such. You are not alone in your dreams for an entirely different world. We recently updated our zine catalog to include both analysis and accounts of the rebellion here in Ferguson. Let us know if you want us to send you any reading material, and we get them in the mail as soon as we can! Thanks for your fight. Until next time, hang in there!!



BEYOND INNOCENCE: ON RECENT POLICE MURDERS IN AND AROUND STL WRITTEN IN FEBRUARY 2015

LeDarius Williams was shot and killed by St. Louis police on Tuesday afternoon. Shortly after, around sixty people gathered in the neighborhood where the shooting occurred. Through tears his mother cried, "People need to stand up. This shit is just gonna keep happening." The crowd dispersed after a couple hours. As usual, the next day a news article reported the story and justified his death.

LeDarius Williams is the fifth person to be shot and killed by police in St. Louis and the surrounding areas subsequent to the unrest in Ferguson this August over Mike Brown's death. There have been instances where people have indeed stood up against police shootings, and there have also been instances of little to no response. If we want an anti-police movement of some sort to continue in the months and years ahead, we have to look at what factors contribute to people settling back into the normalcy of police killing people and how to create a culture of sustained resistance. It seems important to reflect upon how the perception of innocence can influence whether or not masses of people respond.

Just ten days after the death of Mike Brown, Kajieme Powell was shot to death by police. So close to the events in Ferguson his death came as a shocking surprise when police shot him as he shouted, "Shoot me now."

On October 8th, Vonderrit Myers Jr. was shot to death by police. Over the course of four days, there were nights of marches where people burned flags and shut down intersections. Protests also included blockading local Walmart stores, crashing a fund-raiser for a local politician, shut-

ting down a main road in Ferguson and staging an elaborate protest during a Monday night football game.

Then on the night before Christmas Eve, Antonio Martin was shot to death by police. For two nights people gathered at the gas station where he had been shot and confrontations with police ensued. The QT across the street had its windows smashed. There were instances of looting at the QT and a beauty supply store. During the daytime several hundred protesters shut down an interstate highway.

When we showed up at the spot where Antonio Martin had been shot by police, so many people were in the street, angrily confronting the police about killing someone. It felt reminiscent of nights on the streets in Ferguson, but only lasted two nights.

Even with the media and police trying to justify both Vonderrit's and Antonio's death to prevent public sympathy, people did take to the streets and respond to their deaths at the hands of police.

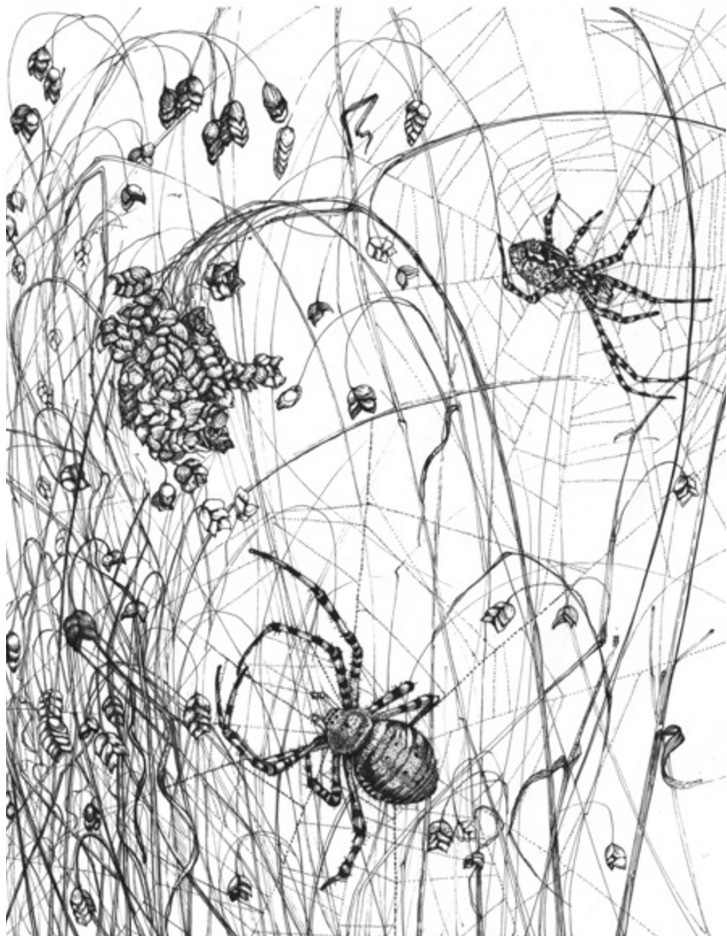
On January 21st, 19-year-old Isaac Holmes was shot to death by police in north St. Louis. Some of us went to the place where the shooting occurred that night but left because other people did not show up. In the paper the following day, the police justified the shooting by emphasizing that Isaac was a criminal and insinuating that he deserved to die.

As there are always many factors at play, the lack of an appeal toward his innocence in the case of Isaac Holmes may have influenced the fact that people did not gather in the streets, enraged at another police killing. The day after his death, a vigil of family and friends took place where he was killed.

Some people did gather where LeDarius Williams was killed but momentum did not continue into the night, as it did in the case of Antonio Martin. The media portrayed Antonio Martin as having a gun, trying to signal to the public that his death was not worthy of sympathy. And yet people were in the streets for two nights in a row before it let up.

The reasons people gather and protest are layered and many. Some people march against police brutality. Some people protest because they feel an injustice has occurred. Others respond because they see systemic racism as the problem. Many of us fight against the very existence of the police and the way the entirety of this society functions. But whatever the problems people find with the way things are, the perception of innocence can heavily determine one's participation in a struggle to change the fact that police are able to keep killing people. Because the law does not and never has served our interests, we must refuse to limit our resistance to appeals of "innocence" within the confines of the law.

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BEYOND INNOCENCE / *Continued from page 3*

When, for example, unarmed black men and women are killed many people are rightly upset. We saw this in the case of the death of Trayvon Martin. However, the situation can sometimes be too complex for people to publicly demonstrate or fight back when the person killed had a gun or is said to be a “criminal” because doing so would challenge many facets of how our society functions as a whole. When people see unarmed black men and women killed by police they can more easily point to the systemic racism of the situation, for example. They can also more readily empathize with the person who has died. But when police kill someone who is black, poor, and armed it requires either the experience of being beaten down by police one’s whole life or the willingness to look at the entirety of how this society functions in order to stand up and fight back.

The system exists to protect the wealthy and ensure their safety. The system, the police state, is not broken. It is working how it is intended to function and leaving countless people killed without question. It seems important to extend the conversation around the loss of “innocent” life toward the necessity of resistance each and every time a human being is killed by the police.

It also seems important to reflect upon the conditions that leave countless black youth with seemingly nothing to lose. The social pressure to be a man and the reality of needing to make money factor in to the equation. To some extent, there is also the recklessness of youth at play. For many, however, the reality of surviving in this society necessitates “crime” and people should not be blamed for trying to defend themselves against the police or trying to hustle out a livelihood in this capitalist society. We see something worthy of affirmation in the refusal of Issac Holmes and others like him to surrender quietly, but we also recognize that attempting to take on the cops as an isolated individual will most likely get you shot and killed. Without the presence of a collective force, individuals have no way to fight back other than to take matters into their own hands, which unfortunately and inevitably ends in far too many young tragic deaths.

Many attempts at offering a collective response to society’s problems have sprung up out of the events that took place in Ferguson. And yet these attempts have tended to alienate or exclude, oftentimes physically, many of the more combative people among us. It is hard to know how to find each other, those of us that have shared in the many moments of uncontrollable anger over the past six months. It is even harder to have a conversation about how we might continue together. And yet we haven’t given up on the possibility that we could find each other again, together confronting our enemies and realizing our collective power. With any luck, this will be only one of many beginnings.

For further reading, check out a really good article written by Jackie Wang called *Against Innocence: Race, Gender and the Politics of Safety*.

“
A MOVEMENT RESULTS
FROM COMBINATIONS
THAT EVEN IT’S OWN
PARTICIPANTS CANNOT
CONTROL. AND THAT
EVEN ITS ENEMIES
CANNOT CALCULATE. IT
EVOLVES IN WAYS THAT
CANNOT BE PREDICTED,
AND EVEN THOSE WHO
FORESEE IT ARE TAKEN
BY SURPRISE.

– ‘68 BY PACO IGNACIO TAIBO II



LAST NIGHT IN BALTIMORE

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT / APRIL 26, 2015

Unsurprisingly, corporate media covered up the extent of last night's riot here in Baltimore. Some of us think it was due to the fact that what took place was a direct result of the State's complete tactical failure policing the streets. Were they to acknowledge what actually happened would be to admit to all of America (as they were watching or reading on their screens) that they have no ability to control us when we really rage. They simply don't have enough pigs.

On Saturday April 25th, the Baltimore Police Department along with the Maryland State Troopers had no control whatsoever of the vast majority of downtown Baltimore till well past midnight.

The images of the police as a seemingly all powerful military force were staged for the cameras and helicopters. It was very clear they had orders of no engagement as long as protestors either didn't get on the highways (they were already blocked by the presence of the pigs themselves) or inconvenience the spectators at the baseball game. You would be only a few blocks away breaking every window of a bank and you see dozens of Robo-cops running down in a different direction with helicopter lights only on them, almost as if to make sure the beams were *not* on us. The images people saw on TV of the police having control were greatly exaggerated.

This is why for several hours small roaming groups of protestors, a majority of which were very young teenagers, had total control of the streets.

There is no way to assess the extent of what happened everywhere in the city, there was no organization or communication between the different elements, as it was a full-on riot not a protest. All that was missing was the tear-gas. But there were no pigs around us (for the most part) for them to even need to use it.

At least two separate series of protestors immediately broke out in different directions. The group we became a part of started using every available trashcan, street bench, or construction barrier within site, to first blockade the streets (assuming the pigs would follow us) and then to launch indiscriminate volleys of projectiles at every window and parked car. This was a crowd of mainly young and black teenagers

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INCARCERATION NEWS DIGEST / *Continued from page 2*

Thirteen teenagers broke out of the juvenile lockup at Woodland Hills Youth Development Center in Nashville, TN, after attacking a guard and stealing his keys and radio. The teens used the keys to escape their dorm. One wriggled through a gap between the perimeter fence and a rolling gate, then threw a rock through the guard house window, and opened the gate, freeing the others. Three weeks earlier, 24 teens broke out of a common area by kicking through aluminum panels under windows. For hours, they occupied the prison yard with wooden sticks, pipes, and fire extinguishers. Two days before that, in a mass breakout, 32 teens kicked through dorm walls overnight and crawled under a weak spot in the perimeter fence.

-The Tennessean, September 28

Demanding their immediate release, 200 immigrant detainees at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA, launched their third hunger strike of the year.

-The News-Tribune, November 3

Prisoners in the segregation unit at Holman Correctional Facility in Atmore, AL, threw items and urine on guards and started fires, catching one guard's pant leg on fire.

-WKRG-Mobile, January 30

At the Willacy County Correctional Center in Raymondville, TX, 2,000 inmates, mostly immigrants, took over the facility in a riot over poor medical services. The riot erupted in the afternoon after prisoners had refused to eat breakfast or report for work. They gathered in the recreation yard, set fire to 3 housing units, wielded pipes, threw objects at authorities, and shook the perimeter fence. Afterward, the prison was deemed "uninhabitable."

-Associated Press, February 22

Upset over shrinking food portions, 26 inmates at maximum-security Ely State Prison in Ely, Nevada, went on hunger strike.

-Las Vegas Sun, March 11

Around 25 Youths inmates rioted against guards at Les Peters Juvenile Corrections Academy in Tampa, FL, injuring one corrections officer.

-WTSP-Tampa, March 16

Over 30 prisoners at Ohio State Penitentiary Supermax facility in Youngstown went on hunger strike fueled by poor conditions, the withdrawal of congregate recreation, and the

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LAST NIGHT IN BALTIMORE / *Continued from page 5*

who have simply had enough of the police terrorism aimed indiscriminately at them, with full immunity from any real prosecution, along with the silence and consent of the majority of people around them, white or black.

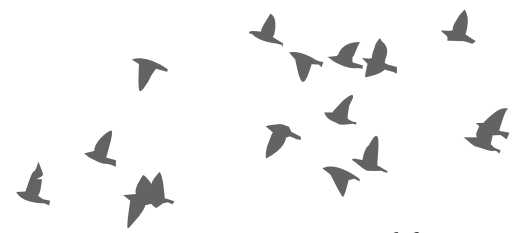
Young teenage girls within seconds of witnessing another women hammering away at cobble stones, were stockpiling so many pieces at once to be able to throw at every possible window. Shout out to that young girl who despite being inadvertently left behind when those 8 undercover pigs jumped out of their unmarked cars to beat the shit out of the kids who were barraging them with bricks minutes earlier. Not only did she not run, but single handedly got the pigs to back off (and get back in their cars) despite one particularly white fat pig having to be restrained by his masters to not pull his gun on her. An hour later the same girl was busy getting her friends to head back downtown. She had no fear.

These young women are the pigs worst nightmare! They are truly uncontrollable.

The message was very clear and meant not only for the police but everyone in Baltimore: "No Justice, No Peace. Fuck the Police." That's why everything was broken. We're not going to nicely and peacefully ask the pigs to stop killing us anymore.

The police locked down the Oriole's stadium that night, telling spectators to stay inside the stadium because they couldn't guarantee their safety outside? We know the only corporate media covering this aspect of the events said the ban of leaving the stadium was lifted before the final pitch, but they don't tell you how many people stayed back inside for hours after the game finished, waiting for their cars to arrive before returning to their homes in the suburbs. Besides, we were back in our own neighborhoods on the west side by that point, but honestly the pigs definitely would not have been able to provide the more affluent and vast majority white spectators any sense of security and calm as they continue to remain silent - and thus consenting to the police terror we are facing - walking back to their guarded parking lots across the street.

To all inside/outside agitators across the occupied lands of America this is our time to be wild!



INCARCERATION NEWS DIGEST / *Continued from page 5* denial of programming.

-The Columbus Dispatch, March 17

Frustrated over poor conditions and mistreatment by officials, a group of 10 mothers being held on immigration charges at Karnes City Family Detention Center in Karnes City, Texas started their second hunger strike. Earlier, on March 31, around 80 women at the facility participated in a 5-day hunger strike demanding their freedom. This strike was supported by a group of 30 protestors holding signs outside the jail.

-International Business Times, April 15

Youth prisoners at the Hillside Children's Center in Romulus, NY, rioted and attacked Sheriff's Office staff with coffee cups, injuring three.

-Syracuse Post-Standard, April 20

ON THE OUTSIDE

Two hundred people protesting against youth incarceration marched to the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center in Chicago, IL. One sign read "Battle the System." Protesters made noise and projected the message "You are Not Alone" onto the jail, while prisoners inside responded by banging on their windows and waving at those below.

-Chicago Tribune, May 20

As part of the international day of solidarity with long term anarchist prisoners Marie Mason, Eric McDavid, and with all others who are imprisoned. Demonstrators converged on the Durham County Detention Facility in Durham, NC. They drummed, chanted and set off firecrackers, even throwing some at a line of prison guards protecting the entrance. Prisoners inside responded by holding up signs and waving.

-News & Observer, June 13

Protesters declaring "Destroy every prison, visible and invisible" unfurled banners to block access to the Greek consulate in New York City to express solidarity with the struggle in Greek prisons. A hunger strike that began on June 18 spread to every Greek prison facility. Around 4000 prisoners refused meals to protest new repressive measures designed to undermine the growing social antagonism both inside and outside of the prisons.

-New York Times, July 3

Marching through the streets of Boston, MA, in solidarity with anti-police riots in Ferguson, MO, demonstrators stopped at the South Bay House of Corrections, to make noise. In response, prisoners shouted to protesters below and one wrote "Mike Brown" on his window.

-Huffington Post, November 25

Hundreds marched through the streets of Durham, NC in solidarity with the anti-police riots in Ferguson, MO the night before. Demonstrators blocked the street outside the Durham County Detention Facility with construction materials, prisoners banged on windows upon hearing the

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WE HEARD FROM YOU

A LETTER FROM A PRISONER IN MISSOURI

I received your letter today. I been real mad and aggressive lately bc I lost my lil homeboy to a police shooting last month. The pigz say he has a gun (supposedly). He was killed right in my hood over on the south side. His name was Ledarius Williams. So I've been trying to stay focused. These pigs had me in the cell with just my boxers for 5 days on some bullshit. They claimed my sheet was ripped.

All they are doing is adding fuel to my rebel and revolutionary thoughts. About the situations on the streets, the response in there has really the the same as out there It also got kinda quiet in this mothafucca too, but it can get turnt up at anytime. Lol . . .

I would like if you send me some more writings about Ferguson and other uprisings. Until next time, stay up.



A LETTER FROM A PRISONER IN MISSOURI

Im locked up for a year after having my probation revoked after getting arrested in the Mike Brown/Ferguson scandal. I have a new 1 year old son and a wife I just married this year who I been with for ten years, and I am locked up for something I believe in. Mike Brown being killed hit me so hard. It took a piece of my soul. I stayed in Berkeley at the time, but staying in Berkeley is like living in Ferguson cause they are so close. I had lost a friend, a close friend, to Jenning police. Anthony Chatman was killed in their holding cell We are the people and it's time to make a change. People are dying from these fucked up police. At night I hear my men screaming – I can't breathe, and I'm screaming – We won't stop until people are freed. Please don't stop. I won't stop. The movement is long overdue.

A LETTER FROM A PRISONER IN ILLINOIS

I appreciate the thoughts, time and support you all sacrifice. Not only for I, but for the multitudes!

I did enjoy the newsletter. There was a lot of information that the media didn't portray or tried to turn around and make it negative. Not only was it interesting and inspiring, it was uplifting to see everyone working together – at a time when racial tensions could have been the highest we've witnessed in quite some time. We found a common theme! It was a message sent and received. We definitely need more of it. Also from this experience – and the Oscar Grant Plaza experience – we can spot where we need to be/get stronger. We should have zones all over the world that are free of the existing order!! We will get there!

I'm tired, but that's usually when I fight the hardest. So I'll stay strong and continue to fight against these many repressions and the oppressors themselves, as they are not used to people standing up to them. They have met one that will not bow down! Even if I lose, I will fight another way another day. I have no choice!

The last few weeks have been a tumultuous journey for me. I went on hunger-strike and have been on strike ever since . . . Since it's not a mass hunger-strike like before, I don't have any support. Not from the outside world or even around here . . . It would be greatly appreciated if you could make some calls to the "administration" to show I do have some support and people do know what's going on.



A LETTER FROM A PRISONER IN MISSOURI

I've received your newsletter, and I think it's very exciting to see we are finally standing our ground against the pigs . . . Me, personally, I'm down with the movement. Check this out. Two months ago I was conversing with my homeboy about the Mike Brown situation and some of the CO's overheard us. They taunted us about it. I was so mad. I never hit a female so I just threw my hands in the air and refuse to move. So they threw two of us in the hold in solitary, locked up for one year. I'm not mad. I'm far from mad because 10 to 15 more people came to the hold for the same thing I had, which was protesting and inciting a riot. On top of that I was transferred to another to another institution.

I feel there has to be something done soon. If we have to take it into our own hands then I'm down for the ride. I'm not going to lie, if I was out there, I would be looting and shooting with the rest. But we can't stop with the pressure because then they will look at it like we are faking. That's why my motto is, "All gas, no breaks".



FROM FERGUSON TO BALTIMORE

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT / APRIL 28, 2015

After watching the riots unfold in Baltimore for two days, it was no wonder that I was feeling pent up energy here in St Louis where now, because of Ferguson, carries so much recent potential for riotous responses to police killings. Maybe it was for that reason that I didn't hesitate the night of the 28th when I got a call from a friend that people were gathering again on West Florissant, where the QuikTrip burned and people subsequently held space for 10 days back in August. I was watching the news of the people in Baltimore defying the citywide curfew, and ten minutes later, I was in the car headed to Ferguson.

When we arrived, there were about 200 or so people milling about on and around West Florissant. Some of them were organizers that have popped up and gained fame since the August protests in Ferguson, but the majority of the crowds that night were teenagers. The atmosphere was festive with loud music blasting from cars parked both on and off the road, groups of kids dancing on car hoods, crazy drag racing car stunts happening dangerously close to the crowd of protesters. In general, it felt like the early days of Ferguson, complete with a line of cops, some in riot gear, facing off with the crowd. At different points in the night, there were calls for people to get in the streets, to stand up against the cops. Eventually, a crowd of about 60 people did get into the street, locking arms and walking toward the line of cops, chants of "Hands up, Don't shoot" and "FTP, Fuck the police" in the air. The protesters dispersed quickly from the street after a couple objects were thrown in the direction of the cops. Some of the protesters were angry, saying that it was that kind of violence that would get people killed. My response to those people that night was that cops will kill regardless of what we do, so we might as well fight. It's not as if rocks and water bottles are any kind of defense against tasers and bullets, but sometimes it's all we have.

After that initial standoff, there was another gathering a

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WRITE TO US

IF YOU WANT TO RECEIVE A ZINE CATALOG/BE ADDED OR REMOVED FROM THE MAILING LIST/TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON WHERE YOU ARE OR YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE RESISTANCE SEEN IN FERGUSON AND BALTIMORE RECENTLY.

OAK ROOT PRESS
PO BOX 775006
ST LOUIS, MO 63177

We do not know anything about the law so we cannot help with legal support. We are also not a dating service. So please do not ask us for those kind of things. If you are a rapist of any kind, and you don't think that is a problem, do not bother writing to us. We dream of a world where rapists along with prisons (and all forms of power-over), do not exist.

INCARCERATION NEWS DIGEST / *Continued from page 6*
drums and chanting outside, and "Burn the prisons" was spray-painted on the outside of the jail.

-News & Observer, November 26

As part of the wave of anti-police demonstrations around country, a loud protest was held outside the Durham County Detention Facility. Inside, prisoners could be seen cheering and banging on their windows.

-WRAL, December 6

Around 100 people marched to the St. Louis city work house on Hall Street calling for the facility to be shut down and the release of 40 people jailed during the Ferguson riots. Demonstrators shouted "Let them go!" while inmates inside shouted back "We love ya'll. Keep up the movement!"

-CBS-St. Louis, December 13

People with banners and drums celebrated the New Year outside the downtown Jackson, MS, jail. Prisoners inside flicked lights, shouted, waved, and banged on windows.

The Clarion-Ledger, January 1

Fifty protesters shouted and banged drums outside the Durham County Detention Facility to celebrate the New Year with prisoners inside. They held a banner reading, "Outside to Inside: You are Not Forgotten."

-WTVD-Durham, January 1

Twenty demonstrators in Santa Cruz, CA rung in the new year by marching to the county jail and vandalizing county cars parked in the lot by throwing rocks, bottles, and paint.

-KSBW, January 1

Youth detainees were involved in a New Year's Day riot at the Cresson Secure Treatment Unit adolescent facility in Cresson, PA, that injured 3 guards.

-Associated Press, January 5

Two Hundred people marched through the streets of Santa Cruz, CA, to the local jail, furious over the sixth inmate death in less than three years. Their chants and music on the outside were greeted by female prisoners inside banging their windows and shouting back.

-San Francisco Bay View, January 24

Declaring solidarity with the Baltimore anti-police riots, vandals set fire to a construction truck at the site of the future King County Juvenile Detention Center.

-Seattle Times, April 28

Philadelphia protesters, marching in solidarity with the anti-police riots in Baltimore, scuffled with police before marching to the Federal Bureau of Prisons building. Prisoners inside the building banged on windows and flashed their lights, while those outside chanted "We are one!"

-Philly Inquirer, April 30

Over 100 people demonstrated outside the GEO Group's annual shareholder meeting in Boca Raton, FL in support of hunger-striking immigrant women held at the GEO Group-operated Karnes County Family Detention Center in Karnes City, Texas.

-WSVN-Miami/Ft. Lauderdale, April 30



FROM FERGUSON TO BALTIMORE / *Continued from page 8*

block down West Florissant where different groups of people parked their cars in the street, turned up their stereos and started dancing. Some organizers approached them, telling them to move, but there was never more than laughter in response. The line of cops moved steadily forward, announcing every few seconds that if we did not disperse we were subject to arrest or chemical measures. The hostility in the responses of the protesters to this announcement grew until eventually people started throwing rocks again. When an armored car drove through the crowd of protesters, a few rocks connected with its side, and it appeared that a window was broken, but that was the extent of the damage done by objects thrown that night. The cops were threatening tear gas, and there was no real movement to take over the streets again after the cars with the dance music pulled out, packed with about 10 to 12 people each. We decided it was time to go.

It was a strange night that had its share of both inspiring and dull moments. Some of it felt so familiar, even down to the shots fired as we were trying to leave. What I took from it is that there is still a contingent of people in this city that refuse to play by the rules. I know that it's unrealistic to think that the riots of August could have been sustained for the 9 months it's been since they started, but that night I saw some of that energy return to W. Florissant. I heard teenagers yelling at the cops to go home, to get out of their neighborhood. I remain optimistic about the potential in Ferguson even if I've witnessed organizers bottling that potential to use it for their own agendas over and over. I saw people refusing to be controlled, both by organizers and the cops. It is those people that I applaud and stand with both in Ferguson and Baltimore and in every place where people fight back.



A REVIEW

FROM MKJ IN BALTIMORE
APRIL 30, 2015

Only two hours left before the purge. We'd better get inside. At the cafe, ominous music was playing, and as twilight set in outside, the crowd diminished and a nervous energy grew in those of us left. Or maybe that was just me.

According to the police and media (and they may have been right, I don't know), this whole atmosphere of rebellion and resistance kicked off when a group of school-age kids put out a call for a "purge" at 3:30 at a neighborhood mall. It was a reference to the film series *The Purge*, which is the one night every year during which all crime is legal.

There's so much to unpack in that. First, and perhaps foremost, what matters is that these kids decided, for themselves, that they were going to get away with crime. In this case, the crimes were almost exclusively mass assault on riot police and mass vandalism of police vehicles. In the film, it was the government that decided to allow the purge, and a cynical take on the Baltimore riots could easily suggest that they fulfilled the ostensible purpose of the film's purge — to allow people to let off steam so that society at large doesn't burst into generalized revolt. The theory is that if people are allowed to fight back every now and then, in a controlled manner, they won't fight back en masse.

But by taking matters into their own hands, these kids weren't letting off steam — they were building collective power. I hope they never forget the power they felt as they pelted the police with rocks and drove dozens of fully armored riot cops into a retreat. Police in the US don't retreat lightly, but 13-year-olds with stones managed to force them.

But the daytime riots — or even the nighttime chaos — aren't what makes me feel like I'm living in *The Purge*. It's the curfew. As a friend told me last night, "There's no situation that the presence of riot police can't make worse." Only the bravest go outside during the purge. During the purge, there are organized gangs of armed violent men and women who will hurt you and take you captive. In Baltimore, they'll hold you for ransom. The gang is, of course, the police. Backed by the National Guard, they've enacted a curfew: no one is allowed outside between the hours of 10pm and 5am. Because of a "state of emergency," many rights have been suspended, including free mobility and the right to see court within 24 hours of an arrest. I've heard they've suspended our right to assembly. Of course, all of this highlights the absurdity of government and the rights it so politely grants us: something is not truly given if it can be taken away without our consent. The only actual fundamental rights we have are those we take for ourselves.

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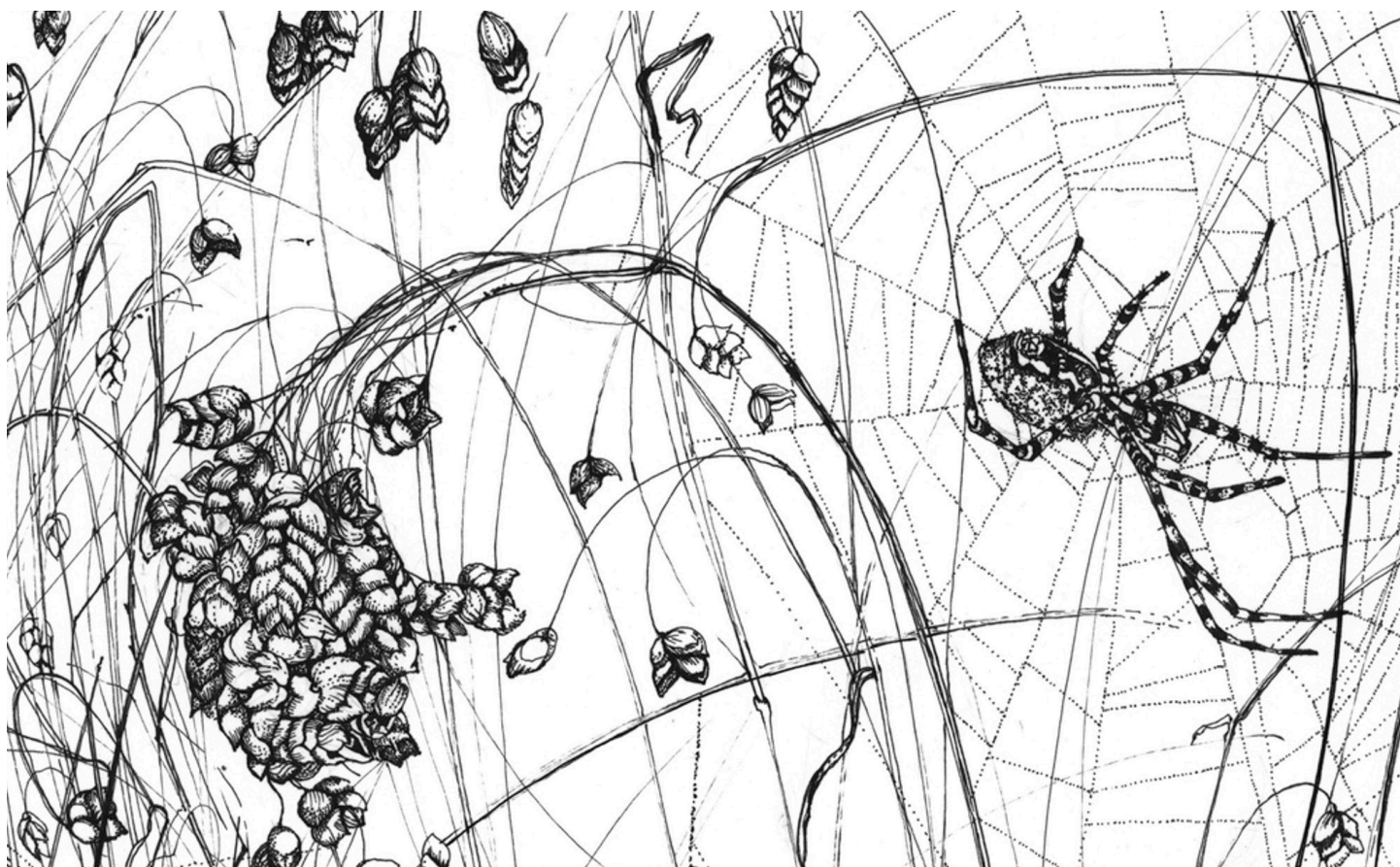
Yesterday afternoon, I attended a festive demonstration at the intersection of North Ave and Penn. A burned-out CVS sits on the corner, and journalists and demonstrators and volunteer cleanup crews walked through the red-tagged (deemed unsafe by the city inspectors) building freely. Outside, riot police flanked us on one side, but granted us free mobility in the other three directions. It was a peaceful protest, to be sure, but I never got the feeling that it was a pacifist one. It was a demonstration of power. People, more or less collectively, had chosen peace after nearly twenty-four hours of fire and resistance and looting.

At that same intersection, hundreds of people resisted the curfew together. They were peaceful and they would have stayed peaceful but for the imposition of an absurd and infantilizing power that the “democratic” government had granted itself. Naturally, people resisted this. I wasn’t there, I can’t speak authoritatively on the subject, but I

believe they resisted this by practicing self-defense, and the fighting went on for hours.

The curfew is not in effect to prevent lawbreaking. If it had been intended for that purpose, it would have started a day earlier, after the afternoon of riots, and it would have been for specific neighborhoods and taken on a day-by-day basis. This is collective punishment. In second grade, our teacher made us all wait in the hallway because one person had acted out. She was trying to turn us against each other, to make us angry at the person who had acted out, as though it were his fault we were all stuck waiting in the hallway. But even then, I knew that was wrong, and we didn’t talk shit about the kid who acted out, we talked shit about the teacher.

The curfew exists to remind us who the government thinks is in charge. Resistance exists to remind us who actually is.



THOSE PRISON WALLS
CAN'T KEEP US APART