

“Hello, you little fat father!” the devil said to the priest. “What made you lie so to those poor, misled people? What tortures of hell did you depict? Don’t you know they are already suffering the tortures of hell in their earthly lives? Don’t you know that you and the authorities of the State are my representatives on earth? It is you that make them suffer the pains of hell with which you threaten them. Don’t you know this? Well, then, come with me!”

The devil grabbed the priest by the collar, lifted him high in the air, and carried him to a factory, to an iron foundry. He saw the workmen there running and hurrying to and fro, and toiling in the scorching heat. Very soon the thick, heavy air and the heat are too much for the priest. With tears in his eyes, he pleads with the devil: “Let me go! Let me leave this hell!”

“Oh, my dear friend, I must show you many more places.” The devil gets hold of him again and drags him off to a farm. There he sees workmen threshing the grain. The dust and heat are insufferable. The overseer carries a knout, and unmercifully beats anyone who falls to the ground overcome by hard toil or hunger.

Next the priest is taken to the huts where these same workers live with their families—dirty, cold, smoky, ill-smelling holes. The devil grins. He points out the poverty and hardships which are at home here .

“Well, isn’t this enough?” he asks. And it seems as if even he, the devil, pities the people. The pious servant of God can hardly bear it. With uplifted hands he begs: “Let me go away from here. Yes, yes! This is hell on earth!”

“Well, then, you see. And you still promise them another hell. You torment them, torture them to death mentally when they are already all but dead physically! Come on! I will show you one more hell--one more, the very worst.”

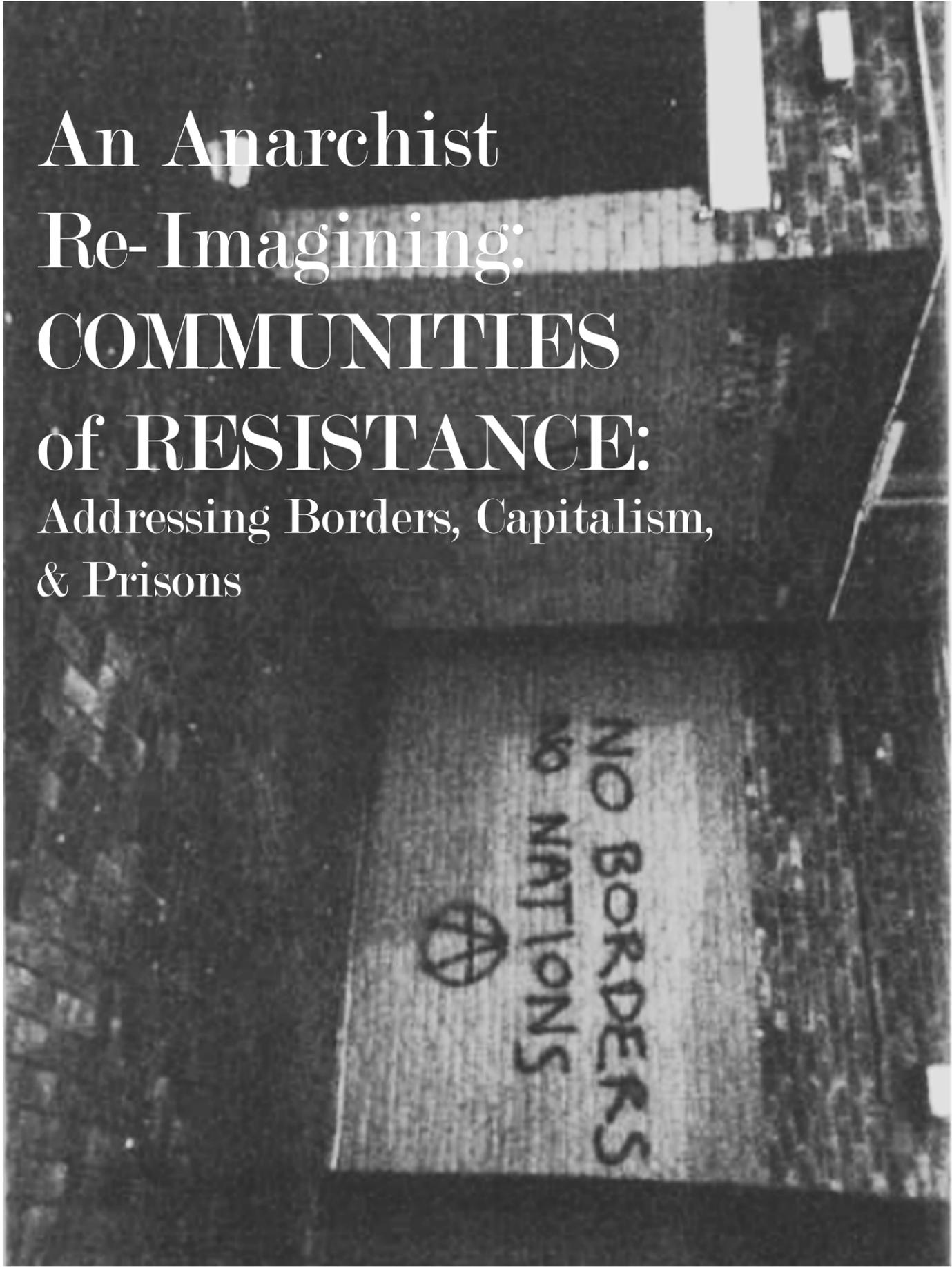
He took him to a prison and showed him a dungeon, with its foul air and the many human forms, robbed of all health and energy, lying on the floor, covered with vermin that were devouring their poor, naked, emaciated bodies.

“Take off your silken clothes,” said the devil to the priest, “put on your ankles heavy chains such as these unfortunates wear; lie down on the cold and filthy floor--and then talk to them about a hell that still awaits them!”

“No, no!” answered the priest, “I cannot think of anything more dreadful than this. I entreat you, let me go away from here!”

“Yes, this is hell. There can be no worse hell than this. Did you not know it? Did you not know that these men and women whom you are frightening with the picture of a hell hereafter--
did you not know that they are in hell right here, before they die?”

-Feodor Dostoyevsky wrote this on the wall of his prison cell in 1849.



An Anarchist Re-Imagining: COMMUNITIES of RESISTANCE: Addressing Borders, Capitalism, & Prisons

“Let them come and see men and women and children who know how to live, whose joy of life has not yet been killed by those who claimed to teach other nations how to live.”

- Chinua Achebe

**BE CAREFUL
WITH EACH OTHER**



**SO YOU CAN BE
DANGEROUS
TOGETHER**

Important Documents, Collectives, Organizations, and Resources

No One Is Illegal

<http://toronto.nooneisillegal.org/>

A Guide to Immigration Arrest, Detention and Deportation & Your Rights at Home, On the Streets, and at Work
PDF (provided by No One is Illegal.):

“This guide aims to provide basic legal information to people without immigration status so that they will be able to better protect themselves from the risks of immigration arrest and detention.”

English: http://toronto.nooneisillegal.org/sites/default/files/KYR%20ENGLISH%20PDF%20FINAL_0.pdf

Español: http://toronto.nooneisillegal.org/sites/default/files/KYR%20SPANISH%20PDF%20FINAL_0.pdf

Français: http://toronto.nooneisillegal.org/sites/default/files/KYR%20FRENCH%20PDF%20FINAL_0.pdf

Critical Resistance

<http://crwp.live.radicaldesigns.org/>

INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence

<http://www.incite-national.org/>

Joint Statement from INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence and Critical Resistance on Gender Violence and The Prison Industrial Complex:

<http://zinelibrary.info/files/incite%20and%20cr%20FINAL.pdf>

INCITE! Pamphlet on Community Accountability:

http://www.incite-national.org/media/docs/6685_toolkitrev-cmyacc.pdf

Queers and Immigration: A Vision Statement

<http://www.barnard.edu/sfonline/immigration/QEJ-Immigration-Vision.pdf>

HAVOQ (Horizontal Alliance of Very (Vaguely or Voraciously) Organized Queers

<http://undoingborders.wordpress.com/>

No More Deaths

<http://nomoredeaths.org>

Audre Lorde Project

<http://alp.org>

Resistance Behind Bars

<http://resistancebehindbars.org/>

Dean Spade and their Sylvia Rivera Law Project

<http://www.deanspade.net/>

<http://srlp.org/>

Locked Out Prison Book Project

A resource list of awesome people providing books for queer, trans, lesbian, gay, people of color, etc. behind bars:

<http://zinelibrary.info/files/lo2010.pdf>

The Queer, Feminist & Trans Politics of Prison Abolition

http://prisoner Correspondence Project.com/QFT_prison_abolition_full.pdf

Anarchist Black Cross

http://prisoner Correspondence Project.com/QFT_prison_abolition_full.pdf



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Table of Contents

Addressing Social Factors.....	3
Deconstructing the Validity of the State.....	4
Docile Bodies.....	5
Visibility as Violence.....	7
Imaginations of Communities.....	13
Tend to Your Communities.....	15
Resistance in Prisons.....	16
Resources.....	20





INCITE! also works towards fighting the violence women experience behind bars as well as Angela Davis' grassroots organization Critical Resistance . "There [prisons], violence takes the form of medical neglect, sexual abuse, lack of reproductive control, loss of parental rights, denial of legal rights and remedies, the devastating effects of isolation, and, of course, arbitrary discipline" (Davis.) Angela Davis identifies how the economic and political concerns that oppress people outside of prisons, also makes its way doubly into prisons as the "prison industrial complex." "[Activists and scholars] have deployed the concept of the 'prison industrial complex' to point out that the proliferation of prisons and prisoners is more clearly linked to larger economic and political structures and ideologies than to individual criminal conduct and efforts to curb 'crime'" (Davis.) There must also be resistance within prisons against this complex which reduces people to cheap labor and subject to violence. Vikki Law has also done similar work as Davis in encouraging incarcerated women and women on the outside to work to not reform the prison system, but completely dismantle it in her *Resistance Behind Bars* series.



Law works to put the resistance of women in prisons in the foreground, for example, shedding light on the August Rebellion of 1974 . She also provides women in prisons with books and other resources on the anti-prison movement. Law expands upon Davis' writings and identifies prisons as a site for resistance.

Addressing Social Factors

What we are talking about.

Historically, colonizers, the state, the academy, and other institutions, practice paradoxical uses of violence that render certain bodies invisible and wrong, and frame others as acceptable and assimilated. The anomaly of this violence is that its use against people by corporations, political groups, medical institutions, police, and even certain Western feminist activist groups is that they are in the name of civilization. In other words, like Divine Right, the expansion of Western ideology and its practices are made right under the premise that they be spread because their ideologies and ways will ultimately bring peace and opportunity, but this has only proven to be true for very few.

Who these people are.

Those subject to imperialization of the West have not been picked at random and still aren't. These people are usually non-white, non-Christian, non-Western, non-heteronormative, and/or not men. Removed from access to medicine, protection of *and from* the law, they are *invisible*. They were, rather are, the raped bodies of Native American women, black bodies and torn families taken from Africa, and homeless youth killed for being queer. These countless trans*, gay, and/or non-white bodies are used to fill prisons, as cheap labor, whose deaths are not prioritized or even noticed. *It is important to notice the difference between the colonizer and the colonized as institution and individuals, respectively.* The recognition of this differentiation is crucial to make and acknowledge as *it distinguishes the violators and the violated and the inequitable acts of violence versus necessary uses of resistance.* This piece aims to further identify the specific institutions of oppression, distance them from the individuals they oppress, challenge the existence of them, and propose the functionality of communities without them.

"Let's be gentle with ourselves & each other & fierce as we fight oppression."

-Dean Spade

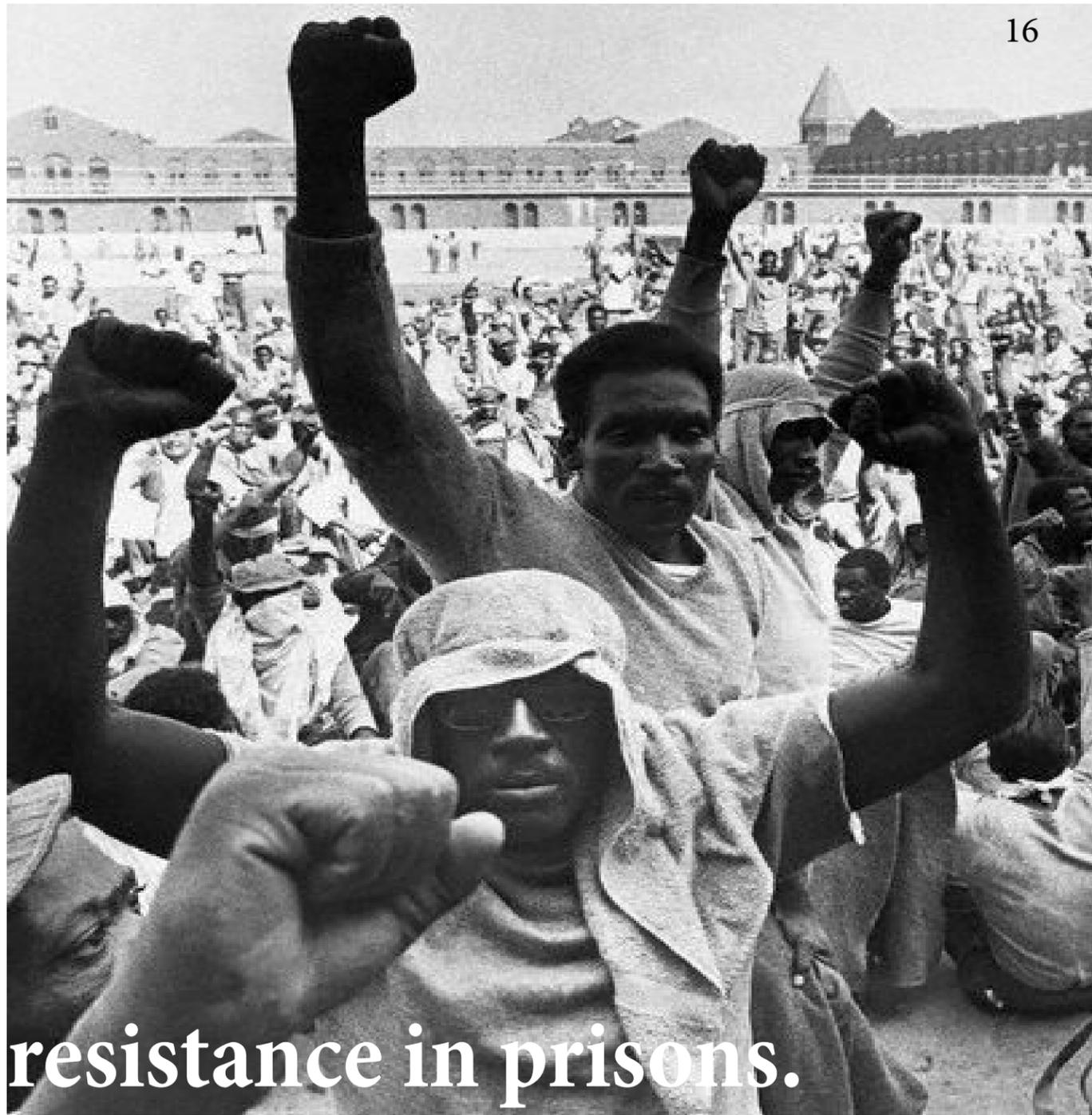


DECONSTRUCTING THE VALIDITY OF THE STATE

The emergence of nations built on violence relies on the oppression and destruction of various cultures of people to make way for the dominant one- wealthy, powerful, Anglo-Saxon, and Christian. The maintenance of the state depends upon the exploitation and rearranging of certain bodies. One of its most useful methods of control is through its power to determine in/visibility- not only of people, but of itself. Its construction of a falsely positive visibility of itself as a land of opportunity, of civilization, progress, and industrialization completely diminishes the cheap or unpaid labor upon which it thrives. The empire's preoccupation with the people who inhabit it manifests itself in a multitude of ways that involves coercion, surveillance, and tracking. This piece will not only examine how institutions of education, medicine, property, heterosexuality, business, politics, and relief all have investments in the multiplicity of oppression that give people no other option than to be complicit with the these systems of violence, but also how these acts of violence render them invalid and subject to justifiably being dismantled.

"Homelessness, unemployment, drug addiction, mental illness, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from public view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages. Prisons thus perform a feat of magic. Or rather the people who continually vote in new prison bonds and tacitly assent to a proliferating network of prisons and jails have been tricked into believing in the magic of imprisonment. But prisons do not disappear problems, they disappear human beings. And the practice of disappearing vast numbers of people from poor, immigrant, and racially marginalized communities has literally become big business."

- ANGELA DAVIS



resistance in prisons.

Authority's existence doesn't end in the policing of our lives in our work, homes, and communities. Prisoners live in a world of complete regulation of not just their opportunity, but even their hygiene, diets, and labor. It is behind bars that this regulation is taken to an extreme that invades every part of their existence. Their bodies are placed outside of the little respect and freedom people outside of prisons receive. It is there that they are cheap labor that came to be these sources of exploitation by criminalization based on their skin, sexual identity, and/or gender status.

Docile Bodies: Distancing the Individual from the State

Michel Foucault locates people within the system and defines their investment as complicit with it as docility. He says that power isn't held only by institutions, but also by the "docile bodies" upon which the powerful rely and is constructed by those who are complicit with them. "...after hundreds of years of open spaces and free expression, one adjusts it to coincide with the development of capitalism: it becomes an integral part of the bourgeois order." (Foucault.) Capitalism and its maintenance depend on these people. While I accept and would like to emphasize that people have power and without their exploitation and work, institutions would lose their strength, I would like to expand upon Foucault's discussion of power as it operates under the premise that those who are rendered docile by the institutions on which they rely and are complicit with remain docile and remain within the institution due to the micro ways in which it sustains them after realizing their docility and compliance. Furthermore, I would say that those who realize their docility may not entirely be quite as docile as Foucault defines, but rather, are stuck within the systems which oppress them. This realization is the initial step toward placing people in resistance to their oppressors. The people who occupy a state must be redefined as being complicit with it only under coercion, meaning, they are given hardly any other option than to invest in it. Foucault's "docile bodies" places people too far outside of resistance to the state to the extent that they may actually be rendered powerless.

-MICHEL FOUCAULT

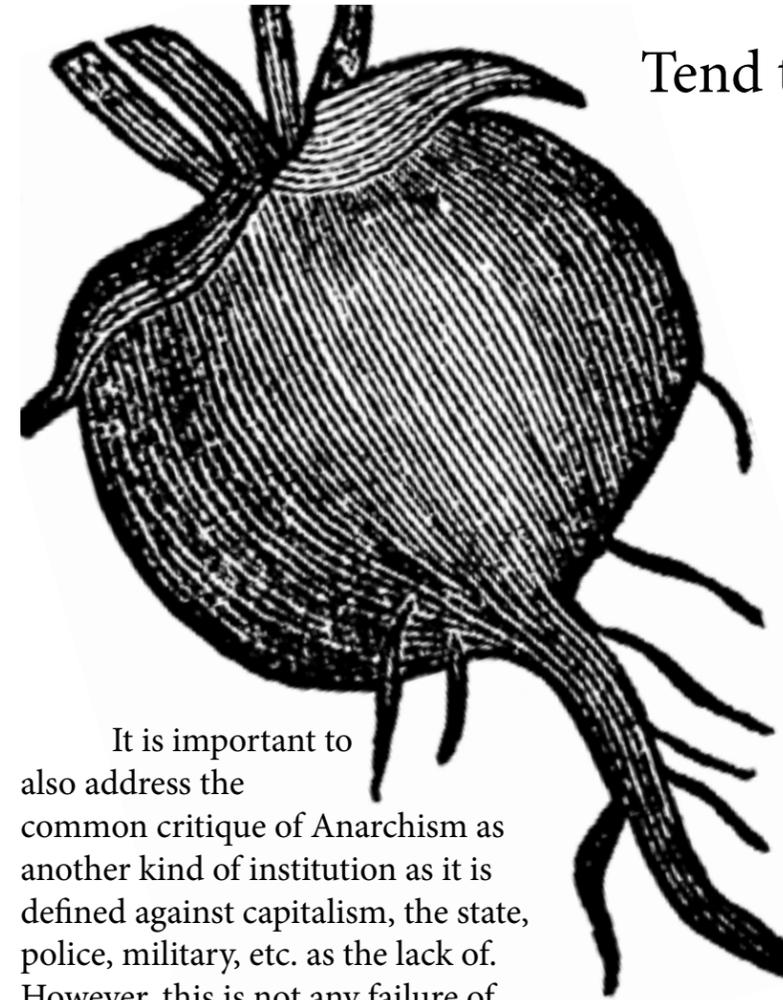
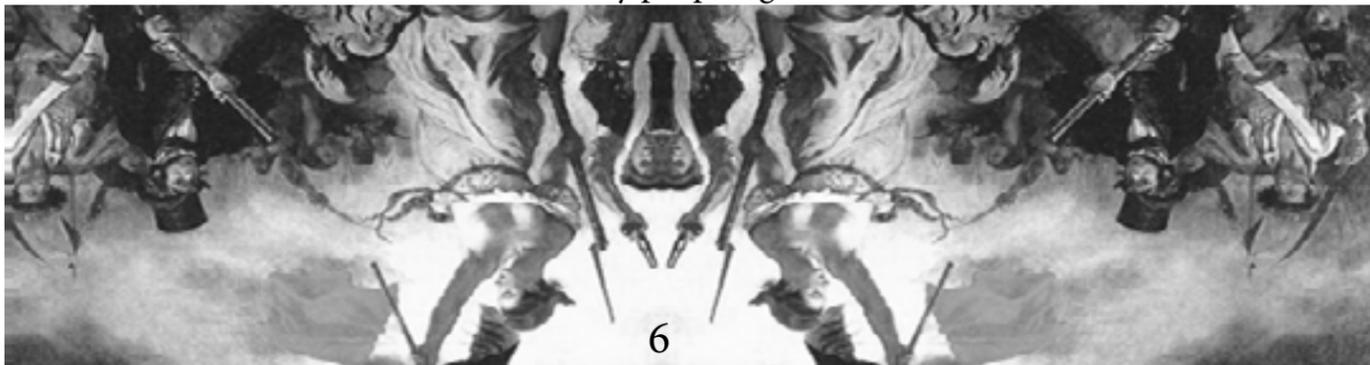
'WHERE THERE IS POWER, THERE IS RESISTANCE.'



Violent institutional responses to this realization of docility are example enough that, yes, as Foucault says, people are powerful, but rather than being powerless to changing the system, I would like to emphasize that this realization lends them the power to question and dismantle these unnecessary institutions. These violent responses being the sentencing of political prisoners, police brutality, and even hateful and violent responses from those the system serves. Foucault addresses the need to transgress law:

“...if repression has indeed been the fundamental link between power, knowledge, and sexuality since the classical age, it stands to reason that we will not be able to free ourselves from it except at a considerable cost: nothing less than a transgression of laws, a lifting of prohibitions, an irruption of speech, a reinstating of pleasure within reality, and a whole new economy in the mechanisms of power will be required.”

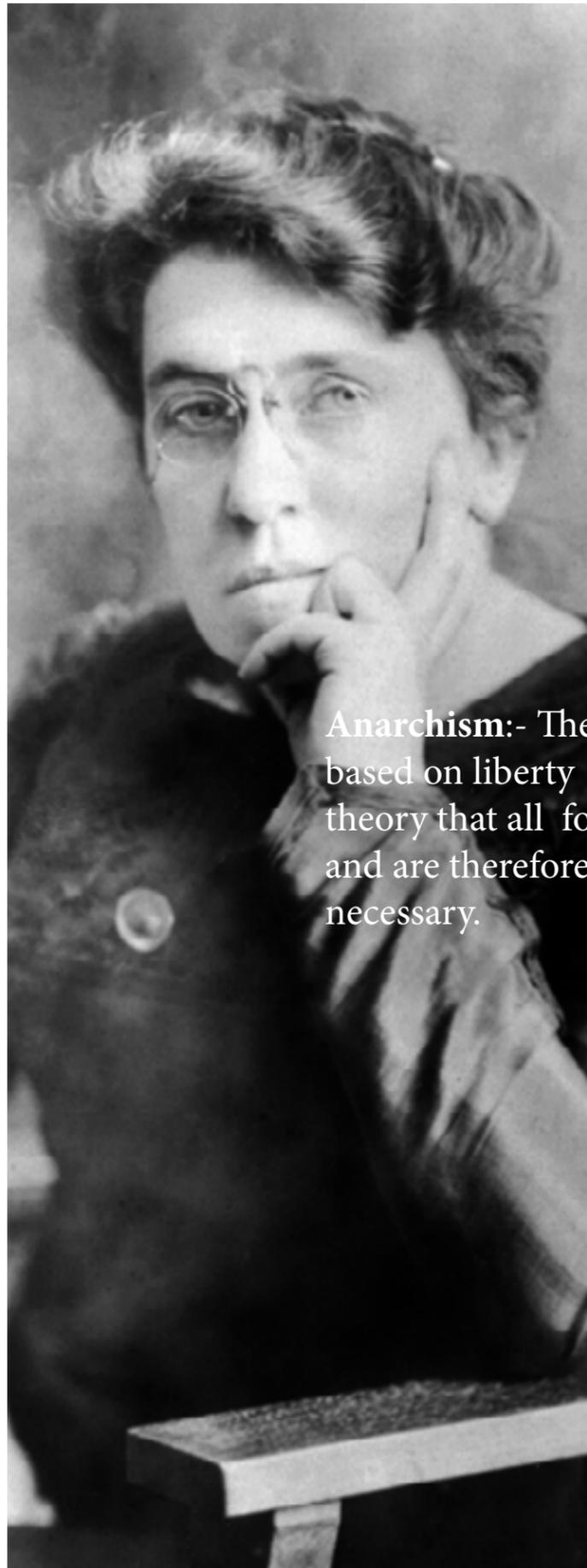
The empire is also successful in framing problems involving lack of resources and poverty not as the failures of relief programs, prisons, or the (lack of) access to resources, but on population- on the people. “One of the greatest innovations in the techniques of power in the eighteenth century was the emergence of ‘population’ as an economic and political problem.” From this, I would like to address this differentiation explicitly and simply: *people are not institutions and institutions are not people*. Institutions are violent, coercive, and to blame for poverty, colonization, assimilation, death and a multitude of other violations, not any sort of failure of the people. Institutions built upon these acts against people are invalid, but just as there is a difference between the institution and the individual, there is a very important difference between the violence of the state against people and the “violence,” rather resistance, used by people against the state.



It is important to also address the common critique of Anarchism as another kind of institution as it is defined against capitalism, the state, police, military, etc. as the lack of. However, this is not any failure of Anarchism, but the shortcomings of language. The aims of anarchism and community accountability are not to recreate these institutions, but to erase them entirely and to make way for liberation. It aims to remove the misconception that these establishments of regulation are necessary in maintaining order. A community stripped of compulsory and dull labor, brutal and destructive police forces and other oppressive systems would instead have a population of people working to uphold their community, supporting one another, and pursuing their interests. This community can then depend on one another to not only always act out of the best interests of their community, but to approach wrongdoings with rehabilitation and understanding rather than brutality and imprisonment. The women of color grassroots activist group INCITE! works towards addressing not only domestic violence women of color experience in their homes, but also police and colonial violence. Their work to distribute literature and resources paves the way towards the creation of communities that use accountability rather than turning to their violators: the police.

Tend to your communities and lay roots of resistance.

1. Remove reliance on police and the criminal justice system and expose their flaws.
2. Educate the community with literature and flyers.
3. Hold regular meetings.
4. Hold those who disrupt the community with rape or violence accountable- out them and their wrong-doing, destroy their property.
5. Find solutions for problems that can be fixed and/or forgiven.
6. Watch out for one another and use direct action to protect one another.
7. Hold potlucks, shows, meetings, etc. to create a sense of community.
8. Prioritize the safety of survivors and take into account what will help them feel safe.
9. Record police interactions and always remember your rights and remind others of their's.
10. House, aid, and assist all you can to migrant people and survivors.
11. Survey community members and be careful of who is let in. Exclude no one, never forget differences, and identify allies.
12. Create an alternate group to intervene in instances where police are usually considered as needed.
13. Use consent when in partnerships or otherwise and respect each others autonomy and agency.
14. Educate eachother- teach one another skills and concepts.
15. Feed eachother- grow a garden and prepare food together.



The recognition and acceptance of our differences, rejection of the state and need for community creates a space of opportunity where insurrectionary and direct action can lead to locations where these institutions are obsolete. It is important to clarify that the uses of insurrection in a movement towards the destruction of the state is that these acts of direct action are to be used against the institution, rather than people. The violence used by the state are assaults against people and is therefore wrong and unjustifiable, as Emma Goldman states in her definition of anarchism:

Anarchism:- The philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.

Calling for confrontation now is not a reappropriation of the violence of the state in our own lives; rather it is a refusal to work with this authority that dictates our lives, a refusal to wait for the right opportunity or moment of struggle to organize, but to forcefully take back what has been stolen. “Direct action against the authority in the shop, direct action against the authority of the law, direct action against the invasive, meddlesome authority of our moral code, is the logical consistent method of Anarchism” (Goldman.) Communities working against the maintenance of capitalism in their refusal to participate in the destruction and subjugation of human and non-human animal bodies are effectively working towards a neighborhood conducive to accountability.

visibility as violence. The state not only relies on violence against people, but its ability to cover it up and leave those people invisible. One of its tactics is to falsify a concern for the “victims” of its exploitation, or rather, the ones who “didn’t work hard enough” through supposed “relief” programs. Welfare and other programs whose definition is to help have tracked people into unsafe and criminalized fields. Dean Spade works with gender transgressive people through the justice system to help reform this mistreatment within the welfare system. “The purpose and result of vilifying welfare recipients and focusing on sexual morality and gender role transgression is the creation of coercive policies designed to force poor people to obey rigid gender and family norms” (Spade.) The visibility of these individuals who are “off the map” only matters when they are under surveillance in prisons, as menial labor, or undocumented labor and/or subject to vilification. Just as invisibility is detrimental to those who aren’t seen, I do not mean to imply that any visibility is good visibility, but rather there should be no occupation with seeing or being seen. The process of creating who gets to be seen as a woman, man, person of color, creates “others” subject to exploitation. The visibility of some gender transgressive and non-heterosexual individuals is not rooted in liberation, but in accumulating capital and relies on the exploitation of those that are invisible transgressive, gay, and lesbian people. “...the visibility of sexual identity is often a matter of commodification, a process that invariably depends on the lives and labor of invisible others” (Hennessy.) Hennessy also addresses how this commodification places an emphasis on pleasure that erases a history of struggle, “...visibility is still fetishized to the extent that it conceals the social relations new urban gay and queer identities depend on.” The visibility of certain queer groups hides the violent social relations and places pleasure in the foreground to be seen and causes their shared and not shared experiences of struggle to fade to the background. Foucault also mentions the link between pleasure and power, “Pleasure and power do not cancel or turn back against one another; they seek out, overlap, and reinforce one another. They are linked together by complex mechanisms and devices of excitation and incitement.” Thus, even the social relations of some queer individuals rely on violence and it is important to never disassociate pleasure from power and the two are inextricably linked.





Art by the Beehive Collective

The history of attaining property by the United States is built upon underpaid and unpaid slave labor. These violent acquisitions of land are as forgotten and unspoken of as the land that has been attained. Hawai'i, the Panama Canal, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guantanamo Bay are U.S. territory who's seizing, let alone existence, is hardly acknowledged. They are places of extreme regulation, torture, and suppression. The borders create a space of visibility where the people's land and ethnic history is used to vilify and lock them into a space as slaves to a distant state that rules and regulates them. Regulatory tactics can be seen in the numerous policies that have been put in place such as SB-1070, NAFTA, the Real ID Act, and Operation Streamline. The San Francisco based group HAVOQ has worked through the distribution and discussions of their zine *Undoing Borders* to challenge the ways in which territorial borders limit our freedom as migrant people, but also our interactions with other people. The borders applied to land are like the borders we apply to people that limit our perceptions of them and hinder possible alliances and coalition. I would like to add to their definition of the borders: these borders we put around bodies have been learned by the state as a way to limit human interaction, exploration, and migration. These notions of land as property, something we can own, should rather be seen as robbery, as another institution that regulates and hinders the possibility of community. HAVOQ addresses this in *Undoing Borders*, "It means looking at the diversity in im/migrant groups' relationships to the United States, and creating spaces for differences within the movement. It is from this platform that we recognize the power of vibrant, diverse spaces to be revolutionary sites to build collective liberation" (HAVOQ, *Undoing Borders* 8.)

SB-1070- This was a bill proposed in Arizona that requires immigrants to carry their documentation on them at all times and to have it ready to present to law enforcement; this bill would encourage racial profiling.

NAFTA- The North American Free Trade Agreement removed tariffs from American, Canadian, and Mexican trade that hurt farmers in Mexico.

Real ID Act- Federal law that requires people to provide proof of residency before receiving a state issued identification card.

Operation Streamline- Ordinance that any person caught crossing the border illegally can face federal charges.

Imaginations of Communities of Resistance, Queerness, and Liberation

The state has only made way for institutional acts of violence through oppression and imprisonment. The communities, states, and world we live in has been built upon violence against certain kinds of bodies and an erasing of their histories. An institution whose foundation is constructed upon the very acts they criminalize in individuals in the form of resistance doesn't deserve the cooperation or patience of the people it oppresses. Andrea Smith posed an important question to these acts at the 9th Annual Critical Race and Anti-Colonial Studies Conference in Montreal in 2009, "If the state's not the solution, what else could be the solution?" She went on to answer this question in her speech:

"So if you ask yourself the question 'What can I do?' there's not much you can do other than call the police or do nothing. But if you ask yourself the question 'what can we do?' then a lot of ideas start to develop and that's what we found. When we asked ourselves 'what can we do?' many groups had lots of creative ideas, so we started to collect them all, we put them on the website and then many groups started to develop their own *community accountability processes*."

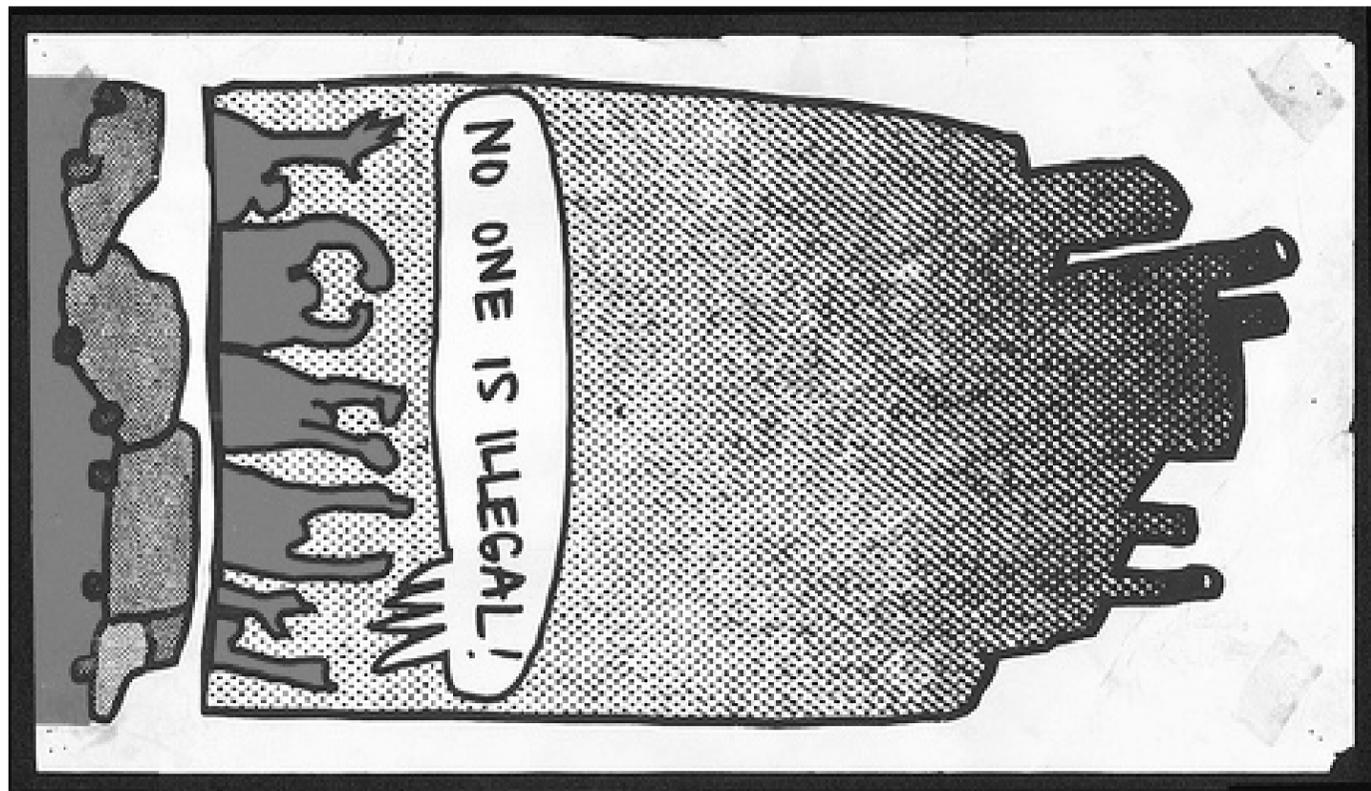


When borders placed on land can't be rigidly or singularly applied to people, an embodiment of resistance arises that can be seen in mixed race people such as mestiza. Gloria Anzaldua, a mestiza woman, writes in *Borderslands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* that this ambiguity challenges the mode of Western thinking that moves towards a single goal: simply defined understandings of people as they are defined by the land they are from and occupy.

"The work of mestiza consciousness is to break down the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner and to show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended. The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our languages, our thoughts. A massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness is the beginning of a long struggle, but one that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war." (Anzaldua.)

Physical representations of the resistance to these borders that police our lives and ability to relate to one another, such as mestiza, are examples of opportunities to break down these walls, dismantle those borders, and use these differences as grounds to resist the violence used to create these divisions. This is not to say an adaptation of mestiza consciousness should come along with an appropriation of mestiza identity, but rather the recreation of land borders as being applicable to individuals can be replaced with the consciousness of the mestiza. Our embodiment and attachment to the places that have come to define us shouldn't be maintained through institutional regulation of ethnicity, where we are allowed to live, or concrete separation from one another. Differences among each other or in ourselves can be grounds of struggle, but also of work to create communities of resistance and liberation from the walls that separate us.

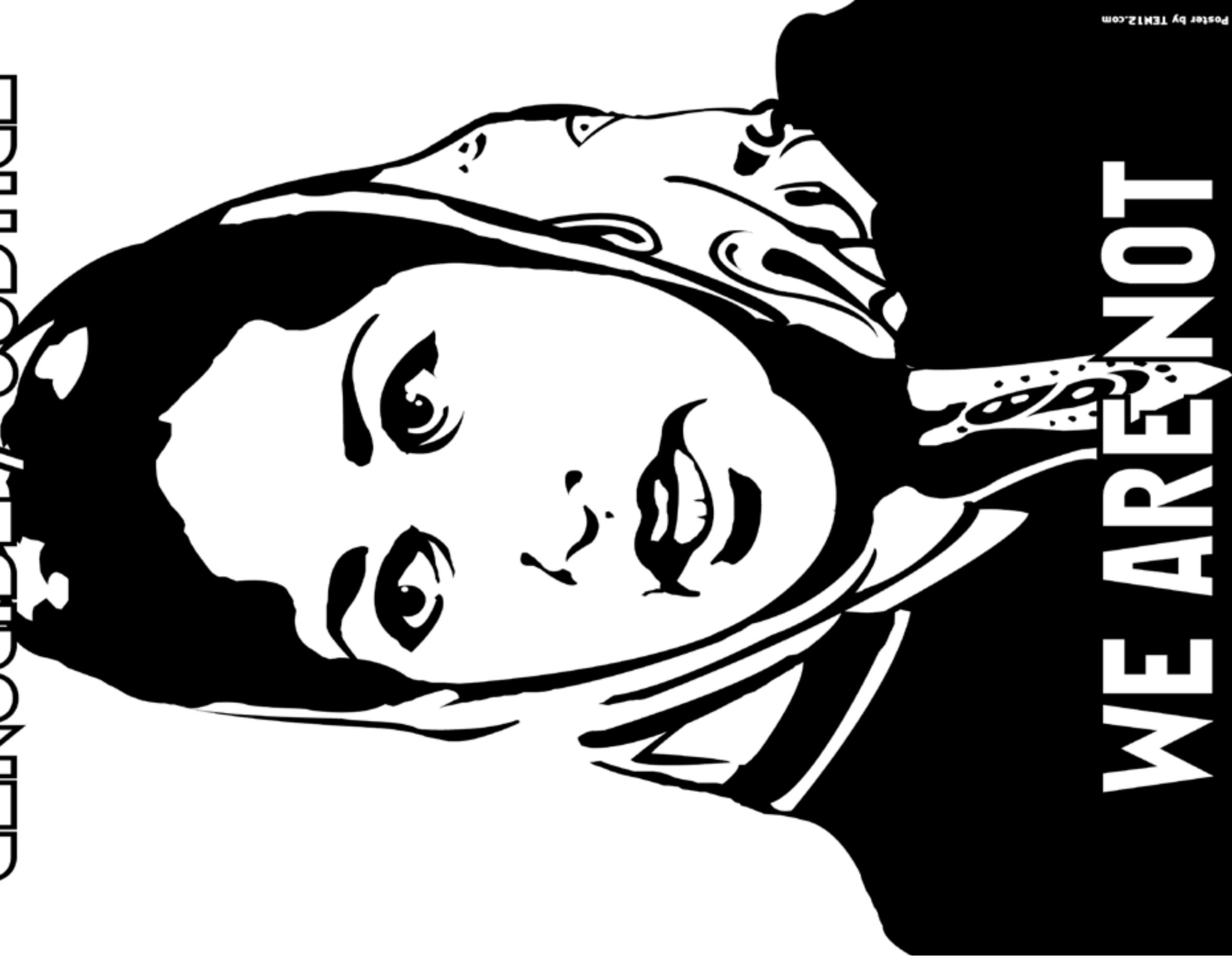
Mestiza is a mixed race woman, usually of Mexican, South American, Spanish, Portuguese, or Native American descent.



caminante,
no hay
puentes, se
hace
puentes al
andar.

- gloria anzaldua

GENOCIDEE ≠ JUSTICE



**WE ARE NOT
THE ENEMY**

INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence
www.incite-national.org

MEENA, R.A.M.A. Poster by TEM12.com