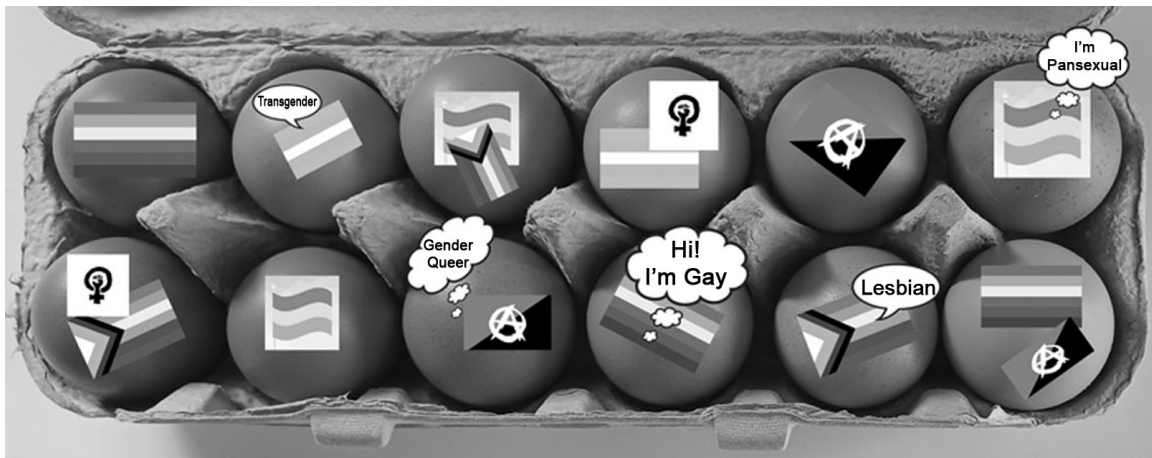


## Embryonic Movement Invades Tennessee



banner of Earnest Embryos Effusively Eagerly Knowing! (EEEEK!) they will travel in a refrigerated van driven by Safer Way to Tennessee where they will invade the Tennessee Senate and demand the bill be dished and ditched.

“You are Marxist Anarchist cells!” screamed the Republican house speaker at EEEEEK!, “And you’re trying to support perversion!”

“We’re not only cells!” replied the EEEEEK spokes ember Yo, and they started chanting “We raise hell! We’re not cells! We support queers! Now and when we’re really here!”

Tennessee is not known for being a hot bed of progressive ideals.

Though it does tend to be very hot hot hot temperature wise, hotter than ever because of that “climate change” but we digress. However the recent nazi rally in Nashville and book bannings throughout the state are apparently not enough to comfort state fascists.

As we go to press, the state senate of Tennessee is trying to push through a bill to ban all rainbow/Pride flags from public or private schools (though nazi/confederate flags could be ok). In a rare equal-opportunity act, the bill may also ban Black Lives Matter symbols.

The bill is hitting some snags in the state senate but the newly personified embryos of Alabama have taken up the fight against this bill. They are organizing (though possibly without any organs) to support queer youth and free speech in Tennessee. Under the

## YBCA: Stop Censoring Art for Palestine

by Blue

“We’ve come to tell San Francisco and the people of Yerba Buena that we’re not gonna stop,” said Maisa Morrar of Palestinian Feminist Collective. “We’re gonna show up in your art exhibits, at the Academy of Sciences, at the Golden Gate Bridge, at the Bay Bridge, at the Federal Building — we’re gonna be there. This genocide is one too many lives lost.”

This quote is from a peaceful action at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) Love Letter to SOMA festival on Feb 15th where artists champoy, Courtney Desiree Morris, Jeffrey Cheung, Leila Weefur, Lukaza Branfman-Verissimo, Paz G, Sholeh Asgary and Tracy draped and decorated their own installations with spray-painted pro-Palestinian slogans and tarps calling for a ceasefire. The eight artists were participants in “Bay Area Now 9,” the ninth iteration of YBCA’s signature triennial exhibition highlighting artists working throughout the Bay Area’s nine counties. Protestors passed out “Love Letter to Gaza” flyers with a list of demands for YBCA leadership including that the museum join the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic



and Cultural Boycott of Israel and stop censoring artists’ language, work and programming that focuses on Palestinian liberation. YBCA had refused to allow “Free Palestine” on the building marquee outside of the exhibit.

All that week protestors had disrupted museums in New York, London and Berlin in solidarity with Palestine. 800 people flooded New York’s Museum of Modern Art with pro-Palestinian chants and flyers, causing security to shut down the galleries within 15 minutes. Other protests occurred at the Brooklyn Museum and Jewish Museum in New York, the British Museum in London, and the Hamburger Bahnhof museum in Berlin.

The Bay Area artists launched an email campaign after the protest and 2200 people sent emails to YBCA within a week. YBCA responded by closing the museum and removing the artists’ installations.

As of March 3rd the museum is still closed. I tried to call the office to support the artists but the voicemail was full. A boycott of the museum has been launched. Letters of support were sent by YBCA workers and staff in solidarity with Palestine and the “Bay Area Now 9” exhibit artists. You can sign letters of support at [bit.ly/artists4gaza](https://bit.ly/artists4gaza).

**Boycott YBCA  
Free Palestine!**

### Uncommitted for the Win

We are usually all in for commitment (unless it’s a commitment ceremony) but this is the season of Uncommitted.

With incredible organizing by Listen to Michigan, Uncommitted took 13% of the vote in the Michigan democratic primary, and for the first time, democrats actually noticed that their constituents hate what they’re doing. Suddenly, congressional leaders Patty Murray and Adam Smith from Washington — which votes on March 12, congresswoman and VP Kamala Harris issued calls to Biden to vigorously pursue a ceasefire, and Biden decided to airdrop 38,000 meals on Gaza (to feed an estimated half a million starving people).

The Uncommitted Washington campaign is rapidly picking up steam. The largest labor union, United Food & Commercial Workers Local 3000, representing around 50,000 workers, has endorsed, along with The Stranger, Seattle’s leading alternative newspaper.

If you can vote and your state has an uncommitted option, make that your bubble (even if you have to choke on saying you’re a democrat to do it).

LAGAI  
3543 18th Street #26  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
[info@lagai.org](mailto:info@lagai.org)

# Terry Bisson



Terry Ballentine Bisson was an author, editor, political activist and friend to many. He was a Hugo and Nebula award winning writer of seven novels, numerous short works of fiction, and over a dozen children's books. He was the author of *On a Move: The Story of Mumia Abu Jamal*, *Fire on the Mountain*, and *The Left Left Behind*. He also wrote the long-running "This Month in History" series for *Locus Magazine*. His progressive politics landed him in jail for refusing to give testimony to a Grand Jury investigating the radical underground. He operated Jacobin Books, a "revolutionary" mail-order book service, from 1985 to 1990. According to his publisher, PM Press, he "was as much an activist's activist as he was a literary powerhouse."

Terry was born February 12, 1942 in Kentucky. He attended Grinnell College in Iowa and the University of Louisville. After a brief time in Louisville, he moved to NY City, where he lived on and off for some thirty years, with sojourns in the hippie communes of the Southwest and South from 1969-1975. He worked as an auto mechanic and as a magazine and book editor and taught in several writing programs including at the New School in New York. He was part of the New Left, associated with the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee. He moved to the Bay Area in 2002 with his third wife, Judy Jensen. He had six kids.

In San Francisco, Terry edited the "Outspoken Authors" series for PM Press, and hosted the SF in SF reading series for many years.

His close friend, Lisa Roth, writes:

"Terry was a life-long anti-racist, anti-imperialist, grand jury resister and brilliant author and editor. Also the inventor of the gravel-stuffed pita bread sandwich for handing out at anti-KKK marches.

*Fire on the Mountain* is his wonderful alternate history picturing the world as it would have been if John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry had been successful.

He might be most famous for his short story "They're Made Out of Meat," which has been widely circulated online, translated into dozens of languages, and made into radio plays and videos.

You can read a long bio and many of his stories on his website, [terrybisson.com](http://terrybisson.com).

Terry's RSVP to the FBI, written in response to being subpoenaed to a grand jury brings together the best of his politics, sharp wit and glorious writing and fuck-you attitude."

**The Outspoken and the Incendiary:  
A Literary Celebration of the Life and Work  
of Terry Bisson**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2024, 7:00 PM PST**  
**The Lost Church, 988 Columbus Ave  
San Francisco**  
Tickets \$15, Registration required at  
<http://www.terrybisson.com/tomorrowing/city-lights/>

## RSVP to the FBI

*(On being subpoenaed to give information to a Federal Grand Jury investigating revolutionary movements inside the USA)*

Thank you for handing me this invitation to talk to you  
But I am otherwise engaged.

Thank you for offering me this opportunity  
to have a heart to heart  
with the murderers of Martin Luther King  
and Fred Hampton,  
not to mention Crazy Horse  
Michael Stewart and Eleanor Bumpurs  
and the nameless millions  
who do have and will have names  
But I am otherwise engaged.

Thank you for inviting me  
to sit down with the brothers  
of the somocistas  
(as you describe yourselves)  
their long knives eager  
for the blood of teachers  
the blood of nuns  
the blood of Sandino  
which is right now running  
bright like a river in the veins of young  
Nicaragua  
But I am otherwise engaged.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity  
to spit on the graves of Sacco and Vanzetti  
to dishonor the memory of the Rosenbergs  
or of my ex father in law  
who spent 10 years not being an actor  
rather than 10 minutes being a collaborator  
But I am otherwise engaged.

Thank you for inviting me to run with the hounds  
howling through the ruined cities  
try ing to hunt down the  
FALN, the BLA  
the ten or the hundred most wanted  
most ready and willing and able  
to resist with arms  
and heart and ideology  
your world  
wide crimes  
But I am otherwise engaged.

And seriously, thanks  
for giving me this chance  
to stand fast with the Puerto Ricans  
who have gone to jail silent since 1936  
rather than drink from your bootprints  
To stand fast with the New Afrikans  
who like Nat Turner "never said a mumbling word"  
To stand fast with the Palestinians  
steadfast in Israeli prisons  
the Irish deep and defiant in Long Kesh.  
the Africans on Robben Island  
scorning your offers with songs  
To stand fast with the children of Lumumba  
and Che and Malcolm X  
not to mention my own children  
and your own as well  
Thank you for this chance to stand  
not with the defeated but the defiant  
who pick up the gun  
who pick up the pen  
who pick up the baby and the struggle  
Thank you for this chance  
to stand with humanity against you  
Don't mind if I do.



# Sekou Odinga

Sekou Odinga died on January 12th. He was a u.s. political prisoner for 33 years until his release from prison in 2014. Sekou Odinga was a revolutionary. He dedicated his life to fighting for a better and more just world. He was a vital member of several Black Liberation organizations over the years: Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity, the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army

Sekou Odinga joined the Organization of Afro-America Unity in 1965 but left after Malcolm X was murdered and founded the Bronx chapter of the Black Panther Party. When speaking about why he joined the Party, he said, "What attracted me more than anything else was the stand against police brutality." He was arrested in 1969 along with 20 other Panthers accused of planning coordinated attacks on two police stations and one education office in NYC. The Panther 21 were all acquitted in 1971 after a huge grassroots campaign. As police and FBI repression increased exponentially in the early 1970's Odinga went underground and joined the Black Liberation Army.

He was arrested again in 1981 and was convicted of helping in the escape of Assata Shakur in 1979 and of conspiracy and racketeering related to the robbery of a Brinks truck in 1981. He never pled guilty to any of the charges but in answering a question on Democracy Now in 2016 about Assata's escape, he said he was "proud to be associated with the liberation of Assata Shakur." He spent the next 33 years in prison: a prisoner of war and political prisoner of the u.s. empire. After his release in 2014, Sekou Odinga remained a fighter for justice and freedom for all political prisoners. He will be missed.

# Aaron Bushnell

Aaron Bushnell, a 25-year-old from San Antonio, Texas, planned his last action carefully. He walked up to the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C. and filmed his final statement:

"I am an active-duty member of the United States Air Force, and I will no longer be complicit in genocide. I'm about to engage in an extreme act of protest, but, compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonizers, it's not extreme at all. This is what our ruling class has decided will be normal."

Then he set up his phone to capture himself calmly dousing himself with liquid and lighting himself on fire.

A cop ran toward him, pointing a gun and shouting, "Get on the ground." Another officer responded differently.

"I don't need guns. I need a fire extinguisher," he told his fellow officer.

At an online vigil organized by the military resisters' organization, About Face, other veterans repeated that as a refrain, a fitting metaphor for what so many are feeling about the genocide in Gaza and the many wars being waged by u.s. and u.s. supported military forces around the world.

*We don't need guns. We need fire extinguishers.*

I have struggled with how to honor Aaron's commitment and passion, without encouraging anyone to follow his example. Veterans, conscientious objectors and other active military members, have expressed the same conflict.

"We desperately need you alive in the struggle," said Ramon Mejia of About Face in an interview on NPR in the wake of Bushnell's suicide.

In Portland, Oregon, dozens of vets burned fatigues and uniforms, like the ones Aaron wore when he immolated himself.

Levi Pierpont, a friend of Aaron's from the air force who left the military as a conscientious objector in 2023, writes in the *Guardian*:

Aaron did not die in vain. He has already inspired so many to stand up for truth and justice. It breaks my heart that his life ended this way. I could never do what he did, and I don't believe anyone should do what he did. But we'll never get Aaron back. All we can do is hear the message he died to shine a spotlight on: the horrors of the genocide in Gaza, and the complicity we share as military members and taxpayers of a government deeply invested in violence.... If you're a service member, I

*continued on page 3*

# Michael Kensinger

Michael Eugene Kensinger died January 14, 2022. Mike loved traveling and lived in many places before settling in San Francisco. He became an activist in the AIDS movement and took part in many demonstrations including the famous demonstration at Burroughs Wellcome in Burlingame CA, January 1988 when demonstrators climbed on the roof of the building waving the gay flag and banners reading 'Burroughs Unwelcome' and 'Stop Aids Profiteering.' Mike was one of 19 people arrested for that action.

Mike created blocks for the Names AIDS Quilt Project to honor friends, crafted imaginative political displays in his Valencia St. storefront window, collected soaps for donation to the homeless, and built a community of neighbors who would watch out for each other. He was also a long time reader of UltraViolet. He leaves behind family and a large community that misses him.



# Queers for Palestine Goes Global

by Deeg

As we write on March 3, the official number of Palestinians killed in Gaza is over 30,000, and twice as many have been seriously wounded. The U.S. funded and supported Israeli war machine has announced there will be another onslaught on 1.5 million Palestinians now living in Rafah, having been forced there by the bombing in Northern Gaza. At least 500,000 Gazans are starving right now and on February 29, the Israeli military killed over 100 people who were lining up to get food from an aid truck.

This, despite the International Court of Justice ruling in January, in a case brought by South Africa, that ... "Israel must take action to prevent genocide," and that "The State of Israel shall, in accordance with its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime



of Genocide, in relation to the Palestinian people as a group protected by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, desist from the commission of any and all acts within the scope of Article II of the Convention, in particular: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to the members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; and (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group." Only the UN security council has authority to enforce rulings of the court, but u.s. pressure and u.s. vetoes have prevented any resolution.

People all over the world have been trying to stop the genocide. The Yemen based Houthis have attacked shipping in the Red Sea, and the u.s. used this as an excuse to bomb Yemen. Everywhere, activists are blocking bridges, highways, buildings, and airports. In Australia protesters blocked the Ganges, a boat from the Israel-related shipping company Zim, whose boats have also been blocked at u.s. ports over the past decade.

With the exception of the Houthis, about whom UV has no information other than what we read in the media, all of these actions have involved identified queer and trans people, including actions in what is increasingly becoming known as the "Queers for Palestine" movement. Palestinian queer and trans people have been increasingly visible in creating and speaking for this movement.

In October Queers In Palestine published **A Liberatory Demand from Queers in Palestine**, which has been signed by over 500 queer groups across the world:

*"We call on queer and feminist activists and groups around the world to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people in their resistance to displacement, land theft, and ethnic cleansing and their struggle for the liberation of their lands and futures from Zionist settler-colonialism. This call cannot be answered only by sharing statements and signing letters but by an active engagement with decolonial and liberatory struggles in Palestine and around the globe..."*

*Shut down main streets. Organize a sit-in in your local central station. Interrupt the flow of commerce.*

*Compacency is a choice."*

In New York on October 23, Gays4Gaza Ceasefire and Queers for Palestine Liberation marched through Manhattan streets, with heavy police presence following behind them. Queer Muslims 4 Palestine and Queers for a Liberated Palestine were two of the several New York City-based groups that organized a jumah prayer for LGBTQIA+ Muslims at the Stonewall National Monument on Dec. 15, 2023. On Jan. 23, ACT UP NY announced their solidarity with Palestinians and endorsed the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement, saying, "ACT UP has always been a rainbow coalition fighting in the struggles for queer and trans liberation. We recognize that Israel's efforts to pinkwash genocide weaponize queerness to indiscriminately brutalize Palestinians of all genders and sexualities. ACT UP NY is proud to be a diverse group of non-partisan individuals united in anger to end HIV/AIDS, with many of our members being part of the LGBTQ community. This is why we join Queers For Liberation to call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza."

In Los Angeles, a coalition of groups identifying as No Pride in Genocide, and No Pride in Apartheid demonstrated against congressperson Jimmy Gomez, who is on the LG-

BTQ+ equality caucus but has not signed on to the call for a ceasefire. Queer and trans people have participated in many actions in Seattle, the Port of Tacoma, and Portland.

In London dyke activists "hacked" 100 pro-Israel transit ads. Queer and trans people were also among the hundreds of people who blocked roads around the UK parliament on January 6.

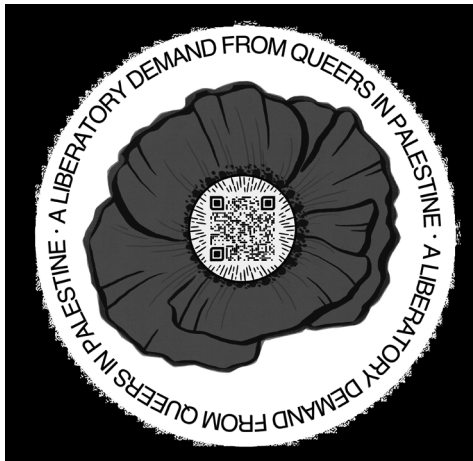
In the SF Bay Area Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism (QUIT!) formed in 2000 to support the second Intifada. One of our first actions was the "settling" of Berkeley's Starbucks, "a café without people for people without a café." In 2005 Israel launched the "Brand Israel" campaign which depicted Israel as a gay paradise. QUIT! launched a worldwide campaign to boycott World Pride event in occupied Jerusalem first planned for 2005, and then unsuccessfully held in 2006. QUIT! demanded for over a decade that Frameline, the Bay Area's LGBTQ film festival, stop working with the Israeli consulate, including disrupting a showing of Yossi and Jagger, a film glorifying gay soldiers during the Israeli military occupation of Lebanon. In 2015, QUIT! organized filmmakers to boycott Frameline, and held a separate film festival called Outside the Frame. The following year, Frameline unofficially stopped accepting sponsorship from the consulate, and this year confirmed to the press that it had no relationship with the consulate.

QUIT! has also been part of the block the boat coalition and supported the inclusion of Palestinians in ethnic studies. We are part of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement and have done various guerrilla theater campaigns, as well as participating in actual campaigns against Pillsbury and HP.

For years we have periodically held Queers of the Plaza (QOTP) actions at Harvey Milk Plaza in the Castro. When QUIT! and Gay Shame held the first QOTP action after the Israeli bombardment of Gaza on November 18, almost 200 people came, and we blocked the intersection at 18<sup>th</sup> and Castro. The following month 300 people joined a QOTP action, which blocked traffic in the Castro before marching down Market St. to join a mass rally.

In addition to QUIT!, and Gay Shame, there is now East Bay Queers for a Liberated Palestine, several queer/trans affinity groups, and Mama Ganoush, a Palestinian performance artist and activist, who has organized shows and events. East Bay Queers for a Liberated Palestine held an autonomous event on Feb. 3 by Lake Merritt in Oakland. Queer and trans activists have been visible in pretty much every solidarity event in the Bay Area, including being among the 78 activists arrested blocking the Bay Bridge in November.

The big LGBTQ+ non-profits and political orgs have stayed away from condemning, or mentioning, the Israeli genocide in Gaza. In October the human rights campaign (HRC) issued a statement sympathizing with Israelis and



Palestinians, and still has gone no further. On February 3, hundreds of people organized by "queer Palestinians, other queer SWANA people, and their allies," protested outside an HRC gala at the Hilton in New York, also pointing out that weapons manufacturer Northrup Grumman is listed as an HRC platinum partner. On February 14, Washington DC based No Pride in Genocide, a "recently launched coalition of queer and trans Palestinians, Arab and SWANA (Southwest Asian and North African) people, Jews and allies," organized a march from Dupont Circle to the HRC headquarters. Their website includes a downloadable "toolkit."

On February 8, SF Pride issued a statement that called for a "Ceasefire and Release of all Hostages," and named the genocide in Gaza.

## The gay zionists

In October, the pinkwashing organization A Wider Bridge, posted a petition calling on LGBTQ people to condemn Hamas. California organizations supporting this call include Equality California and Congregation Sha'ar Zahav. California "gay" state senator Scott Wiener, who is now one of the most powerful politicians in California, has spoken at Zionist rallies, including rallies in January opposing a San Francisco ceasefire resolution. SF "gay" supervisors Rafael Mandelman and Matt Dorsey also opposed the resolution, which ultimately passed. In January, when a queer/trans co-

alition organized a protest outside a gentrification fundraiser that featured Weiner and Mandelman, the group sponsoring the event called it off, rather than face the protest.

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) is the leading Zionist organization in the Bay Area, and has organized rallies against ceasefire resolutions in SF and other cities. JCRC led the fight to remove Palestine liberation from the California model ethnic studies curriculum, and against an "Arab language pathway" in SF Public Schools. They have fought BDS campaigns in the Bay Area, and are quick to call any criticism of Israel, including from Jewish organizations, antisemitic. JCRC showcases its support to and from various gay politicians.

## What's Next for Queers for Palestine

It is almost six months since the Gaza genocide started. Palestinians in the West Bank live under increasingly severe martial law and the constant threat of arrest and indefinite detention.

We are now entering the season where commemorations of the Stonewall rebellion are planned. At the end of June, SF will hold one of the biggest tourist events in the city. We will have to decide whether and how we will relate to these very public showcases. It was at the 2004 Pride parade that a Zionist PR organization handed out 10,000 free CDs of young dancing Israelis to publicize the 2005 Jerusalem World Pride. Will there be national disruptions under slogans such as "no pride in genocide?" Will mainstream non-profits organize Palestine support contingents to march several blocks after Wiener and Mandelman? Will radicals continue to try to ignore corporate pride?

## Aaron Bushnell

*continued from page 2*

Self-immolation as protest is more common than many of us realize. After David Buckel, a gay rights lawyer turned urban gardener, burned himself to death in Prospect Park in Brooklyn in 2018, a *New York Times* article listed dozens of incidents I never heard of. Nearly everyone has heard of the Vietnamese monks who used that method of calling the world to action during the American War against their country, but hardly anyone seems to remember Mohammed Bouazizi, the 26-year-old street merchant who kicked off the Arab Spring by burning himself to death in Tunisia in 2010.

Masha Gessen reports that when the Soviet Union crushed the Prague Spring uprising in 1968, a 59-year-old Polish war veteran, Ryszard Siwiec, self-immolated, and later that year, a 20-year-old Czech student, Jan Palach, did the same.

Since Aaron's death, media have scrambled to get a picture of the man who in many ways personifies a despair that nearly everyone who has been watching and grieving the assault on Gaza these last months shares. He grew up on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, in a tight-knit, authoritarian and likely abusive Christian community. The Air Force was his way out, but that, of course, was another authoritarian and abusive environment.

While stationed in San Antonio, he prepared for transition to civilian life by studying for a bachelor's in software engineering, and got involved in the local Left. At an event organized by the Party for Socialism and Liberation (according to the NY Times), he met people from a mutual aid group called San Antonio Collective Care, and became active in doing street feeds and other solidarity with them. According to friends quoted in the media, he identified as an anarchist and anti-imperialist. One friend told the NY Post that a few days before his death, they had talked on the phone about "their shared identities as anarchists and what kinds of risks and sacrifices were needed to be effective."

He left a handwritten will, leaving all his savings to the Palestine Children's Relief Fund.

His "extreme act of protest" has certainly generated a lot of attention, and perhaps even a tiny bit of movement, though activists have pointed out that much of the media has focused on his traumatic childhood and speculations about his mental health, barely mentioning the death toll and displacement in Gaza. Staffers for Ceasefire, a group of dissident staffers in the White House, used his death to criticize Biden for ignoring their demands and the many voices of constituents calling for an end to the violence.

"President Biden has the unique power to mitigate the harms being done - not through useless backchannel conversations, but through established processes of international law and strong diplomacy. He can choose to change our current trajectory of unnecessary destruction," they said in a statement.

In some corners of the internet, Aaron is hailed as a martyr and hero, with posters of his final words getting thousands of shares on social media. But for most people, his death has led us to ask, "What can I do, that I'm not already doing, to live every day more fully for justice?"

--Kate

## A Victory

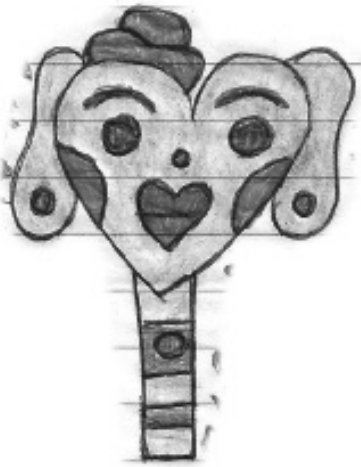
Dear LAGAI (staff and readers). A few months ago I wrote an article about living with Alzheimer's (terminal) here in Warkworth Prison [Canada] and all the struggles being in prison living with this disease. The story was about myself, sadly.

I was saddened when I was given a card that you sent telling me that the UltraViolet newspaper with that story was returned to your office and that I could no longer receive my paper because of changed rules [in the prison] after 8 years of getting the newspaper from you.

So I took the power of voice I learned all these years from the LAGAI paper and decided to find a Human Rights lawyer and I filed a sexual discrimination suit against the prison. (Thanks to you, I won!)

After several meetings with upper Management, my lawyer and myself, it was decided (after they read several past copies I had saved because of certain stories) that the UltraViolet newspaper was approved again and placed on the Master Mailing List permanently.

So could you please send the last 3 issues I've missed so much and thank you for giving me the courage to fight for my rights to be gay here in Canada. *Jaime McCallum, Warkworth Federal Prison, Ontario Canada*



By Augie Carrion #C47698, San Diego S.P./A3-237, 480 Alta Rd. San Diego CA 92170

## Shorts from Inside

**Hey there my friends and family.** Sorry that I lost contact with you all there for a while but things have been rough with me here lately. It's just part of doing time and losing track of yourself and the things around you. I tend to visit that dark place a lot beings I'm now in here with 2 lifewithouts and no chance in going home. You tell yourself that it's going to be alright and pick yourself up and keep moving. I usually have the people from other prisons put their arms around me and tell me that it's going to be alright, but here recently they [the prison] stopped inmate to inmate mail. Now I can't stay in contact with no one else that is locked up and to be honest it hurts me real bad because that's the only contacts I've had throughout my 15 years in prison. But like always I pick myself up and dust myself off. Writing you gives me some kind of comfort so thanks for that. *MP, West Liberty KY [write to us anytime!]*

**I'm writing this letter** of dutiful notification regarding the recurring unconstitutional prison censorship being again perpetrated in all correctional institutions in Florida once again targeting UltraViolet. They just recently rejected one incoming edition based upon one column in which Black Panther Mutulu Shakur was honorably mentioned. *BT, Clermont FL* [We have been seeing a lot of UVs returned from several Florida prisons with letters from the administration citing different reasons. We have tried to appeal some of these with no success. It is an on-going problem that we wish we could fix]

**I'm a Transgender 29 years** old, serving an 18 year sentence in federal prison. I have been thru three institutions from 2020-2014 and because of the craziness of the transfer process, I haven't been able to notify LAGAI about my address changes. But somehow your amazing staff have found me and sent me my UltraViolet every time! I wish I could shake all your hands because you really show me, make me feel appreciated and that one of the LGBTQ+ organizations actually care!. I enjoy reading all the content. Happy new year to all and let's keep on making every day count. *PMC, Talladega AL*

**I'm one of those individuals** who spent my entire life hiding my sexual orientation. It wasn't until I came to prison, that I came out as gay or bi, causing me to face the fear of those not wanting to socialize with me. It will never cease to amaze me that individuals have no understanding that it hurts that others will get up from a table just because you sat down. I look forward to newspapers like this and interacting with others who know what I mean. *RB, London OH*

**Please stop** sending me your Pro-Terrorism, Anti-Jew,

## The California Model

Back in July of 2023 I read an article about how the Correctional Officers and California Peace Officer Association Union were debating over the "California Model" of prison reform by gov. Newsome. Most officers claimed, at this meeting, that they didn't know what the California Model was and that they didn't have a voice in the matter and were upset over this approach and changes. Of course all the Correctional Officers will not support anything for us prisoners who have suffered decades of abuse. And so at this meeting, officers spoke up and said they deal with a lot of post-traumatic stress and depressions that are job related leading to divorce, addiction and even suicide.

I find this funny and a line of bullshit! This is where they play the 'victims' because this is how they come together in an attempt to stop any and all positive programming or prison reform that does benefit us prisoners and will make prisons safer with positive peaceful living conditions. The C/O's don't want this. They want job security and violence and want the keys to control prisons and our living conditions. They want to keep the corruption and continued inhumane conditions pressing up on us making our time harder.

Now most of us prisoners are on the Visionary Path United, to change the prison system and laws to get us all home or get a parole date for a second chance at freedom. These C/O's know it is us prisoners who have psychological disorders related to the stress of living in prison and how they continue to push us around like a pawn on a chessboard. Some officers were concerned about not having their equipment and their status because that goes out the door if they participate in the California Model. It's now going to be incentives and pro-social relationships, not force and control: No hand cuffs, no mace, no batons, vests, walkie talkies, green uniforms. Well, it's part of this prison reform transformation and it will work for both the incarcerated and C/O's who will support it and truly understand it's about treating us prisoners with respect. Stop putting labels on us, we are paying our debts to society so treat us with dignity and stop trying to dehumanize us and divide us.

But you won't crush our fighting spirits to change the game in prison with this California Model. It's time for C/O's to stop playing the victim and be part of the solution, not the problem. *Angel M Garza #B1 7852, Cor-SATF/E-1-146, PO Box 5242, Corcoran CA 93212*

baby-killer supporting newsletter. *KG, New Castle IN* [we surely will]

**Perhaps I should tell you** how much I adore your little newspaper. I know the two causes you are most concerned with are: 1. the rights of ALL LGBTQ+ people and 2. the abolition of carceral institutions. Nevertheless, in the pages of UltraViolet you take a broad based/holistic approach to all the myriad of social ills facing our world. From genocide, war, poverty and economic exploitation to the modern day slavery of the prison system, the hegemony of our heterosexist society and its unjust cismativity. Both LGBTQ+ rights and the cause of prison abolition absolutely must be part of a much larger movement that fights for everyone's rights [and] strives to create a new social order dedicated to universal legal, social, economic and political freedom for ALL. Honestly I think it's fantastic how you folks at LAGAI **think globally but act locally.** Hence you comprehend, better than most, that oppression is oppression is oppression. This is why I must tell you that your work in publishing UltraViolet is a great inspiration to me. Yours in solidarity. *Al Rea South Suffield CT*

**Just writing to update** my address after an unnecessary move by the BOP [Bureau of Prisons]. But wanted to thank you all for all you do. UltraViolet is a little bit of sunshine and hope in what is a normally grey and bleary existence. Stay strong and safe Fam. **SP, Lompoc CA**

**Due to the facility** I am currently at, with nosy red neck inmates and C/Os, I feel the need to cancel my subscription to UltraViolet. I will renew in August upon my release from the crap nest. *Anonymous* [we are sorry to lose you]

*continued on page 8*



## No Help for HIV+ Inmates

While I was held in a county jail in 2019, I requested my HIV medication through a medical request. I was then taken to the nurse's station and was seen by the head of medical, a nurse practitioner (NP). I told her that I've been without my medications and that I needed to restart them. She responded that she didn't want to start treatment and for a year she didn't provide any treatment whatsoever. She never conducted any blood testing, I was never referred to a infectious disease specialist/my doctor nor was I seen in a chronic care appointment despite numerous requests and [filed] grievances.

Once I filed a lawsuit they began treating me. I have made it through the motion to dismiss and summary judgement stage and I have no idea what I am doing. They are now taking advantage of my stupidity in discovery.

O have written what seems like hundreds of letters to advocacy groups trying to get help but because I am in Oklahoma, no one will help me. Please help me get justice and set a clear precedent for the treatment of HIV+ inmates. The officials at this jail have caused me to suffer and to deteriorate and could have killed me. Please help. You can see the case on West Law at 2021WL 2372235. *Bryan Davenport #664874, JCCC/5 south 64A, 216 N Murray St. Helena OK 73741*

## Al Salam Alaikum. Peace be upon You

This is Ali again. I'm writing you specifically as being a GAY ARAB in the US while GAZA is bleeding. Since October 2023, my life has changed forever as an Iraqi man born and raised in Baghdad. I'd been very uncertain to write you about GAZA genocide until I got your newsletter which became my world to me. My heart is bleeding with sorrows, pain, and I'm tortured to see how the US has been funding the terrorist Israelis to kill the Arab resistance like killing animals. Why did I come to the US? I regretted my whole life since October.

I'm in so much pain because of what I found out about the real issues between the Palestine folks and the thieves of Palestinian homeland. I'm crying most nights for the kids under the rebels. My real shock is when I read about the conflict online to find out how GAZA had been "an open Prison". That is what transformed me to a Gay Iraqi or Iraqi Queer living in the US to be on a life mission to be an activist to support and help the Palestinian people including Queers of the Arabs and USA and others. I possess an enormous passion to do just that when I read very carefully your newsletter. Everything makes sense to me; why I'm still alive and not to die in a coward way - suicide. Because your newsletter gave me hope to join your group to protest as you did in the Castro and everywhere else.

Another shocking founding for me recently. I read an article in a different paper about how Israel is haven for the LGBTQ+ people in the world. Hold on for a sec. How is that even possible for US Queer people? I'll feel shame if Queers believe in such propaganda. Supposedly a lot of gay people traveled to Israel to feel the haven as they described it in the paper. What's going on here? How can the Queers in San Francisco that stand with the Palestinian folk solve such a HORRIBLE picture that the Israeli gays had painted? I just need a real enlightenment with this issue because mentally it affects me on a daily basis.

I'd like to educate me while in jail. In the meantime, if my defense works (Inshallah), upon my release I'll be at your doorstep, but if I got time to serve I must use that time to study to be an activist for Human Rights. I just need the mentor thing to help me along the way. Anyhow, my lovely people, now you have helped me breath and most importantly gave me hope. *Othman Al-Muttalaby #68218, SF County Jail #3-J, 1 Moreland Dr. San Bruno CA 94066* [excerpted from a longer article]

Palestinian flag from Othman Al-Muttalaby #68218, SF County Jail #3-J, 1 Moreland Dr. San Bruno CA 94066

# Where There Is Repression

by Kate

“Where there is oppression, may there thrive resistance,” reads a poster on my bedroom wall. The now-famous “L’Chaim Intifada” poster, produced by the queer collective Feygelech for a Free Palestine, paraphrases Assata Shakur’s quote, “Where there is oppression, there will be resistance.” No one knows better than Assata that her obvious truth has a corollary: Where there is resistance, there will be repression. And as a recent report from Palestine Legal confirms, repression has always come harder and faster when the resisters are Palestinians and their allies.

Obviously, the harshest repression has been felt by Palestinians in Gaza, where over 30,000 people have been murdered, and hundreds of thousands are dying of deliberate starvation by israeli siege. Just days before we went to press, a hundred people were shot and hundreds more injured while waiting in line for flour. After months of inaction as aid trucks are stalled on the Egyptian side of the border, the u.s. decided to airdrop 38,000 single meals to feed the million people crammed into Rafah. At least 122 Palestinian journalists have been killed, most of them deliberately targeted by the israeli forces.

Human Rights Watch reports that as of January 1, israel held 3,291 Palestinians in administrative (indefinite) detention, a three-decade high, and that attacks by settlers in the West Bank are at the highest level in history. One of those held in administrative detention is Mustafa Sheta, producer of the Freedom Theater in the West Bank city of Jenin, which was ransacked and defaced with graffiti by israeli soldiers in December. The attack on the Freedom Theater has been recognized throughout the world as a clear effort to destroy Palestinian cultural resistance. In February, Freedom Theater was nominated for the Nobel Prize.

A recent report by the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor documented hundreds of cases of female Palestinian detainees from Gaza being subjected to sexual violence, torture, inhuman treatment, strip searches, sexual harassment, and rape threats by israeli forces. At least two prisoners reported being raped.

Palestinians living inside israel have been fired, threatened, interrogated and even arrested for allegedly “supporting” the October 7 attacks, based on social media posts that often the person never made. A protest including Palestinian members of Knesset was shut down and the leaders arrested before it even started. Ahmed Khalefa, a lawyer with the Human Rights Defenders Fund, was imprisoned for 110 days and then released to house arrest. Several Jewish israeli teachers were arrested, one for showing her students a photo from the israeli newspaper Haaretz.



known anti-semitic.” They could have checked with some of us Jews who have worked closely with her for years. A member of the Syracuse African Graduate Student Network got a visit from the FBI.

Hundreds of students and faculty from Harvard to the University of California Davis have been subjected to threats, investigations, various forms of “discipline,” and suspension for participating in or organizing protests, signing petitions, liking facebook posts, or getting into arguments with Zionists. The Harvard Palestine Solidarity Committee, a “recognized” campus organization, is forbidden from cosponsoring any protests or events with “unrecognized” groups which include African and African American Resistance Organization (AFRO), Harvard Graduate Students for Palestine, and Harvard Jews for Palestine.

Starbucks sued its workers’ union, Starbucks Workers United, for trademark infringement against its name and logo after the union posted a flier stating, Starbucks Workers United Stands with Palestine.

Thousands of people have been arrested across the u.s. since the start of the genocidal campaign post-October 7, including most recently Hunter Schafer, star of the HBO series Euphoria, as part of a JVP-led protest at NBC headquarters in New York, where Biden was being interviewed by Seth Meyers. Most of those people chose to risk arrest as bridges, freeways, corporations, fundraisers, news studios, city council meetings, congressional hearings and Biden press conferences and Xmas tree lightings have been disrupted, sometimes in spectacular multi-city coordinated actions. Although it is hard to know exactly what’s happening legally in so many different areas, most of the charges filed have been predictable and consistent with nonviolent actions – blocking the road, obstruction, failure to disperse, trespassing. At one action I was at, an occupation of congressman Adam Smith’s office in Everett, Washington, the cops arrested people and put the first few in police cars, but then decided they didn’t have the resources to take them to jail and let everyone go, some after a cursory search and ID process and others without.

In some cities like Seattle and San Francisco, where protests are routine, it’s been fairly hard to get arrested, with even major disruptions getting a big shrug from the cops. But some of that is changing, as cities get pressure from Zionists and Law’n’Order types to crack down. Seventy-eight people allegedly involved in shutting down the Bay Bridge in November, during the APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) summit, have been charged by s.f. d.a. Brooke Jenkins (who helped to oust progressive DA Chesa Boudin and was rewarded with his job) with pretty serious misdemeanors including false imprisonment, which is kind of ridiculous since everyone was outside and could walk away if they wanted to. Allegedly Jenkins has had investigators scouring the area for someone who was delayed in getting medical care or emergency services so she could up the charges even more. In early February, the San Francisco Standard revealed emails from San Francisco Assistant District Attorney Michael Menesini, who, using his San Francisco government email address, described Palestinians as “brutal Arab invaders,” “hate mongers,” and “Nazis” who need to be “sent back to their native homelands.” Jenkins herself, according to lawyers for the Bay Bridge 78, called a peaceful San Francisco march for a ceasefire in Gaza “pro-Hamas” and “attributed anti-Israel graffiti to the protestors, despite there being no evidence linking the two.”

In Seattle, a January demonstration blocking the I-5 freeway for several hours dispersed without arrests, but the Washington state patrol came under such fire for not moving in on it that they circulated photo galleries of “persons of interest” on social and mainstream media, asking people to identify people who allegedly were involved in the protest. News stories have said that charges are going to be filed

against twelve people (out of several hundred who blocked the freeway), but as yet, no one has received a subpoena. That obviously leaves the activist community on pins and needles, and may be discouraging anyone from planning very disruptive protests.

Seattle police, possibly under orders or personally thinking that they are losing control, attacked a small, nondisruptive demonstration at the Seattle World Trade Center (who even knew there was a World Trade Center in Seattle?). Linda Bevis, a 62-year-old teacher, was thrown to the ground by cops, suffering a head injury. She was arrested along with three others, most of whom who were held in jail until the following night. Cops slashed tires of protesters’ cars. Two weeks later, police arrested housing and refugee rights activists for speaking and chanting in a city council meeting, after one of the recently elected, right-wing council members claimed that she felt “threatened.” Even the generally anti-activist Seattle Times implied that the council member’s reaction was unreasonable, pointing out that usually when a lot of people want to speak, the time for comment is extended, which it wasn’t in this case, and that the people chanting had already left the building before they were arrested.

As I worked on this article, San Francisco police attacked a Hands Off Rafah march in San Francisco. When the protest arrived at the israeli consulate, police in riot gear charged them with batons and pepper spray. Several protesters sustained broken hands and other injuries, according to the Arab Resource and Organizing Center.

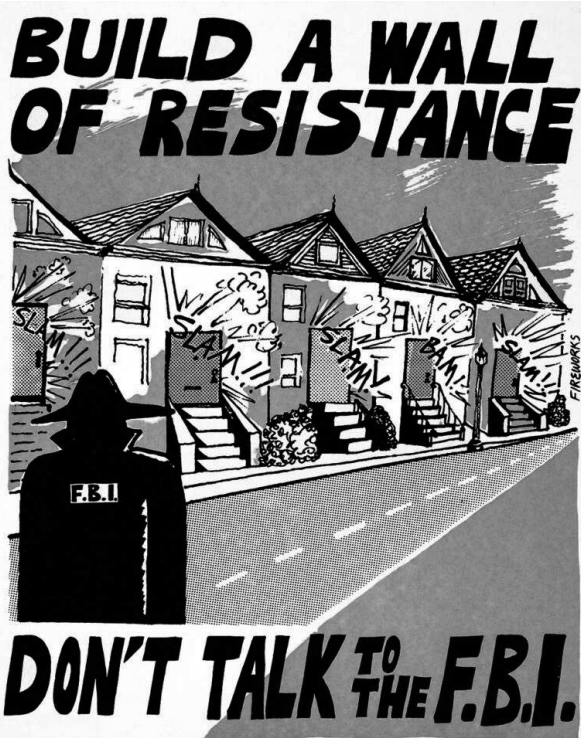
In Toronto, a man was arrested and charged with “public incitement of hatred” in January for carrying a flag later identified as representing the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in a march. The PFLP, whose charter calls for a secular democratic state in all of historic Palestine, is classified as a “terrorist entity” by Public Safety Canada. They had no involvement in the October 7 attacks. The Toronto police chief further outlawed demonstrations over a particular bridge because members of a nearby Jewish community “felt intimidated.”

These local examples of repression might seem insignificant when compared to the assault on Palestinians, and certainly, we have seen much greater levels of police violence against Black Lives Matter, anticapitalist actions like Occupy Wall Street, and Stop Cop City in Georgia, where 57 protesters are still facing charges of racketeering and domestic terrorism. In several states, from Washington to Tennessee, republickians have introduced legislation to make blocking a bridge or highway a felony. But in 2020, at the height of the George Floyd Uprising, twenty-one states considered and eight passed laws increasing penalties for simple forms of protest like blocking sidewalks and streets. In response to the anti-pipeline protests in 2018 (remember NoDAPL and Stop the KXL?), Louisiana enacted a law under which demonstrators who trespass “near a pipeline construction site” face five years in prison.

But as the Human Rights Watch report points out, “Governments have found it easier to disregard human rights issues in the international arena in part because the international community is not challenging their violations of human rights at home.”

Mohammed Nabulsi, a Houston-based leader in the Palestine Youth Movement, puts it bluntly: “In the long term, the fate of Palestine is the fate of the left in this country. Where the left goes, we go; our ceiling is with the left. There’s only so much support for Palestine that can exist without a broader politics around a lot of different issues.”

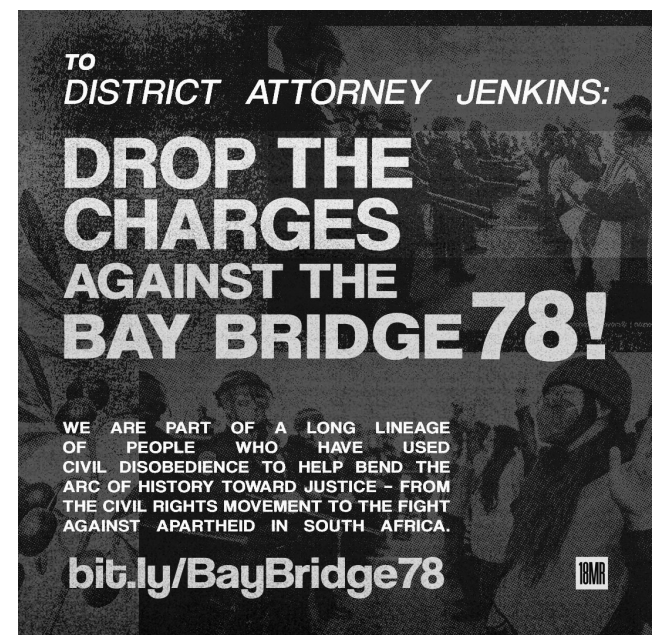
**DROP THE CHARGES AGAINST THE BAY BRIDGE 78** (check out the toolkit at [bit.ly/BayBridge78](http://bit.ly/BayBridge78))  
**STOP COP CITY and DROP ALL THE CHARGES** (<https://stopcop.city/organize-with-us/>)  
**FREE PALESTINE – PERMANENT CEASEFIRE AND REPARATIONS NOW**



poster by Terry Forman, Fireworks Graphics Collective

But the repression has been felt differently by scholars and artists, students and workers around the world. Queer Jewish writer Masha Gessen and Palestinian filmmaker Emily Jacir had talks cancelled in Germany. A retrospective of work by Palestinian artist Samia Halaby was cancelled by Indiana University, where she had studied and later taught. Pulitzer prize winner Viet Than Nguyen was disinvited by 92NY, a leading cultural venue in New York. (After several writers cancelled their appearances in protest, the center was forced to cancel its entire literary season. :) Tom Cruise’s agent, Maha Dakhil, was demoted at Creative Artists; only support from Cruise and Aaron Sorkin kept her from being fired. A London museum pulled an exhibit by the renowned Chinese artist Ai Weiwei. Most of these cancellations were based on a single one-line statement, facebook post, or retweet.

Syracuse University cancelled a teach-in planned by the Africa Initiative because San Francisco State Professor Rabab Abdulhadi was an invited speaker. A change.org petition created by someone calling themselves “Concerned Syracuse University Jewish Student” claimed that Abdulhadi was “a



# THE MOCHA COLUMN

By Chaya and Deni

## MOVIE/TV/BOOK REVIEWS

### THE COLOR PURPLE

The 2023 musical version of *The Color Purple* is based on Alice Walker's powerful novel, directed by Black filmmaker Blitz Bazawule from a script by Black screenwriter Marcus Gardley. It had some excellent singing and acting by Fantasia Barrino (Celie), Taraji P. Henson (Shug) and the incredible Danielle Brooks (Sofia) along with Colman Domingo and Corey Hawkins, and some striking choreography. But the film seemed a bit disjointed and the music was sometimes a bit too perky. One odd number had Celie sing between two lines of men working on a chain gang where the song/content had no obvious connection to the men's circumstances. I (Deni) didn't like the last two numbers in the film: Celie's unremarkable song used dark lighting on a claustrophobic set; the final song and ending seemed a bit slapdash, pulling story threads together inauthentically with a happy ending lacking the drama and depth of the characters' stories. The lesbian relationship between Celie and Shug in the book is almost nonexistent in the film, a point emphasized by queer actor Aunjaune Ellis-Taylor, who played Mama in the film. Not a bad movie but not memorable except for some exceptional singing and performances.

### THE BOY AND THE HERON

Creative animator extraordinaire Hayao Miyazaki retired in 2013 but came back to Studio Ghibli to do another movie, probably his last. We've loved many of his films over the years—*My Neighbor Totoro* is an all-time favorite. His films feature exquisite animation with children, adults and dream-world characters and situations in a trippy, magical/non-linear way of looking at personal and political issues. *The Boy and the Heron*, using some of Miyazaki's early life experiences, is set during World War II. Eleven-year-old Mahito sees the Tokyo hospital his mother is in go up in flames in an air raid, and he is haunted by her death throughout the film. Mahito's father, who owns a munitions factory, marries his mother's sister and moves the family to a home in the countryside, but Mahito is tormented that he couldn't save his mother. Soon a dreamworld of fantastical morphing beings, situations and geography—good and bad (or both)—begins for him, as the grey heron visits Mahito with promises to lead him back to his mother. In Japanese culture the grey heron represents death and rebirth. These alternate worlds were confusing to us at first but then we accepted the fluidity and appreciated it. The film's Japanese title "How Do You Live?" represents the major theme about the importance of accepting reality and making the most of our lives, even as we're faced with cruelty and uncertainty. All this with the lush beauty of Miyazaki's animation.

### PAST LIVES

This film has gotten many accolades but we were disappointed. It's the story of 2 childhood friends - girl Na Young/Nora and boy Hae Sung - in Seoul South Korea who have crushes on each other. She immigrates to Canada with her family at 12. Hae Sung visits Nora 24 years later in NYC where she lives with her Jewish husband. Aside from being very slow and Deni thought claustrophobic (almost totally indoor shots until the NYC scenes) there were no women that Nora spoke to in the entire movie, except her mother briefly and no other women in the film at all! Any reflecting Nora did on her life was exchanged with one man or the other. This Reddit comment describes the acting best: "Couldnt tell if her [Nora] stony stiff acting (a lot of STARING and pinched smiling, was that supposed to be mysteriously meaningful?) was her character or bad acting. The guy was excellent or his character actually included emotions." A few interesting moments toward the end about relationships and how life works out but too little too late.

### ORIGIN

This film by Ava DuVernay is a fictionalization of Isabel Wilkerson's book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent* (2020) with good acting by queer actor Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor as Wilkerson and Niecy Nash as her cousin/best friend. The premise is that racism in the US is fundamentally a caste system with parallels to the historical caste systems of India and Nazi Germany and has to be fought in the framework of caste. But I (Deni) found this premise somewhat under-explained and unsubstantiated in the film, despite all the verbiage and people didactically expressing theories in the guise of conversation. The film mixed the book's theories with Wilkerson's personal life and the losses she suffered when writing it. But Sarah-Tai Black, describing herself as "...a non-binary femme of Afro-Brazilian, Chinese, and European settler ancestry whose creative efforts work to center embodied Black, queer, trans, and crip freedom practices... [to] dismantle white supremacy culture..." is quite critical of the film and particularly the use of very disturbing images as a "poetic vessel" to prove a point. I agree with my friend Cynthia that it might've worked better as a straightforward documentary.

### FELLOW TRAVELERS

This story based on Thomas Mallon's novel of the

closeted relationship of 2 gay men working for the federal government starts during the brutal 1950s era of Senator Joseph McCarthy's attempt to rid the US government of Communists and queers. Ron Nyswaner's screenplay goes back and forth in time through the decades and major events (1960s—the Vietnam war, 1970s—the height of the gay era and the assassinations of SF Mayor George Moscone and out gay SF Board of Supervisors Harvey Milk, 1980s—the AIDS pandemic) which sometimes was a bit confusing. The subplot about racism that centered on 2 Black characters (our favorite actors) started in the 1950s. The screenplay's writing was not its strong suit. The acting wasn't either. But everyone today isn't familiar with the persecutions by McCarthy and his 2 top aides Roy Cohn (a very closeted gay man) and David Schine which included being subpoenaed to testify before a senate sub-committee, public humiliation, being ostracized and fired from their job, so it might be worth watching to learn about that.



### AMERICAN SYMPHONY

You may have seen the fantastically talented musician Jon Batiste as the bandleader/musical director on the Late Show with Stephen Colbert. This documentary directed by Matthew Heineman takes the viewer through an intimate, uncensored look at Batiste's complex journey on his biggest project, the creation and Carnegie Hall debut of his piece *American Symphony*. Other segments of the film include the 2022 Grammys (he received 5 awards in jazz, pop and classical categories and Album of the Year). Batiste's *American Symphony* is not your traditionally composed piece. He had ideas for its basic 4-movement structure: "Capitalism," "Integrity," "Globalism," and "Majesty" and a unifying musical theme, and wanted the movements to be highly collaborative, bringing in musical influences from the African diaspora and elements of different musical styles—Dixieland jazz from his native New Orleans, opera, American Indian drummers and vocalists, floating voices, Afro-Latin percussionists, funk, police sirens and many others. As Batiste started pulling the score together, his partner Suleika Jaouad's leukemia reappeared after a decade in remission. While they waited for her to get a bone marrow transplant, Batiste kept working on *American Symphony* and Jaouad decided to draw and paint when she could no longer comfortably write. The film captures their struggles to deal with Jaouad's medical situation while maintaining their love for each other and continuing their artistic endeavors. Spoiler alert: Jaouad had the bone marrow transplant and her recovery was going well. She was able to attend Batiste's *American Symphony* debut which was a stunning success. This brilliant and poignant documentary captures it all.

### Book Review by MC Chief Book Reviewer Cole

Isabel Allende. *The Wind Knows My Name*. Allende seldom disappoints and her latest novel continues that trend. The reader is first introduced to Samuel, whose Austrian Jewish parents send him to England to shield him from the Holocaust. Although Samuel grows up to be an accomplished musician in an unconventional marriage to an heiress, his parents' deaths cast a shadow over his life. Our next new friend is Leticia, who immigrated as a child to California after the destruction of her El Salvadorean village by right wing forces. After working a string of minimum wage jobs and suffering two bad marriages, she becomes employed as Samuel's housekeeper. Five year old Anita is perhaps the novel's most compelling character. She and her mother flee El Salvador to escape gender based violence only to be separated by ICE; her mother's whereabouts are henceforth unknown. Slowly and inexorably these individuals' lives become intertwined. The novel's common thread is the potential to survive tragedy, although Samuel wisely notes that trauma isn't something one "gets over" but instead learns to tolerate. Allende's earlier work - *House of the Spirits* and *Of Love and Shadows* - are in my opinion masterpieces of world

literature. While her current novel may not reach that standard, it's an engaging tale infused with progressive politics that's well worth your time.

Cole's Quote of the month: The trouble with socialism is that it takes up too many evenings. Oscar Wilde

### BITS AND PIECES

### PALESTINE PROTESTS AMIDST AWARDS SHOWS

Before the **Grammys**, hundreds of Palestine supporters stalled arrivals to the red carpet and some individuals were blocked from entering. When a picture of Sinead O'Connor (an outspoken supporter of Palestine) appeared during the tribute to those who've died, singer Annie Lennox raised her fist and said "Artists for ceasefire. Peace in the world." The show immediately cut her off in an apparent act of censorship. Later Recording Academy CEO Wilson blah blahed about attacks on Israel, which didn't go over well on X: "...disgusting how annie lennox's call for a ceasefire was later followed up with some half assed, long winded speech in favor of israel. it's always going to be free palestine." Other celebrities supporting Gaza on the red carpet included members of boygenius who wore pins with the Artists Call for Ceasefire Now logo, connecting to the petition many musicians and actors have signed. And Grammy winner Esperanza Spalding wore a keffiyeh. The **Golden Globes** were pretty silent on Palestine, though in post-show interviews Ramy Youssef of 'Poor Things' called for a ceasefire on Gaza. Not too much at the **Emmys** either but actors Khalid Abdalla and Mark Ruffalo stood together on the red carpet showing symbols of Palestine support. Abdalla (recently nominated for a Critics Choice award for portraying Dodi Fayed in *The Crown*) had the letters ICJ (International Court of Justice) written on his hand and a peace dove pin on his jacket. He's contributed to a Palestine Festival of Literature series supporting South Africa's motion accusing Israel of genocide in its war on Gaza. At the **Sundance Film Festival** actor Melissa Barrera chanted "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" with hundreds of activists during a protest. Barrera, fired from *Scream VII* for comments about genocide and ethnic cleansing, is in trouble again for insta posts: "Some people think it's okay for a population of over 2 million to be starved to death. shame on you" and sharing a donation link to support UNRWA. In other **Emmys** news, when queer actor Niecy Nash won for Best Supporting Actress in a Limited or Anthology Series, she gave a fabulous funny and moving acceptance speech which then ended with these powerful words: "I accept this award on behalf of every Black and brown woman who has gone unheard yet over-policed, like Glenda Cleveland, like Sandra Bland, like Breonna Taylor. As an artist, my job is to speak truth to power, and baby, I'ma do it till the day I die."



### PELOSI POUNCES ON PROTESTERS

Who knew that Movement humor would be provided by Nancy Pelosi?! In January she said that some Palestine supporters are connected to Russia and should be investigated by the FBI. Apparently she doesn't know about the thousands of queers snatching up QUIT! Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism stickers at demonstrations. Is Putin paying all these queers to protest against Israel and the US? None of us have seen those payments. And we don't think he likes the queers so much. (Some of us were accused of Putin pandering in the days of our EWIFOSOCAS Everyone Who's In Favor Of Separation Of Church And State demos in SF to protest city menorah lighting when an irate woman said we worked for Putin. (Still, no \$\$!)) Pelosi has also told demonstrators to "go back to China." Ok, some serious geo-political confusion here... In the 80's comrade Jeff said that when Pelosi first ran for congress, she said, "I will be the voice of Israel in the US Congress." We can't find that online but clearly she's been proving it for decades. Free Palestine!

WOOF WOOF WOOF FREE PALESTINE WOOF WOOF

# We Demand Justice for Nex

by Tory

Nex Benedict, an Indigenous, 2STGNC+ (Two-Spirit, transgender, gender-nonconforming+) high school student, died on February 8<sup>th</sup>, one day after a being attacked in the Owasso high school girls bathroom in Oklahoma. Nex a Choctaw 16-year-old, who used he/him or they/them pronouns, reported blacking out after hitting the floor during the attack. The school and the police have tried to depict the attack as a mutual altercation, but Nex's grandmother described a year of significant harassment and bullying leading up to this attack. In fact other people from this school have also reported bullying. The school felt that the students were fine because they all walked away from the so called altercation. The following day Nex was rushed to the hospital and died. The police department reported that Nex did not die from trauma, but still a month later have not released a cause of death or the autopsy findings.

This is yet another violent death of a Trans Person of Color in the context of right wing fascist targeting of Queer and Trans people. Oklahoma has passed an anti Trans bathroom bill which states that in public schools students must use the bathroom "as designated on individuals' original birth certificates". In fact the Oklahoma republican majority legislature and the Oklahoma school board are obsessed with targeting Queer/Trans people. Ryan Walters, the superintendent of public education said in an interview with the New York Times "There is not multiple genders. There's two. That's how God created us." State senator Tom Woods said in response to Nex's death, "Oklahoma is a religious Christian, and moral state whose constituency doesn't want that filth in Oklahoma". This violent anti Trans rhetoric is directly responsible for Nex's death.

Following Nex's death, vigils and demonstrations happened across the country. People protested at the Oklahoma board of education. There was a large vigil in Oklahoma City. Also in Owasso the chosen family and friends held a vigil and told stories and remembered Nex.

A former partner spoke at the vigil saying, "My name is Robin Ingersoll. I am a 16-year-old, also sophomore student. I want to start off by saying that Nex was transgender, and he used he/him pronouns. But he was so much more than his transness. Tonight, I want to talk about who he was as a person and not just how he identified... As an individual, Nex was one of the strongest and toughest people I've ever met, but he often hid behind (that) to gain respect from people. And because of that, he built a lot of walls. And he didn't let them down very often. But when he did, he can be one of the funniest and sweetest and most thoughtful people. And he would have done anything for someone that he cared



about or loved."

The San Francisco queer community, including people from Gay Shame and QUIT! also held a vigil for Nex at 18th and Castro, creating a beautiful altar. Perhaps in response to this widespread outpouring of protest and anger, the federal U.S. Department of Education is launching a probe into the Owasso high school, investigating alleged discrimination and sex-based harassment.

As is often the case, the government, the police, the powers that be try to cover up, dismiss and minimize the violence perpetrated on our communities, often characterized as our own fault for existing. They categorically deny the systemic vicious institutionally ingrained nature of racism, transphobia, and homophobia. The school is trying to paint a picture of Nex's death as a minor fight between students, with an unrelated death, ignoring the year long pattern of hostile bullying abetted by state fascism.

This has happened before. In 1985 Timothy Lee, a queer Black person, was found hanging from a tree in the Concord bart station. The police called it a suicide. His family maintained that a Black person would not suicide by hanging in a public place, and cited suspicious Klan related attacks on Black people in the area hours before Timothy's death. The strap around his neck didn't belong to him and the supposed suicide note misspelled his name and names of family members. Members of LAGAI and Revolting Lesbians did an action at the Concord bart station protesting this racist

# 90 seconds to midnight, time to bake a cake.

By Lisa

Is baking lemon cake bright-siding? I'm not sure if this rant needs a trigger warning and I know some of our readers don't have access to their own kitchen facilities so maybe it is unfair to print a recipe? I checked the UV style rules and there is no prohibition on recipes! As I remember it, there used to be a prohibition on slideshows and poetry at events (which probably means powerpoints are off the table too). But I have a really good lemon cake recipe (and its vegan) - this is the kind of cake that gets even better the next day and freezes beautifully (if you don't think you will eat it all in a few days). I use a bundt cake pan my neighbor lent me that makes it easy to cut into pieces to wrap and ... share with the neighbors. Everybody loves getting an unexpected lemon cake treat!

What has brought on this sudden need for lemony-fresh brightness? Perhaps because the doomsday clock ticking down to nuclear disaster is set at 90 seconds to midnight? They did take into account climate change, and the war in Ukraine surging around a nuclear reactor that is understaffed and volatile, and the war in Gaza. But that was more than a month ago (<https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/current-time/>), I would say the Bulletin needs to reassess in light of new developments like Putin's threats to put nuclear weapons in space.

Also upsetting me is that hideous Oppenheimer movie winning lots of awards. Don't get me wrong, some of the acting was quite good but the story they told and more importantly didn't tell is infuriating. Death and destruction in Japan gets about 15 seconds, uranium and plutonium are clean little marbles piling up in fishbowls while miners, millers, and communities are polluted with tailings and contamination from enrichment facilities, and local indigenous people's land is bombed and polluted with fallout spewing from testing. In the movie, most women are just a prop for the ego of the lead character. Infuriating. To me the movie is even more dangerous because it asks us to believe that these "super-smart" white men are heroes, but it is clear they don't even understand that waste doesn't just disappear, humans are part of the environment, there are consequences for actions, and bells cannot be unrung.

Last month I also heard a presentation about a turtle shell found in a museum collection from a turtle that lived near Oak Ridge, Tennessee where the uranium enrichment plants (K-25 and Y-12) and the pilot plutonium production reactor (X-10 Graphite Reactor) were located. The turtle was "collected" in the 1960's. Its shell had nuclear atoms it picked up in the contaminated water from the uranium enrichment and plutonium production dumped into nearby streams. And of course, not just that turtle was contaminated but the entire ecosystem including people.

Or maybe brightness is needed to counter the stack of handbaskets I found in a hoarder garage, like the one the world is going to hell in, along with old Barbie dolls and broken tools? Another infuriating movie, I will spare you the diatribe, and it doesn't seem to be winning many awards.

# Support Rashid

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson is a journalist, artist and prison intellectual. He has been writing and drawing and speaking out about the inhumanity of American prisons for years. Rashid began a hunger strike more than 2 months ago to protest his transfer, medical neglect, and solitary confinement. On February 5th, a complaint was filed on Rashid's behalf that detailed the pattern of "unconstitutional retaliation" that landed Rashid in a facility far from his necessary cancer treatment and cardiac medical care. His situation is extremely dire.

Rashid has been a correspondent for Prison Radio (PO Box 411074, San Francisco, CA 94141) since 2012 and they are asking people to call the VADOC deputy director Chadwick S Dotson, 804-887-8404 and governor Glenn Youngkin, 804-786-2211 on Rashid's behalf. Rashid needs all our support. Write him, Kevin 'Rashid' Johnson #1007485, Powhatan C.C. 3600 Woods Way, State Farm VA 23160



Self portrait by Rashid

**Israel Can't Pinkwash This**

**Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism**  
quitpalestine.org

Israeli soldiers proudly holding rainbow flags over the devastation they created in Gaza

# lunar new year communiqué



Free Palestine! From the river to the sea!  
Free the land! Free all political prisoners!  
Long live the Intifada!  
from “Xinjiang” to Palestine, end imperialism everywhere!  
Bring the intifada home.  
-the sleeping dragons

2/24/24

from the lands of the ramaytush ohlone

It is 140 days after the heroic breach of the Gaza border fence by Palestinian freedom fighters, and day 140 of the zionist entity’s current escalation of its decades-long genocide against the people of Palestine.

We are steeped in violence and complicity. Our efforts are not working. This is a call for diasporic asians in the imperial core, whose existence is born from imperialism in our homelands and built upon anti-blackness and settler colonial violence here, to step up our own escalation against the forces of war and empire at home.

We are here to ring in the year of the dragon by shutting down this corporate parade, calling for widespread resistance to the us state and its domestic and global capitalist war machine. There can be no celebration. There can be no business as usual. Genocide is happening right now in Palestine.

Liberal and reactionary asian american institutions have not only failed to act in solidarity with Palestine and Palestinians, but have defended their relationship with zionist groups, funders, and state shills like london breed, scott wiener, and brooke jenkins. The API council, an honoree at the upcoming fundraising gala of the hyper-zionist JCRC, has sent board members to the colonizing entity on JCRC’s dime. Sponsors of this Lunar New Years’ parade, including hyundai and the literal us army, are directly responsible for the raiding and gutting of Palestinian homes, and for the murder and destruction of Palestinian lives.

Meanwhile, the zionist entity is directly linked to repression and violence across the globe, training cops and state brute squads who in turn repress resistance movements fighting for abolition, autonomy, and Indigenous sovereignty in communities all over the world. Concentration camps in “xinjiang”, cop campus in san pablo, cop city in atlanta, and the megajails in nyc are all extensions of imperialist wars and the carceral state, at home and abroad.

The steadfastness of the Palestinian resistance inspires and compels us to keep struggling for liberation everywhere. In the words of the Palestinian poet Samih al-Qasim, whose poetry was amongst the books found in Black liberation martyr George Jackson’s prison cell:

It is the return of the sun,  
Of my exiled ones  
And for her sake, and his  
I swear  
I shall not compromise  
And to the last pulse in my veins  
I shall resist,  
Resist -- and resist.



Free Palestine banners \dropped from Macy’s

## Thanks Slingshot and TransJustice Fund

We send our heartfelt thanks to the Slingshot Collective and for their generous donation to UltraViolet again this year.

“Slingshot is a quarterly, independent, radical, newspaper published in the East Bay since 1988 by the Slingshot Collective. We also publish the annual ‘Slingshot Organizer’ a radical calendar planner. We are an all-volunteer, non-profit, tax exempt project of the Long Haul. Editorial decisions about Slingshot are made by the collective. We welcome debate, constructive criticism and discussion”. Donations are always welcome. Write to Slingshot, PO Box 3051 Berkeley, CA 94703 or visit us at: [slingshotcollective.org](https://slingshotcollective.org) Slingshot publishes an on-line list of radical groups all over the world, which you can find at: <https://slingshotcollective.org/radical-contact-list/>”

We also send a huge thankyou to the Trans Justice Fund. We are very appreciative of the grant they awarded to UltraViolet for publishing expenses. It costs us about \$3800/issue for printing and mailing to our 3200 subscribers. In 2023, the Trans Justice Fund awarded \$1,850,000 in grants to 258 trans-led grassroots groups throughout the u.s. and u.s. territories.

You can go to [www.transjusticefund.org](http://www.transjusticefund.org) for this year’s list of Trans Justice Funding Project grantees. They are all amazing groups that continue to support trans justice in whatever ways they can. Now more than ever, we need each other to show up for our trans communities.

**Don’t put down the newsletter, you haven’t finished reading it yet!** We left out Lisa’s recipe for vegan lemon cake so we could put this coupon in. So please don’t forget to send us your address changes, subscribe your friends and send us any spare change not already spoken for (and people who sent \$ last time, we LOVE you!)..

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I moved, so please change my address to: \_\_\_\_\_

This person no longer lives here: \_\_\_\_\_. Here is a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Please send a copy to my friend: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: LAGAI, 3543 - 18th Street #26, San Francisco, CA 94110 (510)434-1304, [info@lagai.org](mailto:info@lagai.org)

# Shorts From Inside

*continued from page 4*

**I’m a 40 year old Transgender** being held hostage in the land of these hater-ass Red Necks. I’m very interested in reading up on what Demonstrations you have planned for the innocents trapped in the Gaza Strip and I love your book and movie reviews and hearing from the others that are being held hostage in our current police state by corrupt government politicians. *GT, Carlisle IN*

**This is Mrs Roze Session**, a Transgender at Florida State Prison. Some papers they let it, some they reject. They’ve also denied me books like Hoyle’s Card Games because it has Poker games in it. Yet our Tablets have Poker games on them also. These people contradict themselves. They rejected Prison Express News, the Federal Prison Handbook. You believe that? Reason given? “Otherwise presents a threat to the security order or rehabilitative objectives of the correctional system or the safety of the person.” My god, these people are insane. *DLN, Raiford FL*

**I pray that I get your next newsletter** because I love the stories you all write. They make me laugh, they educate me and they instill a sense of pride in me. Keep hope alive, y’all and fight on just a little while longer and in due time, everything, I mean everything, will be alright. Good vibes always win. In other news, I do believe that the fact that you published my earlier comments at least made someone look into my lost property issues and address them. Even if they did not fix them but they acted as if they might. I am thankful for minor victories shining light on injustices. Even a loss can create major changes ... As convicts, especially LGBTQ convicts, we must remember to always stand up for each other when we see injustices directed at our brothers and sisters. The day will come when we are all faced with something we know is not right. The temptation will be to pass by. By your actions and love for one another, “speak out”, don’t let evil people continue to abuse the LGBTQ community. *LM, Cameron MO*

**Let me commend the publishers** or whatever of LAGAI/UV. What a top-notch effort. Excellent reporting. Need I say more? I was very impressed with the obituaries just to name one category. The coverage of the life of Ruchell Magee in particular. The fearless excellent writing which stands in the gap between oppression and unrighteousness, giving people hope for a better tomorrow and the strength to deal with today. Great work! *JJ PA*

**I say this is genocide** and this needs to stop. I am sorry I can’t talk – I had a stroke. But I am against what they are doing [in Palestine]. I am crying right now, I know this is genocide. Ceasefire Now! *RZE, Uncasville CT*

**I am me!** I did over 16 years in Nevada, was on parole for almost 3. I was the poster child of a successful parolee. Then I had my identity stolen, my partner left me and my family decided they couldn’t handle the fact that I enjoyed wearing panties and make-up to bed. I lost everything including my mind; not caring if I lived or died. I went deaf and almost died. I turned myself in for absconding, and spent a few weeks in the hospital. And I found my mind and got my hearing back. I have no family or true friends left. With all this said and done, I am for the first time in my life, truly happy. Just being Me!!! *OB, Indian Springs NV*

**Alone again I reach out.** There is nobody here for me. I come from a very small town. I read the UltraViolet and when people add their address, I write them and try to help. I was the main legal librarian for over 2 years. People say others helped them make it when they were ready to give up! Where are those people? You brave people know who you are when those that hurt you, have no clue who they are! They don’t have a life of their own so they gotta get into others and torment to fill the void. There is too much pain in the world, don’t add more to it. Reach out and love who you find. *JP, Chillicothe OH*

**Ms Tay from Penn. DOC.** I’m proud to be receiving your newsletter, hearing from you all. It helps me to read and listen and hear from others from the community. *JT, Waynesburg PA*

**Long time reader, first time writer.** As of this moment I have 4 months to go before I go home. I’ve been on hormones for just about 2 years. I’m going out there with no realistic support group, health care, housing etc. And sitting here thinking of all the LGBTQIA+ and trans hatred, it seems sad that the government/political bigots are saying it’s OK to hurt or kill any one of us and even go so far as to push us as a whole back in the closet and lose no sleep over it. *TLK, Chillicothe OH*

**I sent a detailed letter** on 8/29. It concerned the Colorado DOC’s continued blatant, direct, terrible, illegal disgusting practice of slavery/involuntary servitude, “forced prison labor and punishment” issues. The CO DOC is still violating the Colorado Constitution/laws regarding this. All with complete knowledge of doing so illegally. See CO Constitution, Article II, section 26. It is a new law as of Nov. 2018. It makes all CO DOC policies/procedures dealing with prisons, work, punishment etc. illegal. I just need help ‘fighting’ the CO DOC. As a Death by Incarceration/life without parole (DBI/LWOP) inmate, I appreciate any help and responses. Thank you. Lots of love, in solidarity, *Charles A Garrison #108271 AVCF/#13, 12750 Hwy 96, Ordway CO 81034*