

The Gender Correctional Machine: Institutional Mechanisms that Reinforce a Patriarchal Gender Order in Correctional Facilities

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Introduction

Mass incarceration is a feminist struggle. The growth and maintenance of a system defined in *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander as a collection of institutions and practices that locks people up on the basis of racial stigmatization and permanent marginalization (12), shapes the lives of 2.3 million criminalized people in the United States (Prison Policy Initiative). Not only does the criminal justice system disproportionately incarcerate people of color (Butler 36), but increasingly incarcerates women (Prison Policy Initiative). The gender divide in rates of incarceration continues to spike; women's state prison populations have grown 834% over the past 40 years across the United States, double the rate of men's prison population growth (Prison Policy Initiative). Nevertheless, research that addresses the particular needs of incarcerated or detained women falls short in reflecting the urgency of the matter. Michelle Alexander admits that her book—considered today a progressive primer—does not pay enough attention to "the unique experience of women, Latinos and immigrants in the criminal justice system, though these groups

are particularly vulnerable to the worst abuses and suffer in ways that are important and distinct" (15). As an attempt to continue to fill the gap in the literature regarding women¹, this study aims to uncover the gender correctional machine that reinforces a patriarchal gender order within correctional facilities. By gender correctional machine, I refer to the multiple mechanisms within correctional facilities that aim to "correct" women into their traditional roles. It comes to no surprise that women who enter the criminal justice system are subtly forced to "realign" with a patriarchal gender order because "women who commit crimes have historically been characterized as those who have departed from their sex, or have otherwise crossed gender divides establishing 'appropriate' gendered behavior" (Davis 264).

Correctional facilities, more commonly known as jails and prisons, follow their self-fulfilling prophecy: to correct. Beyond this, correctional facilities aim to impose a particular way of behavior—one that aligns with the traditional code of conduct that women ought to follow. The criminal justice system in the United States owns a badge that reads: "gender outlaws will be corrected back into the status quo." The status quo is one that places value on whiteness over colored-ness (race), compulsory femininity over gender nonconformity (gender), and male ascribing job skills over female ascribing ones (class).

¹ The intersection between immigration and criminality, also known as crimmigration, stretches beyond the scope of this study. This phenomenon is the topic of a future study.

Previous literature that examines gender in prisons shows that correctional services try to bridge the gap between traditional femininity and criminality through the implementation of low-paying skills training, such as food, laundry, or clerical services (Davis 265), and parenting education (Kennon et. al). Nevertheless, the gender correctional machine is much more nuanced, complex, and pervasive than previous studies have shown. This study takes an intersectional approach² to uncover how the gender correctional machine works through two main institutional mechanisms: (1) correctional industries, and (2) exposure to patriarchal information through correctional libraries. Taking the Philadelphia Department of Prisons and the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections as a case study, I explore the complexities of these regulatory mechanisms as they play out within their contexts. In doing so, I attempt to challenge the notion that correctional industries and libraries are innocent environments for incarcerated women.³

Situated knowledge epistemology as theoretical premise

It would be misguided to assume that those who navigate the world outside of correctional systems are the true agents of

² Intersectionality encompasses many more identity markers beyond class, gender, and race. However, only these three identity markers, and their interactions are explored in this study.

³ I am not suggesting that engaging in labor and reading have de jure negative implications for women but that the underlying mechanisms that shape such environments do.

change in a troubled criminal justice system; it would be best to call them *allies* who have better access to non-criminalized resources. Following Fernando Garcia's exploration of the partnership between feminist standpoint theory and critical social theory, this study sets as departure point situated knowledge epistemology. This intellectual tool—first conceptualized by feminist scholar Donna Haraway—complicates the feminist standpoint premise of treating agents of knowledge as spokespersons of marginalized communities and proposes "privileged and problematic knowledge situations for critical social theory" (Garcia 302). This implies that multidimensionality and fragmentation are required to understand how connected, opposing, and interacting social meanings and positionalities formulate and articulate knowledge. In this vein, Adrienne Rich's politics of location shed light on the importance of understanding positionality. She asserts that "to locate myself in my body means more than understanding what it has meant to me to have a vulva and clitoris and uterus and breasts. It means recognizing this white skin, the places it has taken me, the places it has not let me go" (Rich 372). Rich is pointing here to the privilege and marginalization that the social meaning of people's identities have over their social position. It would be naive to assume, then, that someone who has not had encounters with the criminal justice system could make an epistemological contribution to women's realities in correctional facilities.

However, as Fernando Garcia explains, "moving to a different standpoint than the one we are socialized in requires changing our own standpoint—linked to our own identity— which both hurts and entails a critical attitude" (302). This painful self-transformation that Garcia is referring to is possible through situated knowledge epistemology; understanding distance from and proximity to a social reality allows this study to explore the limitations and possibilities of doing research from the outside of correctional facilities, and to expose the limitations and possibilities of building resistance from the inside of correctional facilities. In this way, this study treats those who navigate the regulatory culture within correctional facilities as true agents of knowledge and change, "who are embodied, social and meaning positions, nonisomorphic and moving among diverse narrative territories" (Garcia 304). A personal story is in case here. While having a conversation with a formerly incarcerated person, I learned that the term "jailhouse lawyering,"⁴ or inmate-led litigation, is often perceived as a derogatory term by those who have faced incarceration. Understanding that the literature that refers to pro se defense as "jailhouse lawyering" might be perpetuating marginalization allowed me to make the decision of using non-alienating knowledge as one of the ways in which I aim to follow situated knowledge epistemology while parting with traditional methodology. The next section explains this process in detail,

⁴ "Jailhouse lawyering" was originally the main focus of this study. It is now presented as pro se litigation and a strategic solution to mass incarceration.

and the ways in which it plays out in the exploration of the gender machine in correctional industries and the importation of patriarchal information into prison libraries.

Interpolating feminist methodology into the sociology of law

Approaching the gender correctional machine is deceiving. I started the research process knowing that accessing information regarding the criminal justice system in Philadelphia would be challenging. In an effort to decipher the way the system is set up, I needed to reach out to experts beyond official government websites, such as that of the Philadelphia Department of Prisons. After talking to Professor Tricia Way—Inside/Out Exchange Program facilitator at Temple University—, it came to my attention that the so-called Department of Prisons is actually a jail (and not prison) system. This differentiation is important because prisons hold convicted people serving long-term sentences while jails hold pretrial detainees and short-term inmates. Nevertheless, the name of Philadelphia's jail system might confuse the average person who does not study or work for the system itself. A simple distraction like this one is only the tip of the iceberg. In delving deeper into government websites, I realized how time-consuming it can be to access the limited information that the system provides. It seems like the hermetic walls that surround correctional facilities permeate into the hermetic websites that provide the public with enough information to give the appearance of justice, protection, and safety. Given that the

regulatory mechanisms at play within industries and libraries are different, I attempt to use different methods and feminist methodologies. These are described in separate sections for each branch that makes the gender correctional machine.⁵

Correctional industries and the prison-industrial complex

The state, a patriarchal and capitalist one, has a vested interest in maintaining the prison-industrial complex in place because it profits from it. In "Prison as a Border: A Conversation on Gender, Globalization, and Punishment," Angela Davis defines the prison industry as following:

as a matter of fact, the term *prison industry* can refer precisely to the production of prisoners even as the industry produces profits for increasing numbers of corporations and, by siphoning social wealth away from such institutions as schools and hospitals, child care and housing, plays a pivotal role in producing the conditions of poverty that create a perceived need for more prisons (1238).

This production of prisoners through intentional systems such as the school-to-prison pipeline benefits from racialized and gendered stigmas that 'justify' the need to control marginalized communities in the eyes of the public. For example, correctional officials use stigmas such as "mammies, matriarchs, welfare

recipients, and hot mommas" (Collins 69) to inform assessments of therapeutic treatment (Haney 56). The techniques that psychological services employ to intervene at women's correctional facilities deploy stereotypes that cut along race, class, and gender lines (McCorkel). Beyond the creation of a racialized, low-class, and gendered profile, the prison-industrial complex operates through a normalized assumption that prisons are natural institutions that protect society from the "deviant" further assuming that every incarcerated or detained person is a criminal. According to Andrea Smith, "uncompensated prison labor is a multimillion-dollar industry and undercuts unionized labor, forcing more people out of jobs and into poverty and thus making them more vulnerable to committing crimes of poverty" (155). The Philadelphia Prison System is not the exception. The *Philadelphia Jail Inmate Handbook*, handed out to inmates during orientation, stipulates the following:

"A number of work opportunities are available for inmates in all the PPS facilities. All assigned workers are paid a small daily wage (\$1.50 per day for most workers); this pay is deposited directly into your Inmate Account. Work assignments are intended: to provide you with positive work habits and marketable skills; to keep you productively occupied; to prepare you for work opportunities after release; and to allow inmates to earn income to use in the Commissary, etc" (43).

⁵ This does not imply that correctional industries and libraries are the only contributors to the machine but that these are the present focus of this analysis.

Unashamed, the handbook reveals the extremely low wages that inmates receive. This regulatory mechanism ensures a vicious cycle of recidivism; ensuring that inmates do not make enough money while serving time is the perfect formula to have them back soon after they are released (Van Cleve 174). Perpetuating cycles of poverty and homelessness after re-entry provides the prison-industrial complex with a constant influx of new workers, also known as cheap labor. Nevertheless, a system that seems to impact class status only, also feeds the gender correctional machine. In order to explore the regulatory mechanisms at play within the industries, data on their classification and jurisdiction was extracted from the official government websites (Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and Philadelphia Department of Prisons). Then, the data was organized by the type of program they refer to; vocational, apprenticeship, or community work.

Table 1 shows the multiple programs that make the correctional industry work in the three existing female correctional facilities in Pennsylvania, namely State Correctional Institution (SCI) Muncy and SCI Cambridge Springs, which are under the jurisdiction of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, and Riverside Correctional Facility (RCF), which is under the jurisdiction of the Philadelphia Department of Prisons. For the two SCIs, the information was clearly categorized in the website, while for RCF the categories were broken down differently. Therefore, in an attempt to

synthesize and compare data, the information below follows the format of categorization that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections establishes.

Table 1. Programs offered by correctional facility.

Facility	Programs		
	Vocational	Apprenticeship	Community Work
<i>SCI Muncy: PA Department of Corrections</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building trades • Business Practices • Computer • Technology • Custodial • Maintenance • Machine Shop • Horticulture • Cosmetology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automotive Mechanics • Electronics Tester • Painter • Plumber • Welder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mowing and trash pick up • Paint fire hydrants • Pressure wash fences • Trimm and cut down trees • Plant flowers and plants • General landscaping • Stripp and wax hall floors
<i>SCI Cambridge Springs: PA Department of Corrections</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optical • Braille • Custodial • Maintenance • Cosmetology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optical lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interior painting • Highway clean up • County fair grounds clean up • Local park clean up and landscaping • Custodial work for churches
<i>Riverside Correctional Facility: Philadelphia Department of Prisons</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental maintenance (industrial, residential and commercial cleaning, janitorial industry) • Customer service (clerks, receptionists, data entry) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General products plant • Laundry plant • Barricade plant • Carpentry plant • Culinary Arts • Dry cleaning plant • Finishing plant (furniture) • Graphics plant (impressions) • Upholstery plant • Textiles plant 	

Sources:

- [http://www.phila.gov/prisons/programs:](http://www.phila.gov/prisons/programs)
- <http://www.cor.pa.gov/Facilities/StatePrisons>

As the table shows, the vocational programs appear to match the apprenticeship programs, or as they should be more fairly called *correctional industries*. It is no coincidence that women are trained, or *vocationally guided* (as the system refers to it), in the same industries from which the prison-industrial complex benefit. For example, the nicely termed "technology vocational program" is the pipeline to the electronics tester industry; the optical vocational program to the

optical lab industry; or the environmental maintenance program to the laundry and dry cleaning industries. In this way, so-called vocational training is actually feeding into the industry itself, and not supporting the future of women upon release. Furthermore, these are all low-paying vocational programs and industries. It is worthy of mention that all the 'plants' under the apprenticeship program section for Riverside Correctional Facility are run by PhilaCor, a private contractor that manages the industries. Most notably, the Office of the Controller in the City of Philadelphia found that PhilaCor needs significant improvement in 2016, particularly in the design and implementation of procedures across all industries (Philadelphia Controller Office). This means that the state is aware of procedural issues in the correctional industries in Philadelphia but there is no mention of the regulatory nature of the vocational pipeline and narrow work opportunities being offered.

From a Marxist-feminist perspective, the mixture of unrewarding labor and low-skill job options that incarcerated women have while serving time has a particular kind of regulatory framework in which patriarchal and capitalist values are praised. The material base of patriarchal relations in capitalist societies, like the United States, create an interdependent dynamic between capitalist values and patriarchal values (Hartman 180). Since women contribute with their labor to the prison-industrial complex, their

forced labor perpetuates male dominance and capitalist production simultaneously. For this reason, seemingly innocent vocational programs and correctional industries are actually necessary mechanisms that reinforce the gender correctional machine. Given that the correctional industries fall into either traditionally masculine jobs such as plumbing, painting, and maintenance or traditionally feminine ones such as cosmetology, customer service, and textiles, there seems to be an intention to maintain the line between gendered industries. There is an observable effort to offer seemingly gender-blind or race-blind jobs that are also low-paying ones, and therefore the opposite of gender-blind or race-blind. Thus the correctional machine reinforces racialized and gendered stigmas that keep women in low-paying industries inside correctional facilities, and prepares them to stay in them upon release. By discouraging any type of activity that does not align with the status quo in which "deviant" women inhabit, industries aim to correct women back into their limited allowable labor roles. However pervasive they are, correctional industries only make up one of the branches that holds the gender correctional machine together. The next section uncovers the ideological attempt to correct women within the facilities.

Patriarchal rules in information inflow and the male gaze in facilities' libraries

Much attention has been given to the importance of access to books and literature

within correctional settings (Wright 2001, McCook 2004, Billington 2011). Yet access without quality is not good enough. The content to which women are exposed to in correctional libraries matters not only for its potential in inmate-led litigation but for the creation of subjectivity within oppressive environments (McCook 2004). The acknowledgement and development of subjectivity, as an essential characteristic of agency and personhood, allows for a politicized understanding of the self and its community (Wright 35). For this reason, it is important to review the type of books that are permitted or banned from correctional facilities. The original task I set out to do when I found a datasheet of the publications that are denied and permitted in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections⁶ was to categorize each publication by subject. Nevertheless, I soon recognized the need to approach the categorization with a feminist lens not only because of the content of the publications, but because of the patterns that contribute to the maintenance of the gender correctional machine, namely the ways in which women are represented in those publications. It is paramount to examine both the 96 denied publications and the 258 permitted ones to provide a comprehensive reading of what information the correctional facility considers

⁶The list is reviewed and put together by the Secretary Office in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. It is important to note that the listing is not particular to women's correctional facilities; the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections stipulates that the list applies to all facilities under their jurisdiction. SCI Muncy and SCI Cambridge Springs fall under this jurisdiction but is it not unique to them.

permissible for inmates to be exposed to. In order to analyze the contents of the publication list, I used Laura Mulvey's notion of the male gaze. Even though her analysis is grounded on the cinematic manifestations of patriarchy, her articulation of erotic objects (women) and the subjects who look at them (men) applies to the listing of denied and permitted publications because of the visual nature that most of the book covers present. In her iconic work "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Mulvey describes the mechanisms through which patriarchy is perpetuated in the cinematic form, as following:

"The scopophilic instinct (pleasure in looking at another person as an erotic object), and, in contradistinction, ego libido (forming identification processes) act as formations, mechanisms, which this cinema has played on. The image of woman as (passive) raw material for the (active) gaze of man takes the argument a step further into the structure of representation, adding a further layer demanded by the ideology of the patriarchal order" (17).

In an attempt to make sense of the evidently patriarchal publications that I kept finding, I started by using the first part of Mulvey's conceptualization: the pleasure in looking at someone as an erotic object. In order to do this, I categorized the datasheet into three main sections: (I) those that fall under the male gaze (the objectification of women), (II) those that provide helpful information to inmates, such as emotional support or legal knowledge (referred from now on as support-based publications), and

(III) those that do not fall within the first two categories. In order to make a sensible categorization of the covers, I use 6 analytical subcategories (sexual objectification, passivity, heteronormativity, racialized fetishism, compulsory femininity and toxic masculinity)⁷ to categorize the male gaze (section I). It is important to separate these categories to determine which is the most prevalent pattern through which the male gaze operates in book covers. Furthermore, I use 5 main subcategories for publications that fall under support-based publications: activism, self-help, skills, legal aid, and erotica (section II). The categories for section II are self-explanatory, yet it is relevant to note that erotica is distinct from categories that fall under the male gaze section because it portrays sexuality as an empowering, and not denigrating, realm. Erotica is treated as a positive exposure to information because the sexual content in these publications tend to challenge the traditional gender correctional machine. Finally, a category for book covers that do not fall into the two previously defined

categories (male gaze or support) is necessary to isolate those that are of interest to the study (section III). Examples of this category are books that deal with disciplines (such as history, religion, and politics) that do not necessarily provide a normative worldview (as opposed to section I and II). Table 2 and Table 3 below show the frequencies and comparative percentages of section I - male gaze (in orange), section II - support (in blue), and section III - disciplines (in white, labeled as N/A) for the denied and permitted publications listings.⁸

⁷ It is important to define what I mean by each category that makes up the male gaze. Sexual objectification refers to the act of treating women as sexual objects. Passivity refers to the assumption that women do not have agency in their own lives, and are therefore always available for men.

Heteronormativity refers to the assumption that heterosexual relations are the norm, and that opposite sexes are complementary to one another. Racialized fetishism refers to the attribution of superior attractiveness to a particular racial or ethnic group. Compulsory femininity refers to the social expectation that women ought to behave in particularly feminine ways, such as the stereotypical interest in pink. Toxic masculinity refers to the androcentric tendency of enacting traditionally masculine traits, such as being violent or strong.

⁸ The full coding of both denied and permitted publications listing can be found in Sections A and B of Appendix 1.

Table 2. Denied publications breakdown.

Denied Publications Listing					
Category	Frequency	%	% (N/A excluded)	% within group	% per group
Activism	7	7.20	10.76	46.66	23.07
Self-help	2	2.08	3.07	13.33	
Skills	3	3.12	9.23	20.00	
Legal aid	1	1.04	1.53	6.66	
Erotica	2	2.08	3.07	13.33	
Heteronormativity	5	5.20	7.69	10.00	76.92
Passivity	4	4.16	6.15	8.00	
Sexual objectification	20	20.83	30.76	40.00	
Racialized fetishism	15	15.62	23.07	30.00	
Compulsory femininity	4	4.16	6.15	8.00	
Toxic masculinity	2	2.08	3.07	4.00	
N/A	31	32.29	-	-	-
Total	96	100	100.00	-	100

Table 3. Permitted publications breakdown.

Permitted Publications Listing					
Category	Frequency	%	% (N/A excluded)	% within group	% per group
Activism	28	10.82	16.8	32.55	50.88
Self-help	17	6.58	10.05	19.76	
Skills	25	9.68	14.79	29.06	
Legal aid	9	3.48	5.32	10.46	
Erotica	7	2.71	4.14	8.13	
Heteronormativity	5	1.93	2.95	5.61	49.11
Passivity	5	1.93	2.95	5.61	
Sexual objectification	47	18.21	27.81	52.8	

Racialized fetishism	13	5.03	7.69	14.6	
Compulsory femininity	5	1.93	2.95	5.61	
Toxic masculinity	8	3.1	4.73	8.98	
N/A	89	34.49	-	-	-
Total	258	100	100	-	100

The breakdown of denied publications shows a significant disparity between publications in the male gaze group (23.07%) versus the support-based group (76.92%). This finding matches the expectation that the correctional facility should prohibit the entrance of what they term "obscene material" (Department of Corrections Policy Statement DC-ADM 803). Nevertheless, the percentage of male gaze publications (49.11%) that are allowed into the facility almost equals the percentage of section II publications that are allowed (50.88%). Even though the percentage of permitted male gaze publications is lower than the percentage of denied ones, it is still relevant to note that there is equal permissibility for male gaze publications as support-based ones. Notably, the most prevalent subcategory within both the denied and permitted male gaze publications is sexual objectification. The publications that were coded within this subcategory had explicitly obscene images, which are seemingly prohibited by correctional policies. Nevertheless, findings show that the policy is being partially enforced given that more sexual objectification appears in permitted male gaze publications (52.8%) than in denied ones (40%). These findings

show how the gender correctional machine not only functions through denied publications but mainly through those that are permitted inside. An institutionalized reinforcement of what the pleasure in looking at someone as an erotic object falls on the shoulders of the women portrayed in the publications under the male gaze section. Given that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections stipulates that the two listings apply to all correctional facilities under its jurisdiction, it is fair to assume that publications that women get exposed to are the same as men. Regardless of who reads the publications, the message is the same: the male gaze is permitted and patriarchy is the norm you ought to follow. Not only is the machine portraying heteronormativity, toxic masculinity, compulsory femininity, sexual objectification, and racialized fetishism as normal and acceptable traits, but it is also setting a seemingly positive structure in which processes of identification can flourish. This means that the library presents publication covers that can potentially have an impact beyond themselves; the possibility of internalization of male gaze traits becomes a given. For this reason, it is paramount to examine a visual sample of what the gender correctional

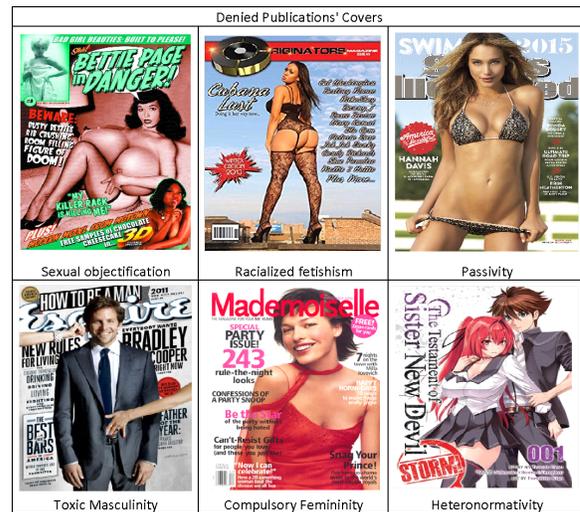
machine is dictating. The next section explores the intricacies of the second mechanism of the machine.

Seeing tradition as process of identification

Simple Google searches on the content of each publication shed immense light on the second part of Mulvey's conceptualization of the male gaze, namely the processes that women go through to navigate their identity. One way to operationalize this is by looking at the content that women are exposed to in correctional libraries. It would be naive to assume my perception of the content is equivalent to that of people who are incarcerated. Instead, I analyzed the publications through an academic lense; interpreting the potential effect of this content on women who face incarceration. After looking at publication covers, the visual representations I kept coming across showed deep patriarchal patterns in the admitted publications. It would be expected to find that images in denied publications are significantly different from those in permitted publications. The Department of Corrections establishes the parameters/rules between permissible and denied publications, as following: "a request for and receipt of any publication or photograph may be disapproved when the publication or photograph contains content considered to pose a potential threat to security, contains nudity, explicit sexual materials, or obscene material" (Department of Corrections Policy Statement DC-ADM 803). However, a critical intersectional analysis of the covers of such publications show the opposite; the

six male gaze traits that were classified before (sexual objectification, passivity, heteronormativity, racialized fetishism, compulsory femininity, and toxic masculinity) are equally pervasive in both denied and permitted publications. Collage 1 below shows a sample of denied publications' covers and Collage 2 displays a sample of permitted publications' covers.

Collage 1. Denied Publications' Covers



Collage 2. Permitted Publications' Covers



It is useful to evoke Audre Lorde's iconic analysis expressing that "the master's

tools will never dismantle the master's house" (335). In an applied version of this quote to the gender correctional machine, the master is the gender correctional machine, its tools the 6 mechanisms of the male gaze, and its house the correctional facilities' libraries. If the denied publications are the baseline criteria determining what contents should and should not be allowed in correctional facilities, the department of corrections is evidently not following its own protocol and policies. And when it does, it still shows a patriarchal male gaze. For example, the images under the compulsory femininity subcategory have similar traditionally feminine ascribed colors, such as red and pink, and a woman with a flirtatious pose in the middle of the picture. Similarly, the pictures under toxic masculinity explicitly claim how a 'real man' behaves and looks; he is a womanizer and looks bulky. It follows this logic that the images under the heteronormativity subcategory reinforce ideas of property associated with traditional heterosexual marriages, such as possessive body language or possessive names that tie women to a particular man (the dope man's wife, in Collage 2). Furthermore, the images under the passivity subcategory highlight a woman's breasts and use a submissive gaze to imply docility and availability. Moreover, the pictures under the racialized fetishism subcategory shows a woman of color (or multiple) revealing their backs in black lingerie. Finally, the images under the sexual objectification subcategory eroticize women by portraying them as abnormal, animal, and dangerous. Thus permitted and denied

publications are not significantly different. The gender correctional machine allows similar content into the facility as it leaves out. In doing so, the machine proves that its mechanisms of selection will not dismantle the patriarchal order that exists as pillars of the libraries but only reinforce it. Therefore, it is fair to argue that the patriarchal meanings of the six mechanisms can shape inmates' processes of identification. Inmates who view these images inevitably encounter a pre-established status quo: heterosexuality is the norm, women are sexual and passive objects, and men should be macho. In this way, the gender correctional machine sets the parameters for what inmates ought to identify with as appropriate behavior and norms. As long as the inmate can see herself in the publication cover as she would in a mirror, the machine has fulfilled its goal.

Bridging the three mechanisms together to bring the machine down

The gender correctional machine has authority over a web of power that oversees, controls, and ultimately shapes the construction of gender norms in correctional facilities. The two main branches of the web of power, namely correctional industries, and exposure to patriarchal information through libraries, function as a moderator of who women are and can be. However, this does not imply that the machine is always successful; doing so would mean taking away women's agency and denying their capacity to think critically. Returning to situated knowledge epistemology, it is important to recall that women's experiences within the walls of correctional facilities are

different from those that I have in seeing the system from the outside. For that reason, a further study requires that voices of incarcerated women be the driving force in order to have a holistic view of the gender correctional machine. For now, a proposed two-fold intervention to start dismantling the machine is offered below. This entails moving away from monolithic traditions, and having better access to legal tools in radical resistance.

Moving away from monolithic traditions

Assuming that all incarcerated women are a monolithic entity is epistemologically false. The intersections of race, class, gender, and all the identity markers that make up subjectivity determine difference and commonality amongst women in correctional facilities. However, correctional industries seem to assume and reinforce that all women fall into a single category of identity. Forcing women to devote their time to sewing, cooking, and, in the best case, doing clerical work presumes that all incarcerated and detained women held that type of job before entering the criminal justice system or will do it when re-entering society. Moreover, by exposing women to a particular vision of who they ought to be, the machine attempts to box them into static categories. However, the material conditions that define the lives of incarcerated or detained women before their incarceration are much more diverse and complex than what the gender correctional machine attempts to tie them to. The fact that "nearly two-thirds of women under probation are white, while two-thirds of

those confined in local jails and state and federal prisons are minorities" (Women's Health USA) is not taken into account in this system. The current programs to address women's needs in jails and prisons are outdated, race-specific, and class-specific. The diverse experiences of detained women of color are therefore erased once more by a seemingly innocent attempt to provide them with gender-responsive (a.k.a. responsive to traditional gender roles and monolithic notions) services, which put forth monolithic creations of selfhood (or lack thereof).

Given that there are intentionally patriarchal mechanisms in place, building resistance from women's situated knowledges would be potentially beneficial in building a sense of selfhood and independence. Since criminalized women are experts in the conditions that led to their incarceration and their legal case itself, this situated knowledge brings a critical lens deriving from their standpoint to the ways in which they interact with the criminal justice system. Since the multiplicity of standpoints of detained women are depoliticized by traditional gender expectations when entering the jail system, it would be beneficial to construct spaces in which those standpoints can be politicized through active resistance. As an outsider to the system, I can only work to provide resources that would make this easier but the resistance should be articulated and led by women within correctional facilities. Making the walls of facilities more porous would build a more restorative system because women would be meeting justice "with their eyes

wide open" (Wright 2001). This means that the veil of traditional gender roles, which is held in midair for a second when detained women are first described as deviant to later be imposed on them through multiple mechanisms, would be counteracted by a critical engagement with their own and shared standpoints. The next section explores how better access to legal tools could potentially evoke pro se litigation and agency for women in correctional facilities.

The fallout of traditional gender roles as a radical space of critical resistance within correctional facilities

The criminalized woman is already perceived as deviant. However, such presumed deviancy could be matched with a radical approach to such a label. By dismantling the negative meaning attached to gender-specific deviance, such deviancy could potentially be met by an explosion (meaning full embrace) of the label. If society renders criminalized women deviant, then using, expanding, and honing on that deviancy would challenge traditional gender expectations and programs. Women in jails not only need mental health support—which is also strictly paramount to the well being of incarcerated and detained women (Billington 2011)—but a critical engagement with legal knowledge. One of the biggest changes from the old paradigm of justice (retributive) to the new one (restorative) is that restorative justice reduces the dependence of defendants on legal professionals and allows for the direct involvement of participants in the legal process (Wright 37). However, the practice

of such direct involvement should be studied more closely in regards to gender roles. According to the listing of permitted publications, only 5.32% are legal aid materials, which is clearly insufficient and disproportionately low (compared for example with sexual objectification or activism). If preconceived notions of gender define the attitudes of jail authorities towards inmate agency, an essentialized perception of women's needs seems inevitable (Davis 265); assuming that all women ascribe to traditional gender roles demarcates the gendered response women get regarding their agency. Therefore, if this trend is systematically dismantled—by empowering women to engage in pro se defense rather than pushing them away from selfhood—the differences and complex identities of detained women would actually impact the services they receive at correctional facilities.

Possibilities of implementation and the power of pro se defense

New approaches to vocational training is not a new idea in criminal justice reform. A radical feminist methodology to develop and implement such programs by building on situated knowledges and standpoints is more recent in its theorizing. This type of radical resistance can draw from efforts such as the Canadian Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women's, which works towards reshaping women's agency in regional correctional facilities. In 1990, the Force created the "Creating Choices" document, which describes the new rapport that would be implemented in

five regional facilities. This rapport has four main principles: "empowerment; meaningful and responsible choices; respect and dignity; a supportive environment and a shared responsibility for offenders" (104-112). If these principles would be translated from a prison setting to a jail setting, they would still hold their revolutionary impact.

According to Randall L. Wright, "Creating Choices" is a postmodern critique of hierarchical, bureaucratic, and traditional correctional systems because it listens to the voices of incarcerated women. A translation of this model into jail settings would be more powerful because a jail focus takes power and makes power simultaneously (as Andrea Smith deems necessary to do) through meeting the specific needs of detained women. Since restorative opportunities and services are fewer in jails than prisons, the push toward women's pro se litigation might need to start from non-profit organizations like *Books Through Bars*. This organization sends free books to incarcerated people upon request. Programs such as *Address This! —a Books Through Bars initiative—* aim to address the education and empowerment gap within correctional facilities by providing "innovative correspondence courses" (Books Through Bars website), which could assist women in building resistance within facilities.

Since the gender correctional machine feeds off of the "divide and conquer" mentality, just like capitalism does, a radical detachment from that mentality would inevitably bring about more

collective ways of creating justice within jails. Pro se defense materials and workshops could bring women together as a group that fights against the non-adversarial judicial model that mass incarceration has created. Women who politicize their standpoints together, by bridging differences and solidarity, are more powerful than women who are institutionally forced to follow traditional gender norms. Thus, critical legal knowledge-based resistance within women's jails could destabilize punitive systems of justice, promote solidarity amongst different women, and challenge the traditional ways of providing services to incarcerated and detained women.

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