

Critical Conversation #2

Abolition, Intersectionality, and Care

Speakers: Victoria Law, Andrea Ritchie, Pauline Rogers, Dean Spade, and host Jarvis Benson

>>JARVIS: Hello, hello, hello, hey everybody. My name is Jarvis Benson and I am originally from Grenada, MI and I am an alumni of the University of Mississippi and I am one of the organizers of Study and Struggle. And I'll be moderating tonight's conversation, "Abolition, Intersectionality, and Care", a conversation about what it means for abolition to be intersectional and how abolition demands a reimagining of what it means to be in community and to care for one another. We are on the second of four Critical Conversations hosted by Haymarket Books. To see our future schedule and access to events such as tonight, you can visit our website studyandstruggle.com and click the webinar tab. Study and Struggle is intended to connect and build radical communities across boundaries, whether they be national borders or prison walls. Our four month curriculum was produced by a team of scholars, community organizers, and currently and formerly incarcerated people. It centers the interrelationship between prison abolition and immigrant justice with a particular focus on the histories and ongoing freedom struggles in Mississippi and the South. We currently have over 100 reading groups across the world, a dozen of which are in prisons in Mississippi, and we hope as these roots become radical communities unto themselves, which are connected to one another through our pen pal program and through a larger community when we come together once a month for conversations like these. Our Critical Conversations will discuss the key concepts for the month and we are absolutely thrilled to have such a fantastic group of thinkers and organizers for tonight's program.

So before I introduce the speakers, I want to thank the organizers and sponsors of this conversation, our entire Study and Struggle team, and Haymarket Books. You can support the dozens of Study and Struggle groups outside of Mississippi which have indicated a financial need through our GroupMe, which we will link through the chat. And finally, if you are able to make a donation, no matter how small via Venmo, folks will place that in the chat as well. All donations, including the registration donation that you might have already made, will go to support the RECH Foundation which works to help individuals and families impacted by crime and incarceration. We are also so grateful to our interpreter and captioning team for their support and to Heard for developing tonight's accessibility strategies. Heard is an abolitionist organization that supports deaf and disabled communities impacted by the carceral system, which includes supporting the work of language justice. For tonight we have live captioning of English and Spanish, and a new deaf-centered model of ASL interpretation that inverts the power dynamics found in typical hearing-centered models of interpreting. To support Heard's work, please see the link in the chat.

Okay, so I am super excited to be here, and I'm so glad that I am only moderating because I am definitely a little baby abolitionist. I am here, got my notebook, I'm ready to learn, sit back, listen, ask questions. And now to my pleasure, to introduce our wonderful speakers tonight and begin our program. And I'll wait a little for the interpreters.

Okay. So first, Dean Spade has been working to build queer and trans liberation based in racial and economic justice for the past two decades. He is the author of *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*, the director of the documentary *Pinkwashing Exposed: Seattle Fights Back!*, and the creator of the mutual aid toolkit at Bigdoorbrigade.com. His latest book, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)* coming from Verso Press this summer.

Andrea J. Ritchie is a black lesbian immigrant, whose writing, litigation, organizing, and advocacy has focused on policing and criminalization of women and LGBT people of color for the past two decades. She is currently a researcher for Interrupting Criminalization and works with groups across the country to defund and abolish policing. She is also a co-founder of the In our Names network, and a

member of the Movement for Black Lives policy table. She is the author of *Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color*, and co-author of *Say Her Name: Resisting Police Brutality Against Black Women* with the African American Policy Forum and *Queer (In)Justice: The Criminalization of LGBT People in the United States*.

Victoria Law is a freelance writer and editor. She is the author of *Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women* and co-editor of *Don't Leave Your Friends Behind*, and coauthor of the new book *Prison by Any Other Name*. She frequently writes about the intersections between mass incarceration, gender, and resistance.

And Pauline Rogers is formerly incarcerated and co-founder of the Reaching and Educating for Community Hope, or RECH Foundation, and Reentry Campus in Jackson, Mississippi. Over 32 years, she along with her husband of 29 years, also formerly incarcerated, provides safe and supportive housing for women coming home from prison with 0 recidivism today for those who have been served by their services. An advocate, activist, ordained minister, and forthcoming published author on a mission to help strengthen and enlighten the role of the church in prison justice reform. And I'll give a moment for the interpreters.

Okay. So, we'll begin this evening as we do with all of our conversations by hearing from one of our Mississippi partners. So Mississippi legend Pauline Rogers will start by letting us know what is happening in Mississippi and the work of the RECH Foundation and then we'll move on to the Q&A format. So Pauline will you take it away.

>>PAULINE: Good evening, it is good to be here. As Jarvis has already said, I am here in Mississippi, and if any of you have watched the news lately, since December of last year, we have made national news with the problems that were exposed at Parchman. And what is happening in Mississippi and the work of RECH, not a lot has changed since that exposure of the inhumane living conditions in the notorious Parchman Prison. Little has changed, in fact, the Governor, our state Governor, has done zero since that exposure. Conditions have been covered up, if you will, a little paint over molded areas, some people moved out of Parchman, but they have been slowly been put back into camps 29 and 30. They were moved to private facilities and now they are being moved back. It is not on the radar, but it is slowly happening to those who were released from there. Visitation is still non existent, except for legal visitations. No out of state transfers for parolees, except for a case by case study if political push or monetary movement, monetarily enforced. No state funerals for first degree relative of an incarcerated person. No hospital visitations for sick family members with privileged deaths allowed here in the state. All of that has been halted.

COVID has added a lot in this occurrence. No urgency or priority has been given to testing of those incarcerated or staff. There have been little of 1,000 incarcerated that have been tested. MDOC has reported to date 601 cases among the prisoners with 1 death, and we know that's not accurate. 145 staffers, the copay is waved, the copay that the prisoner has to pay, they only get free testing if they influenza and COVID like symptoms, otherwise it's pay as usual with the medical care. However, Jay Z and Roc Nation sued the state, and the health care facility that was inside the prison are no longer there, so I don't know to date what that replacement has been. And in recent days, MDOCS has fired 10 staffers for corruption, bringing in contraband, one as recent as today for bringing in alcohol and cash money. And these have been employees, some of them have been with the Department of Correction for 25 or more years. And MDOC rejected a \$10 million bid to renovate a closed facility that had been closed in 2016, that they are about to reopen but they are using all inmate labor to rebuild and renovate this facility. Now I don't know how you can go from refusing a \$10 million bid and put in all this labor on inmate labor with \$0 compensation. But this is what is happening. And that facility is Walnut Grove.

But here, and all over, we got the election coming November 3rd. Another thing that is happening that we hope is gonna change some of the carceral things that are occurring, there is a bill, an initiative measure, initiative measure 65, that is dealing with marijuana, to legalize, to make it medical marijuana usage here in the state and a lot of people are pushing for that to pass. We also have budget cuts, and there was a bill vetoed recently, Senate bill 2123, that would have granted a lot of people to be eligible for parole, that the Governor vetoed. People are still pushing against that. So you have that, that is happening, but the big thing that is happening with RECH right now is voter registration push. Get out the vote, trying to get formerly incarcerated people out to vote. And one of the things in this work that we've been doing 30 something years, in our 30 year history, we have been revisiting what we've done. We've had 11 successful clemencies, and we are looking to build on that, clemency power, working what we did then and learning from some of the experts in our history to see what we can do to move this state even more forward. So I will pass it back to you Jarvis and to the next question.

>>JARVIS: Okay. Thank you Pauline so much, for giving us that, and offering that. Okay, now we're gonna begin our discussion portion, so I'll have each of you give around 5 minutes introducing the work that you do through the framework of abolition as intersectional, and abolition as care. So I'll just pick on one of you, Andrea do you mind going first?

>>ANDREA: Guess that's what happens when your name starts with A. Thank you so much Jarvis and the Study and Struggle crew for having me. I feel very honored to be part of this conversation and excited to learn about this better interpretation strategy. So thank you Heard for all you do. I work at Interrupting Criminalization, where I have the privilege of working with Mariame Kaba and Woods Irving, who are leaders in the struggle for abolition, and I get to learn from them every day. And our work focuses on ending the incarceration, of ending the mass incarceration, criminalization, deportation, and detention of women, girls, trans, and gender non-conforming people. And we started from that place because black women and girls are the fastest growing prison and jail populations over the past four decades, and that the populations of queer and trans people in prison are vastly disproportionate, particularly in women's prisons. Some estimates show that up to 42% of people in women's prisons identified as queer or trans or gender non-conforming before incarceration. And so we wanted, there is very little information, or much less information, on how police come into contact with women, girls, queer and trans people, than there is for male identified people who are assumed to be cis-gender and heterosexual. And so, I wanted to learn more about what brings police to people like Breonna Taylor's door. We wanted to learn more about what police contact was producing those numbers, and from that we wanted to move to abolition through an intersectional lens.

And I'll say more about this as we talk, but the other thing I found in my work on policing and black women, queer and trans people, over the past few decades, is that when you look at policing and criminalization through the experiences of black women, girls, queer and trans people, you get to abolition much more quickly. Because you see all the ways policing takes place, and you see the lie that policing protects women, girls, queer and trans people much more quickly, and you see all the ways in which the State is very intersectional in how it criminalizes people and why our response has to be intersectional in order to actually get to abolition. And you see that criminalization is the default response to every harm, conflict, or need in our society, and has been growing as the default response in part from people who were asking for better response to violence in our communities. That has produced this growth in mass incarceration and criminalization. But really what people need more of is care.

And so the last thing I'll say is that we organize our work around 6-D's. We want to document what is driving mass incarceration; we want to decriminalize as much as possible; we want to divert

people out of the system before they even come into contact with a cop; we want to decarcerate, get everybody out; we want to divest and dismantle, so many of us talk about defunding police but we want to defund the whole system. And most importantly, and this is the abolitionist care and my favorite part, is we want to dream the world we want to live in where everyone's needs are met and as Mariame Kaba says, everyone lives with dignity and safety isn't obtained at the end of a gun. And that is the world we are building at Interrupting Criminalization that is focused on doing that intersectionally and with care.

>>JARVIS: Thank you Andrea. 6-D's, that's amazing. A really awesome way to frame that. We're gonna give a small moment for the interpreters to swap. Okay. So, next on my list, I will say Dean. Do you mind going?

>>DEAN: I'm happy to. Really grateful to the organizers and to Heard and to also to Pauline for that really clear rundown of what is going on in Mississippi. I learned a lot and it was just such a big overview. It is hard to do that the way you did it, so thank you for that. It makes this conversation rich.

I am part of a variety different kinds of abolitionist strategies. I work with a group that is trying to shut down the detention center, here near where I live here in Tacoma, Washington. Worked on fights to stop different adult and youth facilities from being built, or the prison budget from being expanded here in Washington, and here in King County and Seattle. I have also done work for years directly supporting trans and queer people in prisons, and helping them fight for what they need. And I liked this question about how is abolition intersectional and care-based. The first piece around intersectionality, I really think Andrea touched on really well. Ultimately, what abolition is about, is that we have this recognition that reforming or trying to fix the police or prisons doesn't work. That it has often led to the expansion of those very systems. And how do we know that-often because the people who are harmed most in that expansion are the most vulnerable to criminalization-so black people, indigenous people, people with disabilities, women and girls, femmes, sick and disabled people, poor people, et cetera. It's not surprising that abolitionist wisdom has come from those people. And that those people are the intellectual basis of the movement and have done the most of the on the ground work. So it just makes perfect sense that it is intersectional.

And I want to give one example, which is the Prison Rape Elimination Act, which is a law that was passed, the idea being to eliminate rape in prisons. Which of course we would all want, but actually rape is endemic to the project of keeping people in cages. And so what the Prison Rape Elimination has been used to do on the ground has been actually to further criminalize queer and trans prisoners. People in prison have been given PRIA violations because they are gender non-conforming, or have been further isolated from the general population of the prison, and subjected to solitary confinement, which is torture, in the name of preventing rape. So we see that whatever we add to the system that is suppose to protect vulnerable people, actually increases vulnerability. Vicky has many, many examples of this in her amazing new book *Prison by Any Other Name*, which I really want to recommend. So PRIA is just one example, but we can see other examples just if I just stick to the queer and trans examples. Like, if they add queer and trans cops, it doesn't actually stop our communities from being targets. If the cops march in Pride, it doesn't stop our communities from being targets. If the cops get trained about us, they tend to get better at spotting us and arresting us. So we see, over and over again, that we can't reform this system to make it different than its nature. So that's why I think abolition is intersectional.

And why it's care-based? What abolition says is that we should divest from the entire racist ideology of punishment. And that actually, we have to get away from this idea that there are certain people that need to be contained, and that need to be cast outside. Because we all know, it is never actually about who is dangerous. The most dangerous people in our society are running oil and gas companies, are the police themselves, are the military, are the bankers. Like these are people who are actually ending lives early, right? People who want to eliminate health care have succeeded in creating

an inadequate health care system. The people who get cast as dangerous are not the most dangerous people, they are just the part of the same communities that have always been seen as suspicious or as monsters or less than human, through these traps of ableism, racism, and transphobia, et cetera. What abolitionists say, is that instead of trying to find dangerous people and punish them, we want to stop harm. So we want to ask why was this harm able to happen? Why are so many trans people killed because they don't have housing? What are the fundamental conditions that make so much danger happen? Why is there so much sexual violence in our culture? Why is there so much gun violence in our culture? Maybe we make too many guns. Maybe we have a deep form of patriarchy that governs how we understand sexuality. And so abolitionists ask what can we do to change the conditions, what can we do to help the person who was harmed or the people who were harmed, be able to participate in society again, heal, feel supported and heard. Which our criminal system does not do. And what can we do to make harm doers learn how to not do that again. Like how to actually stop the harm, which the prison system doesn't do.

One of the big things happening with the Defund and Divest approach that we are talking about is that people always want to say, can we get a different looking police force? Can it be made of social workers or something? But the main way we see abolition is not through a different form of a police force, it is through getting to the root causes of why people are experiencing harm. So actually moving money from the police, prison, courts, immigration enforcement system, into housing, health care, child care, all the, transportation, all the things our communities don't have that really make us unsafe and stressed out and unwell. Right. So that, that's why care is central to the abolitionist proposal. So I'll leave it at that, thank you so much.

>>JARVIS: I'll give the interpreters some time to catch up. Okay. Thank you so much Dean. That was beautifully framed, that was such a beautiful framing of care and how it is important to abolition. Next I will not follow the alphabet and I'll go to Victoria.

>>VICTORIA: Thanks so much Jarvis and thank you Study and Struggle crew for inviting me to be part of this conversation. Thank you Dean for laying out care, because then I get to then talk about what care as abolition looks like in practice. (has some technical issues)

Okay, so if we start from the framework of abolition, we need to remember that prisons and all of its manifestations cannot be reformed to meet people's needs or to be more humane. Which is what Pauline and Andrea and Dean have all laid out, very beautifully and terribly. And so we need to look at eliminating them and not just saying open the cages, let everybody go free, and we live in Mad Max world. But actually replacing them with resources and supports that actually meet people's needs, and as Dean put it, reducing and addressing harm and violence if and when they happen and the conditions that enable them. So if we think of abolition as not just eliminating incarceration, but meeting people's needs and supporting their ability to not only survive, but thrive in this world. We have to understand that care and caring and care work are crucial. In other words, we need to actually need to look at care work, which is often invisibilized or dismissed or downplayed or ignored, as abolition. Ruth Wilson Gilmore, who is a co-founder of Critical Resistance, talks about abolition as an aspirational adventure. And so we need to think of all of the ways we can work towards, or go along on that adventure, and one of those ways of doing so is to build a world in which we are valuing care work and community.

And during this pandemic, we saw this happening in many places. As institutions and places that are suppose to meet people's needs shut down, people were stepping up to connect with each other and to take care of each other. We saw mutual aid organizing and networks form in different neighborhoods and communities. We also saw people doing more informal types of care for each other, including sharing resources, including food, information, medical care, and in some places, especially looking at NYC where I am, people don't often know their neighbors. People go in and out of apartments

and buildings and neighborhoods, and with this pandemic, people made efforts to get to know their neighbors. They made efforts to form support networks, so that if someone got sick, or was afraid of getting sick, or simply needed help, there were nearby options. So for instance, getting groceries or medications, and it starts small. You don't necessarily start with a crisis and hope that community and care comes at the very beginning. Did the system or these systems work all the time? But does our current system, which espouses individual resilience, and you do it, and you don't ask for help, work all the time? We definitely know that it does not. And it leaves so many people behind. And one of the things about the pandemic is it really illustrated how care work can be political, and also how it can be abolitionist, because it helps people meet their needs and lead a life of dignity rather than relying on coercively controlling and surveilling people. And threatening them with punishment and caging.

And I want to dive into a little bit of recent history of how people have been practicing care work as abolition, even if they didn't necessarily call it abolition at the time. So going back to the 1970s, some feminists, we'll talk about those other feminists later, some feminists were recognizing the importance of care work, child care, house work, all of the invisible gender work that mostly women were doing, as work. And they said we should be recognized for this work, we should be compensated for this work, we should not be expected to do this work with no recognition, with no compensation, with no support. And so if we think about this idea that care work is work, we have to think of that as a way in which people are providing for other people's needs. If you are doing parenting or child care or house work or meeting other people's needs, and having their own needs met. We also saw this kind of care work happening inside of prisons. One of the most famous examples happened in the 1980s at New York's maximum security prison, Bedford Hills. So in the early 1980s when AIDS, when HIV and AIDS were very stigmatized, it still is today, but at the time it was very, very stigmatized, incarcerated women started organizing to break the stigma around HIV and AIDS and educate themselves, and provide care for women who had been diagnosed with HIV. Because at the time when people were diagnosed with HIV in prisons, in NY and across the country, they were often ostracized, discriminated against, they were threatened with or met with violence. They were often, people were petitioned to have them be out of their cells. What they did was they formed a group called the AIDS Counseling and Education Program, educated themselves, educated each other, cared for people who had HIV, helped them figure out how to get medical care in a prison system that did not want to provide medical care for people to begin with, let alone provide medical care for people with HIV. And in some cases, when people were very sick or dying, were able to go and be with them and provide care so they did not have to spend their last days alone in a prison infirmary with no one around them except perhaps an occasional hostile nurse or doctor.

In the late 1980s and 1990s, there was a battered women's support group in Illinois' women's prison, and they realized, it originally started as a support group, and they realized that they had all been incarcerated for defending themselves against abusive loved ones, and again it started as care work, how do we support each other through these long or life sentences. And what ended up happening was they said, they started talking, and through talking they realized they should not be, they should not actually be in prison for these lengthier long sentences, and then they said, we should do something about this. So they petitioned the Governor of Illinois at the time to commute all of their sentences so they should be able to get out of prison and their effort resulted in a record number of clemencies. Twenty something women, I believe it was 25, were granted commutations, and this was something that was unheard of at the time, it was unprecedented, but it was based in them caring for each other. Not necessarily starting as a political or abolitionist framework, but just as a way of supporting each other through their incarceration.

In the 1990s, people in California's women's prisons started to organize around health care based on their relationships and connections with each other. And so, again, they noticed they were not getting health care that met their needs. I mean nobody in prison really gets health care that meets their

needs. But what makes this different is that the women began organizing based on their relationships, and their friendships, and their networks of care. And then they expanded to building relationships with outside advocates, again based on this model on community, and we need to actually do, you know, to work together, to improve these conditions. And also, to challenge these conditions that keep us in prison for long or life sentences.

So moving back to the outside and to the present day, one, Jarvis mentioned that one of the books I co-edited, was *Don't Leave Your Friends Behind*, which is a sort of primer of sorts on how to provide child care and deal with children and youth in movements that are often not family friendly or children friendly. I forgot to say earlier on that I am thrilled to be here, because I am not only coming here as an abolitionist, but as a mother. My child is now older, but once upon a time, she was a baby and a toddler and a young child, and as a caregiver, and when my daughter was small, I used to be one of the few people who would bring my baby and toddler, small child, small disruptive child, to different political events. And I used to press for childcare at radical gatherings and political events, and people often said they didn't know how to deal with children, or how to do child care. Basically again invisibilizing that kind of work. So with another mother, China Martens, we set out to put together a series of how-to zines, which I would show you except I can't find them, which later culminated in a book which basically gives people a blueprint as to how to do this.

And since then, we've seen an emergence of child care and youth activities which has spread over the past few years. And then moving to present day as well, the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective has a model called pod mapping. Where basically, I don't know if you can see the slide, I am assuming you can, which looks like a bunch of circles is a way to show what relationships you have and what you can do, who you can rely on for certain things. So for instance, if I am at the center of this pod map, and I say you know, these are the kinds of supports that I need, you know, and these are the people I have in my life, you know, who can I call on? (paused for interpreter) Okay, who can I ask for support of these people that I have relationships with. And one concrete example I want to give is that last, not this past April during the pandemic, but the April before, my partner had a life-saving lung transplant. I don't know if anyone has ever had people in their lives who have had transplants, but post-transplant, you can't leave people alone. You have to be around them 24-7 because if something bad happens, someone needs to be able to call 911 or bring them to the transplant center or go to the hospital. They also can't do, at least for lung transplant people, a number of things including prepare their own food, and clean, or do anything that might bring spores and dust and what not into these new lungs. And that might have gotten old really fast. But we used pod mapping to say, how do we ask our community for support and for care, so we're not just isolated in a little pod of 2 or 3 or 4, and in the end, we had a tremendous community that stepped up and offered the support. Over 30 people stepped over the course of 3 months, ranging from food support. Somebody would just come and bring a meal, so that was one less meal that I had to cook. Or hung out with him so I could go take a walk and do something that was not caregiving. To actually accompanying him when he needed to go walk or run errands, that way I could concentrate on my own work. And these are some of the ways in which we can look at building a world that we want to see, and the world that we want to live in through community and through care, rather than saying, you know, abolition is just this tearing down of institutions and not necessarily looking at other ways in which we can come together and build that world without prisons.

>>JARVIS: I'll give some time for the interpreter. Okay, thank you so much Victoria. That was amazing, and thank you so much for sharing your story with us. Thank you. And last, I'll ask Pauline to introduce yourself as well and then we'll move onto the questions.

>>PAULINE: Again, Pauline Rogers with the Reaching & Educating for Community Hope Foundation. We use the acronym RECH (pronounced reach) in Mississippi. This abolition work for me, I

come from a church experience. I don't, bear with me a minute, to sound preachy or whatever, but the work of abolition to me is getting back to the beginning. If you ever read a bible, in the beginning, there was not this big governmental overhead, governmental oversight, governmental operated control land. It was self-governance. You had the access to everything but you governed yourself as to what you were limited to or had the freedom of. And even when Jesus himself came along, he said I didn't come to destroy the law, I came to fulfill it. Now it sounds like an oxymoron, but when he said I came to fulfill, he came tearing down traditions in what men and women would have done to handle situations. You don't deal with Samaritans-brown, black, Asian, Vietnamese, Jewish, Palestinians, whatever. You don't deal with them. You don't heal on the Sabbath. Everything that people were trying to put a law on, condemn people over, he came and tore down. He abolished it, tore down, destroyed, same as abolishing. He abolished it so we didn't have all the oversight and control of, of what we have now with the government controlling and monies being allocated to control people. You just now got this big cycle going on and we judge people, but if you looked at the life of Christ, he was engaged with everybody. Everyone.

And that's the world I want to see, dealing with this criminal justice system, is tear down the walls that we have built. In order to get us to the place of stability, the place of ending mass incarceration, and a part of one of the things to me that keeps incarceration on the forefront is, like in school. Each time a teacher sends a child to the principal's office, a record is being created. Every time that teacher says I can't handle this child and they need to go out of the classroom, down the hall, and to the principal's office, from preschool to high school to college, a record has been created. That child has been stereotyped, classified, when it may be simply this child is trying to struggle with who they are, who am I and what do I want to do. And as long as we continue the process of creating records on people, we set ourselves to be criminalized and incarcerated. So even at work, every time an employee does an evaluation, a record is being created.

So we have to be very conscientious and cognizant when we are in these positions of leadership, not to create a path that would lead to a pipeline to incarceration. Whether that is in the school with the teacher who says I can't handle this child, they need to go to the principal's office, because when you get to the next teacher, that record from first grade now goes to third grade. When they look at that record, you have already been classified and stereotyped. So I take it back to the beginning of being cognizant of the records we create upon children, men, people of color, we creating all of these records that are traveling with us, with people everywhere we go, every time you sit down, and we chatter negatively about the other person-we are creating records. And these records are stacking up information, piles of information, that are being put in the gateway of the brain cells, the gateway of the computer, the gateway of the paper, the phone, the picture, that leads to this pipeline to prison. So that is what I'll say on that Jarvis.

>>JARVIS: Thank you. Okay, yes thank you. Amen, Pauline that was amazing. You're so right. Okay, so now we're gonna move into the Q & A format. And so I will pose all of you questions and I'll direct questions to you so it's not awkward, you don't know who is going to go. And each question, even though I'll pose them, is going to be open to all four of you. Feel free to pass it to someone if you don't want to answer, or if you feel like it's been answered, we can move onto the next one. Okay, first question is going to be posed to Andrea. We are going to be alphabetical. What does intersectionality mean to you and why is it important for understanding imprisonment and migration controls?

>>ANDREA: Thank you. Intersectionality was outlined in the Combahee River Collective's statement, before by many black feminists, and I heard Angela Davis once talk about how intersectionality comes out of organizing and lived experience, not a theory, right. And the experience of intersectionality is living at, one organization that really shaped my politics calls, the dangerous

intersections of state and interpersonal violence, for instance, right. It's living in a world of what the Combahee River Collective calls interlocking oppressions. So it is not about my identity—I'm a black woman, I'm a lesbian, I'm an immigrant, I'm a survivor of domestic and state violence, and that's my intersectional identity, that's not the case. The case is how do I experience intersecting forms of violence or how I do experience violence based on intersecting systems of control that operate in my life. So obviously as a light skin black woman that is going to be a very different experience than how anti-black racism plays out for a dark-skinned black woman. As a cis-gender appearing woman, it's gonna be very different, even though I'm experiencing patriarchy alongside my trans and gender non-conforming siblings.

So it's about how systems of oppression interact in our experience of the world within the larger context of systemic relations of power. And it's really important for understanding mass incarceration, criminalization, and deportation because those are the systems that maintain those intersecting and interlocking systems of oppression. They are the frontline of those systems. When the police come into contact with you, that's what they are enforcing. They are saying, I'm enforcing anti-blackness, I'm enforcing a system of power in which, you know, I'm ensuring that white supremacy is enforced in this interaction so I am going to understand a black woman as in that larger system. I am going to understand someone who is a migrant in that larger system of maintaining a nation-state. I am going to interact with someone who is disabled in a way that's about reinforcing ableism and able-body supremacy. And so, those things mean that the people who are most impacted by mass incarceration, detention, and deportation are the folks who are living at the intersections of those systems of oppression.

So for instance, black migrants are experiencing very high levels of criminalization, and black disabled people experience very high levels of police violence. Black trans women experience very high levels of police and community-based violence because they are living at the intersections of multiple forms of oppression that are enforced through state violence and state-sanctioned violence. So we need to understand all of the systems that are at play. If we only look at mass incarceration, criminalization, deportation, policing through the lens of an experience of someone who is a young, black man, who is assumed to be cis-gender, assumed to be heterosexual, assumed to be west-born, then we are only going to see one slice of the problem. And then the solutions we propose then will only come at one slice of the problem. We won't see how the child welfare system is also a system that enforces interlocking systems of oppression. We won't see, if we read Vicky and Maya's book we'll know, we won't necessarily see if that if we say we don't want a policing response to drugs, we want a public health response to drugs, then we'll see the public health system was actually set up in a way that was about policing and criminalizing black women, disabled, and migrant bodies. And so we're just shifting the policing and criminalization to another realm. And we wouldn't be surprised for instance that ICE has forced sterilized black women in detention, because that has happened to black women through public health systems since the public health system was established. So I can go on for what that teaches us, but its why I say that if we look at the experiences of policing, criminalization, mass incarceration, detention, and deportation through the lens of black women's experiences, and when I say that I mean black trans women, black queer women, black gender non-conforming people, black migrants, we understand better how this whole system works in interlocking ways, and that fact that we have to take it all down, because otherwise we won't be able to free all of us, and that's the goal here.

>>JARVIS: We'll give some time for the interpreter to switch. Amazing, okay. Andrea, thank you so much. Very clear outlaying of what intersectionality is and how important it is for abolition. Thank you so much. Does anyone else want to answer that question? Okay. So the second question is going to be posed to Victoria, and it is why is intersectionality important for building abolitionist movements? And so, I guess going a little deeper into why that is important.

>>VICTORIA: Thank you Andrea so much for laying this out, and you've done so beautifully, I'm only going to add a quick comment to it. Which is, when we're thinking about building abolitionist movements, if we don't think about intersectionality, if we don't think about different identities, we end up leaving people behind. We have seen this, and I said earlier we would talk about those other 1970s feminist, in the battered women's movement that arose in the 1970s and 1980s, in which women were sick and tired of the police not responding to domestic violence calls or not taking seriously domestic violence calls. This did not mean that domestic violence was not a problem in all communities, but they were demanding a greater law enforcement response when somebody was experiencing family or domestic violence. And what ended up, and they did not take into consideration, nor did they listen to the experiences of women of color, and queer women and other women who had never been served by law enforcement and the criminal legal system, and who had often been brutalized by these systems. They did not take into account or consider or take seriously these concerns and these experiences.

So in calling for greater law enforcement violence, they ended up leaving behind a whole swath of people who were experiencing violence from family members and others who said that they loved them. And increasing policing and policing budgets and police capacity instead, and it was a missed opportunity to say, well what is it that needs to happen to end domestic and family violence? What supports need to be in place? Maybe we need to close the gender wage gap so that people, so that women are not making half of the amount or 70% of what men are making, and that might enable them to be able to go out and get their own, you know, get their own apartment. Maybe we need more safe and affordable housing available, maybe we need better child care options, maybe we need to not have a system which tells certain people that it is okay to go and hit certain other people. Because if we think about the way that abuse works, people who are abusive to loved ones typically do not just go around punching their bosses and their coworkers and the cop that gave them a traffic ticket, and other people for whom their would be more consequences for assaulting. So we should look at that as a cautionary tale of not looking at intersectionality when building movements for abolition and instead say whose needs are not being met, who do we leave behind if we're not looking at intersecting identities, and then what do we need to do to make sure that we are not creating these systems that further marginalize and endanger and criminalize other people.

>>JARVIS: Give a moment for interpreters, ready? Okay. Victoria, that's awesome framing, that's really well put. Thank you so much. Who can we hit and who is allowed, yah, that is amazing. Does anybody else want to answer that question? Okay. So the next question is going to be posed to Dean, which is how do heteronormativity and binary gender norms contribute to the prison industrial complex?

>>DEAN: I have to say that Andrea's work is central to my understanding of this, so I hope you might add things. As soon as I see this question, I think about all the levels of profiling people experience for violating gender norms. The ways in which our prison system is designed to enforce a gender binary, and inevitably, that means there's a bunch of people who are punished for not easily fitting in that. So, I'm thinking of like, a women's prisons I knew of that put more masculine or butch women into a separate wing or put them in solitary. I am thinking of how people the prison knows are queer in both men's and women's prisons, or who are identifiable as trans, are subject to so much punishment. I'm also thinking about as Pauline talked about, these pathways and pipelines to prison. So because queer and trans people for many reasons experience family rejection, experience difficulty in the job world, are likely to be in criminalized work, if it's the only work they can get. Are pushed out of schools, and this is, you know, far more true for black and indigenous queer and trans and people, for other queer and trans people of color, for disabled queer and trans people. This is gonna make people more in the

zone of where the police are already targeting people for arrest. These are also the same people likely to be pathologized, likely to be seen as mentally ill for their sexuality or gender expression, likely to be locked up in what me might call medical and psychiatric prisons. Our abolitionist project includes opposing all forms of forced treatment. Again I refer you to Vicky's book for a quick go to about why.

And so there's, there's both the pathways into the system, then there's being in the system. I've had clients who were a trans girl, in an all-boys juvenile justice facility, a kid's prison. And being written up for having her nails long, for having her identity, for going by her name. So she's gonna be slower to ever get out of there because she's got this record, as Pauline said. And then, so in all the ways that the time in can become longer and more dangerous, and traumatizing. These are young people often targeted for sexual abuse by adults in the prison system. And I've also had known a lot of people who couldn't get into like a diversion or drug-treatment program because the program was some kind of private place, they don't take trans, or they don't want queers. You know, so, or they don't have a very good record from their time inside because they kept being targeted. And then when you get out, you got all this, all these obstacles-to housing, employment, education-and now you also have this label as a criminalized person, as a diagnosed person from the psychiatric or medical systems.

And we have had a kind of gay and lesbian rights formation during my lifetime that's been visible, that has not been on the side of criminalized people. That has, what has been the gay and lesbian politics most of us has heard of, has been about upper class people, accessing marriage and property rights. It's not been about criminalized people, even though many of us are in this movement, centering criminalized and poorer people. But this really relates to what Vicky was saying about a strain of the feminist movement that didn't listen to and didn't care about the experiences of the most vulnerable women and queer and trans people, and therefore actually built responses to domestic violence that were pro-police. We got the same thing going on in the gay and lesbian politic side during the same period. So, for so many reasons, it is not surprising that there are a lot of queer and trans people in the abolition movement because we see how the police and prisons harm our communities and we want something else.

>>JARVIS: Absolutely, thank you so much Dean. I'll give a moment for the interpreters. Okay, does anybody want to respond to what Dean said?

>>ANDREA: Only briefly to say that I learned a lot of what I learned from Dean and also from Tourmaline and Miss Major and Miss Janetta and people like Toni-Michelle Williams in Atlanta, and from black queer and trans people across the country who were willing to talk to me when I was doing research in the early 2000s for a report called "Stonewalled". And so, I just, back to this question of intersectionality, we learned so much of how policing happens, not only on the axis of race and poverty, but also on the axis of gender and sexuality, through the experiences of trans and queer people with policing, not just now, but over time. I think sometimes people think that's a newer phenomenon, but actually some of the first police forces were of course slave patrols, of course patrols called Indian patrols to keep indigenous people off their own land, but also policing in urban areas was explicitly about policing the gender binary, policing people's gender in public space, and policing people's sexuality, which for black women was always, whether queer or trans or not, perceived to be inherently deviant. And so, there's so much to learn there about different forms and sites and impacts of criminalization and policing that we're so lucky that black trans women continued to be willing to share and teach us particularly given how, how much there's also an epidemic of interpersonal and community violence against black trans folks that is also not being addressed.

And so, I just want to lift up for instance the experience and story of Toni McDade, who was killed by Tallahassee police a few days after George Floyd was killed by police in Minnesota, whose experience of gender violence and transphobia and the violence of the criminal punishment system is

very complex and complicated, but also teaches us all we need to know in many ways about all the systems that we need to abolish and all the ways we need to support people who experience violence, who perpetrate violence, based on what they've learned and been taught. And how all of that, our failure to address all of that, is deadly for everybody. And certainly our failure to offer genuine and sustainable safety strategies and create a society where black trans women and gender non-conforming people can survive but also thrive, and instead experience tremendous rates of police and other community forms of violence, which is for me a reason I get up to do abolition every day, cuz that's a responsibility I have and hopefully we can all take on.

>>JARVIS: Thank you so much Andrea. I'll give a moment for the interpreter. Okay. So the next question, we're gonna switch our, yah, just the topic. I guess we've talked a lot about intersectionality, and now we're gonna move on to thinking about care a little more intimately. And so the first question is gonna be posed to Pauline. So Pauline, how do we reimagine communities as central to the continuation of care?

>>PAULINE: Well a part of that to me goes back to a perfect garden. And that even, I grew up the oldest of 11 siblings. And when trouble came in the community, you didn't call someone who to inflict punishment, or pain, you were sent to grandma's, the next uncle, the aunt. You were circled around until you landed into that place where somebody could relate to you in whatever that struggle was. You were treated with punitive punishment in order to deal with the root of where you were, so a part of the continuity of care for people in communities to me is dealing with those influential factors in every community. Because every community is different, it's not a one size fit all. If you send a person to a community where the aesthetics, the cosmetics, are not up to par, that entire community is already judged and stigmatized. And it's nothing to do with the people whoever runs the city should enforce the codes and laws to keeping the community clean. But it's not, but rather than doing that, a lot of communities hold the people accountable for bad aesthetics. Some of it can be community ridden, if it's targeted to one household, but if it's a drainage problem that keeps sewer backed up and the whatever, that's a city issue.

So a lot of the issues that we placed on people in terms of the continuum of care, is the lack of proper appropriations of funding to address a lot of the issues that need to be addressed. You send a person back to the community and the only available housing for those who have been formerly incarcerated is in this neighborhood because they can't get a job, they can't find employment, so they are thrust into this community that's unkept, no care, and they get tailored as being just like the community in which they now live. You got a lot of people hanging out and whatever. So the population and the makeup, and then if you got kids in there, you have to target whether you got children who are school aged, your seniors, and if you got these vast majority of diverse people, you have to have the resources, the senior care centers, the gyms, the community centers, in order for these kids to be able to thrive in their prospective age bracket-sports, whatever, basketball for the kids, whatever, in order for them to thrive. If you don't, then that's what leads to the path of getting caught up in something wrong, something bad. They just want to succeed like everybody else, but if we don't make the care that they need available, then we're setting them up for failure and on the road to the pipeline to prison.

>>JARVIS: Thank you Pauline. I'll give a moment for the interpreter. Thank you so much Pauline. Anybody else want to think about that question? Okay. Next question is gonna be for Dean. And it's just what is mutual aid? What has it looked like in your life? And what can you imagine it as?

>>DEAN: Thank you. This is such a rich conversation, I'm really enjoying it. I am really grateful. So the way I think of mutual aid is that it's work where we directly support each other with survival

needs based in the idea that the current systems aren't gonna do it, and that actually they usually make things worse. So Vicky gave some great examples about people doing mutual aid work during COVID. A lot of us have seen people deliver each other groceries, helping make sure there are masks and hand sanitizer around, you know stuff the government isn't providing, since the government is actually making COVID worse. But we see this in any disaster. We often see like FEMA doesn't show up or it won't help people who were already displaced or homeless before the fire, or the earthquake, or the flood. So you got the community doing it, helping all the people who always get left out. But, mutual aid isn't just for those disaster moments, it's also happening in all our social movements. It's when we do child care collectives, when we're giving out food on the street, when we're doing, just all this basic work. Free community clinics people had in the 70s was a big example where you had Black Panther clinics, you had feminist clinics, you had gay clinics, you had everybody trying to help each other get health care. These volunteer run grassroots. There's so many examples.

The most famous example of mutual aid you hear about in the Left movements in the U.S. is of course the Black Panther Party's survival programs-giving out free breakfast to kids, fixing the road, making speed bumps, doing health clinics, doing an ambulance service. Saying hey, black people are impoverished and under attack in U.S. white supremacist society and are building power by taking care of one another and exposing that it is not the individual fault of people, of the poor, it is a system that sets it up. It's that destigmatizing, building that shared power and saying, this isn't right.

The most important thing about mutual aid is to me, right now, is that mutual aid is what builds movements. It's the on ramp. Most people come to movements because they need something, like food or housing, they are getting evicted, they're afraid of losing their kids to the child welfare system, their loved ones in prison, whatever. Or they've been through something like that recently or care about people going through that and they want to help. That's why people start movement activism. And then often times, you're in it, you're part of a group, and you also learn about more parts of the issue you didn't know about. So it's how our movements build solidarity. I came here because I was mad about what's happening to trans people in the shelters, and now I'm learning about what's happening to immigrants, cuz there're immigrant trans people in this group too, or now I'm learning about what's going on in foster care, or whatever. So mutual aid builds movements and it enhances their solidarity and radicalism because when you're dealing with real people's problems, it's intersectional like people were saying already in this conversation.

The abolition movement has centered mutual aid. We all know about the conditions happening in prisons only because we're in touch with prisoners directly. Because the prisons lie about what's going on inside. The police lie about what they do. So mutual aid is essential in building abolitionist analysis. If we listened to what the state said about police and prisons, they've solved all the problems-they're not racist, they're not ableist, et cetera. So mutual aid has been central to abolitionist analysis. It's, when I think about like what I shared earlier about the failures of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, we only knew those, I learned about that through queer and trans prison pen pal mutual aid groups that were hearing this over and over again. Especially the group Black and Pink, which is a group you can start a chapter of wherever you live, and you can also get a pen pal on their website whose looking for a pen pal right now. And I encourage this as a way for people to plug into abolition right now. You could connect to a prison pen pal which breaks their isolation and may help them be safer, it exposes, we can expose conditions. Like I have pen pals in prisons who are telling me what's really going on with COVID where they are. So I can help get the word out. We need that inside-outside solidarity really bad because the system tries to make them politically separate and inoperable and actually they have the wisdom about how this system works and need to lead the struggle. And our direct support back and forth can build our analysis and help with concrete things like, do they need support, letters of support around getting released. Do they need information about benefits or housing in the place they are being released to. Do they need books and reading materials, et cetera. Do they need help with their

commissary cuz they're being given less nutrition than could let someone live, which is happening in a lot of prisons. So, mutual aid is central to all social movements that are, that become powerful and make a difference, and it's central to abolition, and it's a way that everyone can plug in right now to supporting abolitionist movements.

>>JARVIS: I'll give a moment for the interpreters. Okay. Thank you so much Dean, thank you so much. That's a really great framing of mutual aid and we're all doing it, we're doing it right now by sharing knowledge that we know. So thank you so much. So, now we're gonna move on to the audience questions. And there are several really, really good questions, and the way that we'll do it, if you want to answer them, just say them, or I can pose them. But I'll just start with the first one and then we'll see how that goes, and the we'll move on. So the first question is, what are some of the ways abolitionist practice are coopted or undermined, and this is from Nicole Robinson. And what are the ways we can prevent that from happening? So if it you want to answer that.

>>VICTORIA: Well, it's hard for abolitionist practices, abolition, to be coopted. It's easier for political forces, the state, the police, the court system, school administrators, to coopt the language of abolition. So in schools and in some communities we see courts and schools adapting language of restorative justice. So restorative justice as opposed to the criminal justice or the criminal legal system, says you know, some harm has been done. Benny and Joe got in a fist fight, let's sit them down, and figure out what the causes are, and the point is to iron out the problems and restore them to what happened, you know, the way things were before. This is a very over, over simplified version of this, but for times sake, I don't want to go into a whole other, you know, thing behind it. But it seeks to and, this is something that schools have taken on to say yes, we can do restorative justice to decrease the number of school arrests, or the number of school suspensions that we have. But at the same time they're not practicing restorative justice and saying what are the reasons why this happened, what are the underlying causes that addresses the immediate problem with the stick of if you don't comply or if school administrators don't like the way this is going, we will still suspend you or call the police or have you arrested. So we can see how the language and some of these ideas get coopted and twisted so that now you have prisons that are doing restorative justice circles. In which they have people come and they use the language and some of the ideas behind restorative justice, but they're actually not doing restorative justice. They're doing a type of group counseling, or a type of group therapy or group education, but it's not restorative justice.

So I think that we need to understand that its, I don't want to say it's impossible, but it's very hard to coopt abolition into a criminal legal institution, but it's easier to coopt language and pull out bits and pieces and say look, now we're doing restorative justice. We see this also calls to defund the police, where it's been twisted around to say, they don't mean defund, they mean, you know, body cameras and more black police. Or body cameras and more sensitivity training, and that's, if you look in the dictionary, I'm pretty sure that's actually not what word defund means. So, we need to keep in mind that language can be coopted, practices can be twisted around, but abolition is not as easy to coopt.

>>JARVIS: Thank you Victoria. I'll give some time for the interpreters to switch and then Dean will hop onto this one.

>>DEAN: I think we're ready. Yah, I just wanted to give two, some examples from my own locality. So for, maybe 8 years, we've been fighting this battle in King County where I live on Duwamish land, to stop the county from building this \$230 million youth jail, probably ended up being more than that, but. And while we were fighting this battle, we were facing the things you can imagine. They were saying, this new youth jail it'll be good for the kids inside, it'll be a nicer jail. A classic move, you know,

prison expansion in the name of somehow benefiting prisoners. Classic move. And a lot of the non-profits bought into this. It was really a bummer. It took a long time for us to build, it was a real rag-tag group that were abolitionists that were saying this isn't right. Over time we actually built more and more consensus in the county that this is a terrible idea. Let's close the jail and actually support people, young people and their families to thrive instead of finding better ways to criminalize them. But during the fight, the county and the city passed zero youth detention ordinances. So they passed these laws that had no teeth and that meant nothing, that said they were committed to the idea of zero youth detention. Sounds abolitionist, cuz that's what we're fighting for, which is getting people out of the cages. And they even hired like a zero youth detention staffer in the county while they built the jail. Which at any point they could've stopped and repurposed into housing or into anything that our communities actually need. So that was a trick to see these, cuz I live in this region where people want to appear progressive, the electeds, so they just take the words right out of your mouth and apply them to their terrible project. Also seeing this with some of the work to defund the police, they will just move the money around so it looks like they took the money away. But they're, and then they can be like look, I'm this wonderful pro-progressive, anti-racist politician, but actually I won't touch the police budget really. I just want to say that I love what Vicky said. The reason we have an abolitionist politics is so that we don't get fooled by these reforms that expand. And one chapter that I was just teaching my students from Vicky's book is about electronic home monitoring, and how there's actually, and probation, and how these kinds of systems that look softer then take in more people. More people get actually locked down in their homes, and at any time can be violated and stuck back in a cage. So I just want to say that this is exactly what abolition is about. It's not accepting these lies that say they respond to our communities concerns but actually strengthen and usually expand the system.

>>ANDREA: And just jumping in quickly on the, while waiting for the interpreter. Thank you, just to expand on the building and expanding the system, I want to name that we're in this moment where obviously a lot of people are talking about accountability for police who do harm, including accountability for the police who killed Breonna Taylor. And, we cannot build the system that we're, that killed Breonna Taylor, in demanding justice for Breonna Taylor. And also the system that killed Breonna Taylor is not going, is not set up to provide justice for Breonna Taylor. And so, where sometimes we get stuck and I don't know that it's cooptation, as much as just struggling but I think it can be cooptation, people say I'm an abolitionist, and I want a prosecution of police officers who kill people I care about. I want to put more money into controlling the police and into setting an oversight body over the police. I want to put more money into a decertification process, I want to create a system of accountability for a system that was set up intersectionally to kill Breonna Taylor, and so, and everyone else it's ever killed or incarcerated or harmed or sexually assaulted. And so I think we really need to understand and think about abolition as the ultimate accountability strategy; that we need to understand defunding the police as the ultimate accountability strategy; and understand reparations as opposed to restorative justice, as the ultimate way that we ensure that people are compensated for harm they experience, even though you can never compensate for the life of someone killed or raped or assaulted or criminalized, frankly, by the police. But that there's some compensation about restoring, some healing opportunities, some resources to people and communities harmed by police. That we get accountability where someone has to look at someone and hear about the harm that they did to them, in taking their daughter away from them while she slept in her bed or a man while he walked down the street or a trans woman who received no protection or safety.

And, we need, most important elements of the reparations framework is cessation and non-repetition, so actually these frameworks point us towards more accountability. It means actually that we're gonna end up, that we are gonna create a society where Breonna Taylor would still be with us, and that we would stop the systems that killed her from coming at her and all the angles that they did.

So I think for me it just feels so important to say that abolition, and I say this as a survivor and as someone who has worked on police violence for most of my adult life, for me abolition is about wanting better and more for survivors like myself, and for the people who I struggle alongside and with, who experience police and state violence. And what we're getting from the system right now is not accountability, and the answer I don't think is to keep trying to make it do what it wasn't set up to do. Mariame Kaba often says, why do we keep trying to ask the police to not be police? And instead can we actually demand the world where accountability and transformation for survivors of all kinds of violence and families for people who don't survive is real. And that's the world I'm fighting to build through abolition and I hope we can all get there together.

>>JARVIS: Thank you Andrea. I'll give time for the interpreters. Yah, better more, like absolutely. Thank you so much to you both for answering that question. Because we're coming up on time, it's 8:30 now, and we want to be respectful of everybody's time, so we don't have any more time for the audience questions. Unless Pauline did you want to add something to that?

>>PAULINE: No, I'll pass.

>>JARVIS: Well, we want to just close out by all of you just ending with any statements you want to add about the importance of intersectionality and care as a critical lens for this abolitionist Study and Struggle that we're gonna be working with for a long time. So Andrea passed. I'll toss it to Pauline. Do you have any closing statement?

>>PAULINE: I just want to again say to anybody that's out here from the church perspective that I came from. The pulpit has to be very careful not add harm in attempting to do good because it's happening. I grew up and my lived experience, the worst predators, child molesters, sex traffickers, traffickers, that I ever ran across came from the pulpit. And we have to be very careful that we're not using the good book to cause great harm. And that is happening and to get back to the part of abolition, comes largely from the world of the church to restore people back to their rightful place and not to create the harm. And I'll pass it back to you Jarvis.

>>JARVIS: Thank you so much. Dean, do you want to give a closing statement?

>>DEAN: I just want to say this work is really hard and we all have to dive into it to win, and also that we need to show that care with one another. There's just, there's so much pressure on us all right now and there's more pressure coming, as climate change worsens, as the pandemic goes on, as the economy crashes. And under stress most of us have a harder time being patient, kind, compassionate, open, influenceable, willing to stick to our principles but also hear others, and so we're all hopefully joining groups and building more relationships to do this work. And we have to show so much care. We may not like everybody we work in groups with, but we do love each other. And how to hold onto that when we're having conflict in the work. I just want to add that because it is one of the biggest threats to our work, is that we start acting like the way the cops and the prisons have trained us. We throw each other away in the work. How can we have generative conflict, receive and give feedback, change and heal, instead of throwing each other away or disappearing when someone gives us feedback. I just want to suggest that and one resource that I think Andrea mentioned before is transformharm.org. It is a website that has collected so many different materials and resources about self-accountability and about resolving harm inside groups and relationships, and I just really encourage all of us to use that resource.

>>JARVIS: I'll give a moment for the interpreter. Okay, Victoria do you want to give a closing statement?

>>VICTORIA: Yes, so again to echo what we've been saying on this panel is that we need to see care as central to abolition, not as an afterthought or an addendum. That this is crucial if are going to be talking about tearing down prisons in all of its manifestations, and building a world in which we can survive, thrive, live with dignity. And again, I also want to echo what Pauline said earlier, about the appropriation of funding so that we can build care and community rather than policing and prisons and all of its manifestations. So I mean we live in a society where people, where the police budgets get money, you know, millions and millions of dollars, and we're cutting from mental health care or health care, from schools, from child care. So we need to also come together in these communities of care to demand these resources. Because as much as I love my community, and mutual aid has helped us, there is no way that I was going to be able to provide a lung transplant for my partner. You know, but why is it then, so we need to demand these resources come into play and be put into life-saving institutions and systems rather than in these death making institutions.

>>JARVIS: I'll give a moment for the interpreter. Okay. Alright, Andrea you're okay? Okay. Well, that's it from us. I want to say thank you so much to all four of you again. You all are beautiful, beautiful people, not for your labor or your work, but because of your hearts, and that's shown tonight. So thank you so much for everything you've said. I know a lot of people have learned a lot, including me. I have pages of notes. Thank you so much, thank you again to Heard, for your interpreting. Thank you so, so much. And also thank you to Haymarket Books for sponsoring and hosting us. And thank you to the audience and make sure to my momma. And I think we're good. Thank you so much you all, have a great night, and we'll see y'all later.