

Thirty-One Theses: A Manifesto

Toward an Anarcha-Transfeminist, Youth Liberationist, Anti-Racist, Anti-Rapist Prison Abolitionism

△Content Warning: Rape, Sexual Assault, Child Sexual Abuse, Incarceration, Abuse, Racism

1. **Every rapist is a cop without a badge.**
2. **Every cop is a rapist with a badge.¹**
3. Almost no rapists are ever imprisoned. Prisons do not punish rapists.
4. In fact, many rapists thrive and succeed in their careers, attaining power, wealth, and prestige.
5. On the other hand, survivors who kill their own rapists or abusers are very likely to be incarcerated as a result. Prisons punish people who fight back against rapists.
6. Prisoners are routinely sexually assaulted in prison; assault by guards, staff, and authorities is anecdotally more common than assault by other prisoners. In other words:
7. Prisons are run and operated by and for the benefit of rapists; prisons reward rapists with access to a group of victims who cannot escape or resist, Prisons punish violent resistance.
8. Abolishing prisons therefore necessarily entails *liberating a population of survivors who killed their rapists*. It entails liberating them from the custody of prison guards who are also rapists.
9. The Prison Industrial Complex is not and never has been an institution for punishing people who violently dominate & harm others.
10. The Prison Industrial Complex is not an institution of justice.
11. The Prison Industrial Complex is an institution of ***racial slavery***.

¹ Some resources on police sexual violence can be found at the following sites: (a.) The California Law Review, [“Police Sexual Violence, Police Brutality, #MeToo, and Masculinities”](#); according to which at least 36.5% of police officers in a national study had committed some form of Police Sexual Violence, and crucially, their colleagues knew and protected them via the infamous “Blue Wall of Silence,” moreover Black women were found to be drastically more likely to experience Police Sexual Violence than white women; (b.) Stinson et al. [“Police Sexual Misconduct: a National Scale Study of Arrested Officers”](#), which found that, in a study of officers arrested for sex crimes, egregious sexual violence by police officers are *not* isolated events, and *most* victims (71%) were under the age of 18 with a modal age category of 14-15; (c.) Isidoro Rodriguez, [“Predators Behind the Badge,”](#) in which one officer says that targeting Domestic Violence victims seeking help is like “shooting fish in a barrel”; (d.) Walker and Irlbeck, [“Police Sexual Abuse of Teenage Girls: A 2003 Update on “Driving While Female,”](#) which finds that 40% of reported cases of Police Sexual Violence involved teenagers, (e.) Buffalo News, [“Abusing the Law,”](#) which reports that an officer is *caught* in a case of sexual abuse every 5 days, and (d.) Lovely Alyxandera’s [“Since 2010 At Least 1300 Women and Children Have Been Sexually or Physically Attacked by UK Cops. PT 1,”](#) the first of an extensive 4 part series on police sexual violence and its victims and survivors. When we say, “Every cop is a rapist with a badge,” we mean that in the same way we mean “All Cops are Bastards.” There are no good cops because the ostensibly good ones still enforce the rule of the bad ones; there are no cops who do not protect and ally with rapist-cops, who do not explicitly or implicitly collaborate with rapist-cops against victims.

12. Although abuse & assault are complex phenomena and people who are marginalized can and do engage in these acts of domination, the *great majority* of all sexual violence in the so-called United States is committed by cis heterosexual white men (regardless of the gender or age of the victim.)
13. The Prison Industrial Complex vastly disproportionately mass incarcerates Black and Indigenous people.
14. The Prison Industrial Complex disproportionately incarcerates Black, indigenous, queer, or trans people, women and minors, for killing or violently resisting their rapist. Especially if the rapist is a cis white man.
15. Black and Indigenous people are not disproportionately violent. White men are. But white men are not disproportionately imprisoned. Instead, a majority of prison *guards* are white men.
16. The great majority of prisoners are not rapists or abusers.
17. *Ergo*, the great majority of Black and Indigenous prisoners are not rapists or abusers.
18. Rapists & abusers are disproportionately non-imprisoned, free adult white male citizens protected by the law, the community, and the cops.
19. Black and Indigenous people, trans, non-binary, and queer people, women, and children are the majority of victims and survivors of sexual violence.
20. Among these, people at more than one intersection of oppression are at even higher risk of rape.
21. People at more than one intersection of oppression are also at higher risk of incarceration. When incarcerated, they are then trapped in a cage guarded by white male rapists with badges and guns and tasers—instruments of authority, threat of death, and torture.
22. An abolitionism that centers the *de facto* protection, safety, and “rehabilitation” of rapists and abusers from the voluntary, autonomous, individual or collective insurrectionary resistance of survivors and their allies is an abolitionism that centers the protection and safety of non-incarcerated free cishet white men.
23. An abolitionism that benefits primarily non-incarcerated free cishet white men, and/or in any capacity seeks to shield rapists and abusers from being subject to their victims’ acts of direct action is an abolitionism that benefits the powerful at the expense of the marginalized.
24. An abolitionism that starts from the presupposition that “freeing and rehabilitating prisoners” is synonymous with “freeing and rehabilitating rapists, murderers, and abusers” is a racist program that falsely conflates incarcerated Black and Indigenous youth with “rapists, murderers, and abusers,” by accepting the fascist, reactionary lie that the mass incarceration of Black and Indigenous youth is in any way a project aimed at “punishing rapists, murderers, and abusers.”
25. When someone is seriously injured and requires therapy & care to recover, that is called “rehabilitation.”
26. Incarcerated victims of the Prison Industrial Complex & racial slavery have been seriously injured. Rape victims have been seriously injured.
27. Rapists are not seriously injured by their own decision to rape someone, and they do not need to recover from the experience of raping someone.

1. (27a.) *Abuse or trauma in a rapist's own past is unrelated to their decision to rape someone. Their own potential experience of victimization should be addressed in its own context, not in the context of someone ELSE'S—namely, their victim's—experience & needs.*
28. An abolitionism that benefits disproportionately cishet white men at the expense of disproportionately Black, Indigenous, trans, & queer people, women, and children is not an abolition of the Prison Industrial Complex at all.
29. An abolitionism that centers the needs of rapists & abusers, and benefits white men at the expense of the marginalized is an accomplice and colleague of the Prison Industrial Complex, because:
30. **Every rapist is a cop without a badge.** And:
31. **Every cop is a rapist with a badge.**

End Note: To Those Who Say, “Violent resistance only counts as self-defense if done as a last resort, in the immediate moment of the assault.”

“On the night of November 16, 1982, in Cheyenne, Wyoming, Richard Jahnke, Sr. stepped out of his car and into the range of the 12-gauge shotgun held by his sixteen-year-old son. Richard, Jr. fired six times; four of his shots hit his father in the chest. Inside the house, his seventeen-year-old sister Deborah waited in the living room with a semiautomatic .30 caliber M-1 carbine. She did not have to shoot. One hour after the shooting, Richard Jahnke, Sr. died from the gunshot wounds inflicted by his son.

*“**Richard was charged with first degree murder,** and with conspiring with his sister Deborah to commit **first degree murder.** At trial, the children relied on the defense that **they had been protecting themselves from abusive acts by their father.** Richard Jahnke testified about years of violent abuse. He told the jury that his father had been beating his mother and him and sexually abusing and beating his sister for as long as he could remember. Richard and Deborah testified to repeated unsuccessful attempts to obtain help from local child protection agencies. Richard's attorney also attempted to have a forensic psychiatrist testify to the effects of this history of abuse on Richard's perception of danger on the night of the killing. The trial court, however, excluded this testimony. **The jury found Richard guilty of first degree manslaughter and sentenced him to five to fifteen years in prison.***

*“On appeal, Richard challenged the trial court's exclusion of the expert testimony. The Supreme Court of Wyoming affirmed the trial court's ruling. The court began its analysis of the self-defense issue by stating that the only admissible evidence pertaining to self-defense was **“evidence which establishes that defendant had a bona-fide belief [he] was in imminent danger of death or great bodily harm, and that the only means of escape from such danger was through the use of deadly force.”**”*

From Joelle A. Moreno, “*Killing Daddy: Developing a Self-Defense Strategy for the Abused Child*” (emphasis mine.)²

We ask only that self-identified “anarchists” and “radicals” refrain from relying on such heuristics as the court of law, which they claim to reject, to pass judgment on the ethical justifiability of survivor autonomy. You have established an absurd ethical double-standard, which you will not admit amounts to a rule of law, according to which any victim or survivor who fails to physically overpower an assailant in the exact moment of assault, during a traumatic experience when they have already had their autonomy and agency taken from them, automatically loses all right to take their autonomy and agency back from their oppressor by any means available or necessary.

This standard becomes absolutely absurd in light of almost *any* consideration of what rape actually *is* in real life—it is very rarely a stranger in an alleyway leaping out of a bush, but almost always someone the victim knows, loves, or depends on. Almost always someone who wields some kind of power over them. **Rapists, by definition, rob a person of their agency and autonomy**, and by nature the circumstances in which rape is most likely to occur are circumstances in which the victim is already disempowered. We recognize that sex with an intoxicated person is rape, even if the person says “yes,” because intoxication inhibits a person’s ability to give meaningful, fair, informed consent. How exactly is such a person supposed to overpower their assailant in the moment of an assault in self-defense? How is a child or an adolescent supposed to overpower their father *in the moment of an assault*? A woman who is raped by her husband in her sleep?

In establishing this standard of protection that applies to rapists after the fact but not to victims, you are implicitly establishing a standard by which **any rape that can be successfully completed is de facto a protected act**. A standard by which the most physically powerful may enact domination, rob another person of their autonomy, and expect their actions to be protected by “the community” as long as they can *successfully* carry out the rape. You collaborate with the rapist in reifying that power, making that loss of agency and autonomy *permanently* reinforced by agreement of “the community.” We note that this standard is especially grave when it comes to children, the elderly, people with disabilities, or people who face structural oppression that inhibits their ability to act in the face of an assailant whom they know wields power over them.

We do not, and never have, advocated for the introduction of a standard, procedure, rule, or policy of executing every rapist, and we are tired of this disingenuous straw man. We reject the absurd logic of Engels’ “On Authority,” that supposes any act of force is automatically authoritarian, even a slave killing their master, or a prisoner killing their prison guard, and we

² Joelle A. Moreno, *Killing Daddy: Developing a Self-Defense Strategy for the Abused Child*, 137 U. Pa. L. Rev. 1281 (1989). Available at: https://ecollections.law.fiu.edu/faculty_publications/30. Accessed August 20, 2022.

find it utterly strange that self-identified “anarchists” seem to selectively apply an Engelsian standard specifically and only to survivors of sexual violence. We ask that “anarchists” stop coming down on the side of the judges, juries, courtrooms, prisons, and cops, who would send an adolescent to prison for 15 years for enacting violent resistance and radical solidarity with his sister against their father, and then passing yourselves off as “anti-carceral.”

We ask that you **stop treating rape as an individual mistake, pathology, deviance, or “sin” to be redeemed from,** and recognize it as the **structure of power and hierarchy** that it is. We ask that you stop holding survivors to this rigid moral standard while accusing them of being bloodthirsty puritanical authoritarians for contemplating the possibility of acts of resistance, for even imagining taking back the agency and autonomy that has been taken from them. Stop slandering queer and trans feminist anarchists as reactionaries for citing the theory of past trans and queer feminist anarchists³ Stop thumping your Transformative Justice workbooks like street-corner preachers, stop accusing Black trans anarchists of “belittling BIPOC resistance” for criticizing white anarchists’ investment in the recapitulation of white supremacist rape culture.

We do not believe there is now or ever will be a single one-size-fits-all solution that can be applied to every instance of sexual violence. That is the entire point.

It is not our job to save the souls of our oppressors.

We sincerely have no interest in what a rapist or abuser “deserves.” We have no universal policy for evaluating whether someone “deserves” a particular response or not. If an individual rapist desires “redemption,” that’s okay for them to want, but they are invited to take it up with God. Not us, and certainly not their own survivors. If an individual rapist sincerely changes and wants to actively work against rape culture, then they are invited to engage in the long-term work toward rehabilitation with those who are willing to dedicate years of their lives to rehabilitation efforts, but they are not entitled to share the communities of their own victims and survivors. Rape is always a choice. It is not a tragic mistake or something that has happened to the rapist. They are the agents of their own actions. There are many possible strategies, as individuals and communities, for responding to someone who chooses, by their own agency, to take away the body autonomy of another person. **But no one who makes this decision is automatically entitled to a non-violent resolution.**

Our goal is to interrupt structures of power, and interrupt the ability of those who enact domination to do further harm, by whatever means are available or necessary. Anti-rape politics are anti-fascist politics, no more, no less.

– *Judith’s Dagger*

³ namely, [Dangerous Spaces: Violent Resistance, Self-Defense, and Insurrectional Struggle Against Gender](#).