An imprisoning gaze: Practices of gendered, racialized and epistemic violence

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Abstract

This article examines how correctional systems absorb feminist-inspired reformist discourses that focus upon women's victimization as a 'pathway' to incarceration. Through the absorption process the concept of gender loses its socio-economic and political resonance, centering instead the psychological effects of gender oppression. A psychological notion of gender has been used to individualize and pathologize criminalized women through prison programming and is linked with notions of 'risk' to re-offend. I reflect upon the role of evidence-based practice (EBP) in exacerbating epistemic problems related to the subjectivity of the 'risky victim.' Moving beyond this conceptualization, I suggest the importance of an analysis which draws connections across spaces of confinement and challenges the very role and practices of prisons as examples of racialized and gendered violence themselves.

Keywords

epistemic violence, female offenders, feminist criminology, prisons for women, risk

Introduction

In this article I problematize the way in which the victimization−criminalization continuum as conceptualized by feminist criminologists in the 1980s and 1990s continues to be taken up through correctional regimes and the discourse of 'gender responsive' or 'gender sensitive' practices. I begin with an examination of correctional absorption of feminist-inspired reformist discourses that focus upon women's victimization as a 'pathway' to incarceration. The absorption process empties the concept of gender of its socio-economic and political resonance, centering instead on the

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psychological effects of gender oppression. A psychological notion of gender has been used to individualize and pathologize criminalized women through prison programming and is linked with notions of 'risk' to re-offend. I follow this discussion with some reflections on the role of evidence-based practice (EBP) in exacerbating the epistemic problems related to the subjectivity of the 'risky victim'. I argue that efforts at prison reform that do not simultaneously challenge the practice of imprisonment itself will inevitably result in perpetuating troubling correctional practices. As Foucault infamously stated, 'prison "reform" is virtually contemporary with the prison itself; it constitutes, as it were, its programme' (Foucault, 1977: 234). I conclude by arguing for an analysis of imprisonment that recognizes, problematizes, and challenges contemporary imprisonment practices as acts of racialized, classed, and gendered violence.

Feminist criminology: Gender victimization and the criminalization of women

In an effort to rectify the male biases in the field of criminology, feminist criminologists developed the notion of the victimization–criminalization continuum to explain women's law-breaking (Comack, 2006; Faith, 1993; Gilfus, 1992). One of the central critiques advanced by feminist criminologists was that mainstream criminology assumed a masculinized subject and when addressing women in conflict with the law tended to demonize or pathologize them. This influential body of work drew on developments in the wider fields of feminist theory and feminist activism that had exposed the prevalence and seriousness of violence against women, the sexual abuse of girls, and gendered economic marginalization (Comack, 2006). The victimization–criminalization idea challenged the prevailing victim/offender dichotomy by conceptualizing women's law-breaking as resistance to gender oppression and violence. The underlying assertion was that these coping strategies often propelled women into situations that put them at risk of being criminalized. Links were made, for example, between women's economic marginalization and 'survival crimes'; running away from abusive families was linked to homelessness and illegal strategies for survival on the streets; use of alcohol or drugs was understood as abused women's self-medicating coping strategies (Carlen, 1988; Comack, 1996; Daly, 1992; Gilfus, 1992; Owen, 1998; Richie, 1996). Analytically, this work 'blurred the boundaries' between victims and offenders and illustrated how women's survival strategies are often criminalized (Comack, 2006). Feminist scholarship in criminology focused on why women commit crimes and distinguished women's 'pathways' to crime as different from those of men. Rather than being viewed as irrational, deviant or 'bad' behavior, women's actions were understood within the political and socio-economic context in which they occurred. Although most scholarship tended to privilege gender as an analytic category, some writers did use an intersectional feminist perspective to expose the interlocking forces of race, class *and* gender in the criminalization of women (Arnold, 1990; Daly and Stephens, 1995; Richie, 1996). These works highlighted race- and class-based oppression that sustains and contextualizes the interpersonal and personal challenges face by women and which leads to the criminalization of poor women of color in particular.

The contributions of feminist criminologists have led to significant shifts in understanding the lived experiences of criminalized women and, importantly, to linking male violence against women and childhood abuse to women's survival strategies that are often criminalized. In addition to the theoretical contributions offered by this body of work, the 'pathways' scholarship had practical implications for policy and practice with imprisoned women.

Particularly in Canada, but more recently in the US and UK as well, correctional policy-makers took up the idea that the experiences and needs of women were different than those of men in

prison, and developed 'gender-sensitive' or 'gender-responsive' strategies to incarcerating women. Canada has promoted itself as a world leader in gender-responsive prison programs and has been identified by the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe as demonstrating 'good practices' of 'evidence-based penal management' (Maloney and Moller, 2009: 432) of imprisoned women. Gender responsivity as a strategy for 'managing' women in prison has gained international momentum, with jurisdictions in Canada, Britain, the United States, Nigeria, India, and Russia asserting the importance of gender-responsive principles (Hannah-Moffat, 2010). It is at the intersection of feminist criminology with correctional practice, however, that feminist aims go awry. Meaningful attempts to give voices to the experiences and analyses of criminalized women through qualitative research methodologies and feminist analytical lenses have been absorbed by correctional logics to support the prison industrial complex. As Shaylor notes, departments of corrections have 'taken up the language of reformers, using it to their own ends' (Shaylor, 2009: 148).

Within the context of correctional practice, the structural emphasis on gender, race, and class embedded within the notion of the victimization−criminalization continuum, fades from view. Significantly, gender becomes understood in *psychological,* rather than socio-economic, terms (Pollack, 2006). A variety of interrelated factors are likely to have contributed to the slippage from gender oppression as a political and socio-economic structural force to one that is psychological. Correctional practice is individualistic; the target of reform is the prisoner who must change her/himself cognitively, behaviorally and socially in order to reduce his/her risk of re-offending. The means by which self-change occurs is through cognitive behavioral programming (Fox, 2001; Kendall, 2002) as this is considered to be 'what works' to stop people from committing crimes. When operationalized within an individualistic epistemological frame, 'gender responsivity' cannot be anything *but* psychological or behavioral. Additionally, some academics who promote gender responsivity themselves privilege a psychological perspective of gender as the '[t]he most centrally meaningful principle on our culture's mattering map' (Kaschak, 1992, quoted in Bloom et al., 2004: 32). The bold assertion that for *all* women (and men) gender is the most salient category of experience relegates racial and class oppression to a subservient position in the 'mattering map' and sweeps aside the wealth of anti-racist feminist scholarship that illuminates the effects of interlocking modes of oppression (see, for example, Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1991; Razack, 1998).

In Canada, racialized correctional practices continue to operate under gender responsive regimes. There has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of Aboriginal women being sentenced to federal prison; a 90% increase over the last decade (Sapers, 2010a). Aboriginal people comprise 3% of the overall population, yet Aboriginal *women* comprise 33% all federally sentenced people (Sapers, 2010a). While in custody, Aboriginal prisoners are notoriously over-classified as maximum security, preventing many from accessing prison and community services (Sapers, 2010b). For incarcerated Aboriginal women, the designation of maximum security presents an additional barrier in that it prevents them from accessing the Okimaw Ohci healing lodge, a prison created in the early 1990s as part of the overall gender-responsive correctional policy which incorporates cultural and spiritual practices into correctional programming (Hayman, 2006).

A glaring recent example of a racialized punitive practice is a correctional policy (recently rescinded) called the Management Protocol. This protocol was an extremely punitive strategy for dealing with women prisoners deemed 'high need' and a threat to the security of the institution. The protocol involved being put in solitary confinement for prolonged periods of time. In 2009, of the five women placed on this Management Protocol, four were Aboriginal and the fifth was

another racialized woman (Sapers, 2009). Advocates, lawyers, and the Correctional Investigator argued that this practice was excessively punitive, racialized, and violated women's human rights. The Correctional Service of Canada reviewed this policy (Correctional Service of Canada, 2009) and the policy and practice have since been discontinued.

As a reformist strategy, gender responsivity does not overtly question the mandate, discourses, or presuppositions of the prison itself. This may make sense strategically − if one questions the foundational premises and discourses of the institution one is trying to reform, recommendations may not be adopted. However, an ameliorative approach to the imprisonment of women rather than one that is more transformative or abolitionist in aim is easily absorbed into the operational norms of punishment; business can continue as usual, albeit with a different sort of currency.

The next section examines how the victimization of women has become conflated with correctional risk practices as a strategy for regulating women prisoners.

Risk and gender victimization

The topic of 'what works' to change criminalized women is central to most academic and correctional research on 'the female offender' (Blanchette and Taylor, 2009; Dowden and Andrews, 1999; Sheehan et al., 2007). This work is replete with references to the high rates of abuse experienced by criminalized women in both childhood and adulthood, with a focus upon the psychological effects of these experiences (e.g. low self-esteem, substance abuse, self-injury, suicide attempts, and mental health issues), as risk factors for re-offending. Within the correctional risk paradigm, women's responses to victimization are not seen as coping strategies but rather as factors needing to be changed in order to reduce their riskiness (Turnball and Hannah Moffat, 2009). Additionally, violent men are not considered a 'risk' to women's safety, nor are inadequate social assistance rates or systemic racism in the labor market, factors that may also contribute to the criminalization of women. The subjectivity of criminalized women is formulated through these deficit-based discourses, which generally conclude with recommendations about what type of treatment 'works' best to reduce their risk level. This psychologized victimization−criminalization narrative is reproduced so perpetually it has become reified in most discussions related to women in prison. Such reification is almost impossible to penetrate, particularly when one is its subject (Pollack, 2007; 2009). Moreover, criminalized women are rewarded for reproducing psychologized victimization narratives about why they have offended in order to provide evidence of a reformed self, no longer incapable of managing the risk they pose to society (Hannah-Moffat, 2004). The majority of imprisoned women have histories of being abused by men and attempts to cope with abusive relationships are often criminalized. Regardless of the context in which criminalized actions occur, histories of being abused and feelings of low self-esteem are scrutinized as risk factors and criminal justice discourse constructs these women as dangerous and 'risky' victims (Hannah-Moffat 2004; Pollack, 2007). The conflation of women's victimization with risk has both discursive and material effects for criminalized women, including increased monitoring of intimate relationships while on parole (Pollack, 2007).

How one is 'known' through the discourses of those who have the power to define and regulate and how one comes to know oneself within these discourses are epistemic concerns. In a Canadian study women who were interviewed about their post-prison experiences wrestled with the ways their experiences and behaviors – their very selves – were enacted through correctional discourses and relationships with parole officers. Specifically, participants spoke of how narratives about riskiness discounted their own understandings and usurped alternative renditions of self, needs, and

experiences. Julie stated, for example, that even when correctional workers 'come face-to-face with somebody, really face-to-face – they can't even see you' (Pollack, 2010). The challenges of 'being seen' through powerful dominant narratives is reflected in this participant's decision to no longer take part in the discursive construction of 'who she is.' Julie stated that her previous attempts to narrate a self-story were eclipsed and transformed by the assessments and documentation of mental health professionals, in particular. Consequently, in an attempt to contest discursive correctional constructions of her 'self' she no longer participates in the storying process, telling people instead to 'open my file, read it. I don't have anything else to say. That's it.' (Pollack, 2010).

'Epistemic violence' (Spivak, 1988) occurs when criminalized women are (un)known through dominant discourses that circumscribe their experiences and which they themselves must reproduce either by letting the files speak for them or by narrating the same self-story that lies within the file pages. Spivak (1988; 2005) raises the question of whether 'subaltern' voices can be heard or expressed through the logics of dominant discourses. Borrowing this idea, I would like to challenge the notion that the subaltern can speak her experience within the context of penal frames, whether reformist or correctionalist, particularly given that 'subalternity cannot be generalized according to hegemonic logic. That is what makes it subaltern' (Spivak, 2005: 475).

The 'hegemonic logic' of correctional practice is founded upon notions of risk to 're-offend' and is perpetuated and sustained by the premises of evidence-based research and practice. The orthodoxy of evidence-based perspectives permeates correctionalist approaches and proclaims one story of 'who' criminalized women are and what they need to stop offending. Epistemic violence occurs through this story by eradicating perspectives and subjectivities of criminalized women whose experience of self, criminalization, and imprisonment may not be measurable through the ideological tools of evidence-based research and practice.

The only knowledge that counts: The orthodoxy of evidence-based practice (EBP)

Evidence-based practice and research are integral to the project of risk management. Evidence-based research is described as applying research knowledge to inform policy and practice, with the intention of improving decision-making and accountability (Webb, 2001). Extracted from the medical field, the standard accepted definition of EBP is 'the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions regarding the welfare of service users and carers' (Sackett et al., 1996). The gold standard of 'best evidence' is that acquired quantitatively from randomized control trials, single-case experimentation, and double-blind studies. Embedded within EBP is the explicit assertion that this type of research is superior to all other forms of knowledge acquisition and evaluation (Holmes et al., 2006; Hope, 2004; Webb, 2001). When applied to the social sciences, most evidence-based research and practice take the form of program evaluation studies, aiming to assess whether a particular intervention changes participant behavior. As such, EBP is positivist, behaviorist, and influenced by the audit and performance culture of organizations concerned with risk and accountability (Webb, 2001).

In the current socio-cultural historical moment, evidence-based research and the 'best practices' it proclaims, frame what can and cannot be 'known' within the context of human services, health sciences, and correctional practice; it is thus the dominant 'truth regime' guiding research, policy and practice across a variety of human service fields (Biesta, 2010; Holmes et al., 2006; Webb, 2001). Within such a context, qualitative research, lived experience, and practitioner wisdom are disqualified forms of knowing since they do not conform to the scientific standards of randomized

control trials (Biesta, 2010; Brown, 2009; Denzin, 2009; Holmes et al., 2006; Hope, 2004; Wall, 2008). Holmes et al. (2006: 182) observe that we are 'engaged in a strange process of eliminating ways of knowing' and describes this as 'microfascism' in its confinement of the researcher to a single discourse and research paradigm, yoking her/him to 'reproducing the established order'. Critiques of the evidence-based movement do not contest 'engagement with evidence' (Biesta, 2010: 492) but do expose and dispute the ideological parameters of what is considered (il)legitimate evidence. For practitioners, the narrow definitions of effective practice have resulted in stringent programming preoccupied with standardization and universality rather than specificity, relationship and context and a focus upon outcomes rather than process (Adams et al., 2008; Butler et al., 2007). Within the correctional context outcomes are defined primarily in terms of rates of recidivism.

The science of punishment is unabashedly ideological, tied as it is to the crime prevention agendas of public policy and criminal justice (Brown, 2009). Since the publication in 1974 of Martinson's controversial article 'What works?: Questions and answers about prison reform', in which he argued that there is little evidence that prison programs 'work', correctional science has been preoccupied with trying to prove that 'something works' to rehabilitate prisoners (Brown, 2009). It is within this context that evidence-based research and practice in correctional institutions has gained prominence. Garland (2001: 176) notes that the 'practice of rehabilitation is increasingly inscribed in a framework of risk rather than a framework of welfare. Offenders can only be 'treated' (in drug abuse programs, anger-management groups, offence-reduction programs, etc.) to the extent that such treatment is deemed to be capable of protecting the public, reducing risk, and being more cost-effective . . . .' Notions of standardization and universality saturate this approach, with a premise that 'what works' can be implemented across nations, genders, cultures, races, and contexts, with only minor context–specific variations. As such, evaluation studies of criminal justice and correctional programs are political, inextricably linked to state governance and the goals and agenda of policy-makers (Brown, 2009; Hope, 2004).

In addition to policing the boundaries of what is considered evidence, the orthodoxy of the evidence-based movement fails to acknowledge 'a world that is first and foremost a relational world and not a fixed set of objects, partes extra partes' (Holmes et al., 2006: 183). People are connected interpersonally and to the wider social structures in which they live. Yet the correctional subject within the evidence-based paradigm is not; sh/e is but a criminal, changeable and risky. When evaluating the effects of correctional programs, evidence-based research assesses whether the correctional subject has changed in ways recognizable to positivistic methodologies. Personal change – as measured primarily through recidivism rates and correctional measures of *risk* − is the only legitimized narrative within this paradigm. The rigid contours of what can be known about prisoners and prisons ensures that narratives of protest (both about the conditions of incarceration and the social circumstances leading to criminalization) remain submerged within the framework of personal change and culpability. Evidence-based discourses sustain a moral indifference to punishment practices and the violence of imprisonment.

Spaces of confinement: Violence and violations

Prisons are inherently violent; indeed their primary purpose is the infliction of pain and exclusion (Brown, 2009). Arguments for gender responsivity in prison programming make scant mention of the violations and violence of imprisonment and paradoxically implicitly assume that prisons can be spaces of trust and healing. One of the recent issues that has come to light in the American

context is the potential for mental health professionals to be co-opted into the punitive regimes of prisons, thereby putting themselves in ethical conflict with professional codes of ethics. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and clinical social workers are in a 'dual role,' being both accountable to and responsible for implementing the mandate of correctional services (Birgen and Perlin, 2009), as well as bound by the ethical guidelines of their professions. Forensic helping professionals, whether in the context of military, correctional, or psychiatric institutions, routinely deal with ethical conflicts related to their professional responsibilities and the norms and practices of the institutions for which they work. Typically these conflicts arise when the demands and practices of the prison or hospital regime trump the clinical responsibility of the helping professional, thus putting her/him into direct violation of their professional code of ethics (Birgen and Perlin, 2009). The American Psychological Association in the United States is currently dealing with the repercussions of an extreme example of gross ethical violations of psychologists within the context of the United States-led 'war on terror.' Under the Bush administration, psychologists participated in the torture and interrogation of military detainees, an unspeakable transgression of the ethical imperative to 'do no harm' (Coalition for an Ethical Psychology, nd). The American Psychological Association − the governing body for psychologists licensed in the United States − agreed to these practices and in so doing violated international human rights laws (Birgen and Perlin, 2009).

Ethical and human rights violations may occur not only as a result of overt participation in violence, such as the interrogation of military prisoners, but as a result of 'the violence of neglect'. Cunneen (2009: 215) refers to the violence of neglect as 'the failure to exercise a reasonable duty of care to persons in custody.' The use of this term is meant to draw attention to what the authorities *neglect* to do; failures to care which 'at the most extreme … can result in death.' Certain imprisoned groups may be more susceptible to the inaction or neglect of the authorities, such as Indigenous people, women, and those with mental health issues. In Canada, the death of a young woman in federal prison, Ashley Smith, has catapulted the question of whether correctional staff are able to appropriately care for prisoners with mental health issues, into the public sphere. Ms Smith was a 19-year-old woman who died in 2007 while in a segregation cell in a Canadian prison. Prior to her death, she was left for weeks in a segregation cell, wearing only a security gown, and allowed no contact with others or any activities, books, paper or pens. Ms Smith was known to self-injure and according to the Correctional Investigator had recently been evaluated by a psychologist as being at risk for suicide. However, prison managers were given orders not to intervene, allowing officers little discretion in regard to their assessment of Ms Smith's risk of seriously harming herself. The failure to intervene resulted in Ms Smith's death by tying a ligature around her neck, the whole while being observed through the lens of security cameras by those in charge of providing safe and humane custody (Sapers, 2008: 6).

The notion that a 19-year-old woman died in a prison segregation cell is disturbing on a number of levels, the most obvious of which is the sense that those who were observing her through the eye of a security camera were complicit onlookers − bystanders to a young woman's distress and ultimate death. The public outrage is understandable and justifiable. However, by limiting our outrage to individual and extraordinary examples of state-perpetuated violence and neglect, we evade a central conundrum; we are *all* complicit in the death of Ms Smith and the death and injuries suffered by prisoners everywhere. Brown (2009: 21) argues that most of us are 'penal spectators' of the violence of incarceration. A penal spectator is 'a bystander and outsider as opposed to an engaged participant or witness. She may stare curiously or reflectively, peer sideways from her peripheral vision, or gape and gawk directly, but the object of her gaze is inevitably other people's pain.' Feminist-inspired reform efforts confront the pain, but limit this confrontation to the

personal effects of gender violence, bracketing structural racist violence and the violence of the state and thereby placing reformer's selves into spaces of presumed innocence. Evidence-based ideologies reflect scientific spectatorship, related but different from that of reformers. Correctional and evidenced-based discourses also shield from view the individual, collective, and social pains of imprisonment, preoccupied instead with transforming, controlling, predicting and reconstructing the criminal subject, while simultaneously refusing to see her.

Criminological approaches that remain at the level of the individual shield from view the 'social disorder signified by mass incarceration, and . . . sidestep[s] the question of why the state responds to abused women with punishment' (Sudbury, 2005: xv). Scholars writing about the punishment of women from perspectives outside the disciplinary boundaries of criminology have pushed their analyses beyond the victimization−criminalization continuum (Allspach, 2010; Davis, 2011; Gilmore, 2007; Haney, 2004; Sudbury, 2005). This scholarship encourages an analytical engagement with neoliberalism and global state processes, including practices of imprisonment, and examines the gendered, racialized, and classed processes of punishment. Reorienting our focus to institutions, structures, ideologies, and practices of punishment that normalize prison as a response to social inequalities exposes the violence of imprisonment. This type of shift forces accountability; we move from spectator to witness, ourselves involved and complicit in the pain of others.

Contemporary prisons are extensions of historically racialized spaces of confinement such as Aboriginal reservations and US state enforced slavery of African-Americans (Cunneen, 2009; Davis, 2003; Rodriguez, 2009). Contemporary neoliberal policies and ideologies expressed through 'tough on crime' and 'tough on immigration' rhetoric have currently led to refugee and immigration policy being linked to criminal justice regimes, with 'foreign nationals' being imprisoned at state borders (McCulloch and Pickering, 2009). The violence in/of incarceration of contemporary prison produces 'structures of dominance that create new colonial relationships' (McCulloch and Scraton, 2009: 15). The colonial relationships incited through all forms of incarceration have, of course, gendered faces. Routine strip searches and cavity searches in women's prisons have been identified as examples of state-sanctioned violence against women (Davis, 2003; McCulloch and George, 2009; Moore and Scraton, 2009). Yet without an analysis of the harms and violations of state penal practices in the lives of imprisoned women, violations such as strip searches cannot be recognized as gendered violence. Tracing punitive practices across geo-political spaces and across local penal welfare systems reorients discussions about 'female offenders' away from their psychology and 'needs' and towards the role of the state in constructing and responding to these challenges.

McCulloch and Scraton (2009) describe the prison as a defining feature of liberal democratic societies, rather than an aberration. Taking this point further and referring to the United States, Rodriguez writes that imprisonment is 'constitutive [of the] current global order' (2009: 189). The long history of racialized carceral spaces, such as US slavery plantations and Aboriginal reserves, illustrates how processes of confinement of racialized and poor communities define liberal democratic societies (McCulloch and Scraton, 2009; Rodriguez, 2009). Understanding racialized and gendered imprisonment practices within the context of the political economy exposes the fact that prisons are extensions of violent structural processes which confine populations to marginal social spaces until they are no longer deemed 'manageable' in the community (Rose, 2000). The neoliberal context of dismantling social welfare provisions, the effects of global capitalism in countries to the global South, and increased criminalization processes create 'risk' and 'disorder'; yet it is those who are most negatively affected by these processes who are labeled 'risky' and 'disorderly' (Neve and Pate, 2005).

Conclusion

Although there has been an energetic debate about whether or not actuarial risk assessments are gender-appropriate (Bonta and Wormith, 2007; Brown and Bloom, 2008; Davidson and Chesney-Lind, 2009; Rettinger and Andrews, 2010; Taylor and Blanchette, 2009; Turnbull and Hannah-Moffat, 2009), no such debate has occurred about gender responsivity. In fact, gender responsivity as a penal management strategy has 'spread throughout the international community with surprisingly little resistance or academic debate' (Hannah-Moffat, 2010: 2). Proponents of gender-responsive discourses have tacitly accepted evidence-based narratives, the risk paradigm, and the notion that prisons can be spaces of healing and support. Correctional risk narratives about women's victimization and criminalization are bolstered by evidence-based assertions about 'best practices.' Within this paradigm, only certain types of knowledge claims are requested and/or heard by policy-makers and government funding bodies. Thus we can ask, as Foucault did in regard to the realm of scientific discourse in general, 'What speaking subject, what discursive subject, what subject of experience and knowledge are you trying to minorize when you begin to say: "I speak this discourse, I am speaking a scientific discourse, I am a scientist"' (Foucault, 2003, quoted in Brown, 2009: 176). Epistemically, criminalized women are (un)known through the rhetoric of correctional science which leaves little if any room for self-definitions and conversations about racialization, poverty, the role of violence against women, and the violence of the state. Perhaps there is a strategic undercurrent to these silencing processes and that 'all the psychologizing is simply a stand-in for political analysis, a distraction, a way to discredit and dissipate a well-earned rage that should not be "healed," but turned toward activism. What's needed, surely, is not purging, but protest, not rehabilitation, but radical change' (Davis, 2011: 12−13).

Reformist strategies that are ameliorative may improve certain prison conditions on a case-by-case basis, but radical change is unlikely to occur through penal reforms that do not question the legitimacy of imprisonment as a response to global, socio-political, gendered, racialized, and classed inequities. Substantial change is also unlikely until we boldly confront the material, social, ideological, and moral implications of removing from society 'potentially active, angry and demanding political subjects, to a remote and closed place where they are civilly disabled and socially dead' (Gordon, 2009: 179). Finally, without a substantial reorientation of our gaze, those of us who research, advocate, support, and agitate with and for criminalized women will safely occupy our seats as penal spectators: analyzing, documenting, counting, and theorizing about the pain experienced by 'others.'

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