

August 3, 2011

"On Being Transgender - Part 2"
By Jennifer "Baby Girl" Gann

Having first gravitated toward girlhood in my preteen years, and developing toward bi-sexuality in my teenage years, I had finally began to come out in adulthood as bi-sexual and transgender.

I've always had a sense of the sacred Feminine Principle, and the divine Mother Principle, in the Universe. Throughout the 1990's, I incessantly studied the pre-Christian, Indo-European cultures, whose ancestral religious mythology included Goddess myths and ritual worship.

In 1998, I enrolled in a yoga home study course, based on the goddess-centered Shakti teachings of Kashmir Shaivism. I've since become a practicing yogini and devotee/disciple of my beloved Guru - an Indian woman.²

In addition to continuing the course and performing daily sādhanā

(spiritual discipline), Hindu culture acknowledges and is accepting of hijras and hijranis, albeit in a limited and sexualized way. They are both considered the "third sex". Many Indian men are effeminate.

STATE PRISON
CCI-TEHACHAPI

Sexually, I have always had a preference for the submissive role in sadomasochistic fantasies of the dominatrix/fetish sort. I fetishized femininity, and desperately desired my own emasculation and feminization by a leather-clad, stiletto-heeled Mistress. My total fascination and overwhelming 24/7 obsession with the idea of becoming and being a woman has also included Amazon/Lesbian eroticism.

My first conscious awareness of the actual existence of real-life transsexuals, as far as I can recall, is probably having seen it on television as the topic of talkshows like Jerry Springer and Maury Povich. I specifically remember the British, transsexual Bond-girl — "Tula" —

as one of my earliest exposures to transgender women.

I first came into personal contact with the transgender community around 2000-2001, when I began writing to Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender & Queer (LGBTQ) contacts listed in various prisoner resource guides. I then subscribed to newsletters, such as the "GIC TRP Journal",³ and zines such as "TransSpirituality", which further advanced my self-education of the inner conflict and personal struggles, which I shared in common with transpeople.

In 2004, after undergoing a couple of years of psychiatric care and therapy, I officially became a "dropout", or ex-gangmember, and disassociated myself from the AB and Skinheads. I have been and continue to be, full of regrets for my past involvement in such groups, and for my criminal activity and conspiracies with them.

STATE PRISON
CCI-TEHACHAPI
4A HU 6

White racism destroyed my life and led to my imprisonment with a 105 year to life sentence under the "three strikes" law!

I was eventually transferred from Pelican Bay to Pleasant Valley State Prison, where I was placed on a Sensitive Needs Yard (SNY) ⁴ facility with other gang dropouts and LGBTQ prisoners. I was around a lot of Queens there for two years, and inspired by their being out and proud.

STATE PRISON
CCI-TEHACHAPI
4A HU 6

I came out in 2006 before leaving Pleasant Valley, and transitioned while "in-transit" from there in early 2007. I changed my name to "Jennifer" and chose the nickname "Baby Girl." I also started on a regimen of estrogen hormone therapy, and became involved in a serious relationship. I fell in love for the first time with an older Latino prisoner named Jesse, which lasted for 2 years through ups and downs.

I became a woman, for all intents and purposes, fulfilling my life-long desire. I have never been happier with myself or felt so at peace. I have fully transitioned, short of my goal of sex-reassignment surgery (SRS), not only into womanhood, but also into an entirely new mental perspective and political consciousness.

As an Irish & Cherokee, trans-woman prisoner activist, my political involvement is now focused around radical feminist, LGBTQ, and Maoist ideology. I support the famed American Indian Movement (AIM), indigenous Peoples' struggles, and fully dedicate myself to the Peoples Revolution!

Sylvia Rivera (7/2/51 - 2/19/02),⁵ the Boricua transgender activist who participated in the Stonewall riots, remembered Black Panther Party leader Huey Newton in an interview with Leslie Feinberg; "Huey decided that we were part of the revolution

— that we were revolutionary people". She and Marsha P. Johnson, a Black trans-activist, co-founded the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (S.T.A.R.), a political group intended to advocate civil rights and provide social services for the transgender community in New York.

Inspired by these revolutionary comrades' legacy, and the Peoples' Liberation struggles of the 1960s and '70s, I decided to join the prison abolitionist and revolutionary feminist struggles of the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons, as a member of the MIM(Prisons)-led United Struggle from Within (USW).⁶

STATE PRISON
CCI-TEHACHAPI

AA HUG

In late 2010, as a result of a disagreement with MIM(Prisons) on gender line and LGBTQ revolutionary potential, I co-founded the Amazon Maoist Party (AMP) based on the concept of Women's Struggle as an "Amazon national liberation struggle".⁷ AMP supports the Anti-Imperialist United Front and USW. (continued in Part 3).