

PF7C

August 7, 2020

Julia,

Thanks for your comments posted on my blog in response to my article, "Call for Parole Support and Solidarity!" of July 4, 2020.

I'm sad to report that I was denied parole for 5 years at my hearing on 07/28/2020 based on adverse and biased findings that I "lack insight" and "pose an unreasonable risk to public safety." This is due mainly to my extensive prison disciplinary record of Rule-violation Reports (RVR), which admittedly is terrible and includes a lot of incidents of violence. Though, some involved defensive violence, either as part of the LGBTQ+ prisoner community defense or self-defense, against homophobic and transmisogynist gang violence; or prison guard brutality and sexual/gender violence, which is prevalent against transwomen in the CDCR men's facilities. Also, prison records and police reports are notoriously

inaccurate and unreliable. Sometimes such reports/records are completely fabricated and falsified in retaliation for advocacy or political organizing (i.e. exercising constitutional rights or challenging adverse circumstances & discriminatory policies).

In any case, the Board did not like my defiance of widespread abuse of authority, or my attempt to justify my recent rule-violations as community defense actions (e.g. where i jumped in a fight to defend one of my friends, a trans sister, against an aggressor). In spite of having been disciplinary-free since December 2018, completed multiple college courses, and eight certificates earned from self-help/rehabilitative programs, they described my RVRs from a year and a half & two years ago as "recent", and my rehabilitative achievements/education college credit as "minimal". I'm considering possible legal challenges, but wish me luck in 5 years as i continue my positive and productive activities! :)

It's unfortunate that they didn't give much consideration (and probably didn't even fully read) my 28 support letters from family, friends, supporters, teachers, students, community groups, my lawyer (also a credentialed psychologist), legal advocates, a UCLA faculty member / Gender Studies professor, and multiple community-based transitional housing programs, which accepted me and offered to provide a community-based alternative to incarceration, rendering my continued imprisonment unnecessary!

Nor did they give much consideration or thought to my vulnerability as an "at-risk" category inmate facing severe COVID-19 symptoms due to my age and chronic medical conditions (i.e. hepatitis C liver disease and medical history of Valley Fever infection / respiratory illness). Dozens of California prisoners have already suffered preventable and unnecessary deaths by their incarceration under unsafe prison conditions! I'm worried that the denial

parole for 5 years may ultimately become a death sentence!!!

i wasn't aware of the fact that no one sentenced to life or LWOP in Europe has actually been released! i also was of the opinion, perhaps a presumptuous one, that European countries' criminal justice systems and prison conditions were very much liberal and progressive compared to the U.S. However, at least in Democratic-controlled California over the past decade, many prisoners with LWOP sentences have been granted commutations by Governors Jerry Brown and Gavin Newsome; a few have even been released! Gov. Newsome also granted a reprieve to all death row inmates, promising no executions will be carried out as long as he remains in the Governor's office! Yay! Of course, the reprieve is temporary, they remain condemned. FYI - there's a statewide campaign called "#DropLWOP" which, along with the California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP), advocates abolishing LWOP and other extreme sentencing.

laws in California. Their stated position, (and urgent plea to anti-death penalty abolitionists!) is that not only is LWOP not a "more humane alternative" to the death penalty, it is in some peoples' opinion a worse fate than death! In their words, its a sentence of "death by incarceration" in which the prisoner is deprived of all hope of ever being "rehabilitated" or released; and during which the incarcerated person suffers all the adverse circumstances, brutality, and torture of prison life over the long-term until they reach old age and die in a state of deprivation of their basic humanity; often deprived of basic medical and elderly care, and in most cases also denied compassionate release!

Well, I'm afraid this response has become too long. Of course, I could write a book on these important social justice issues that have of late come to the forefront of U.S. news and politics. Defund & Abolish Police! #FreeThemAll - Jennifer