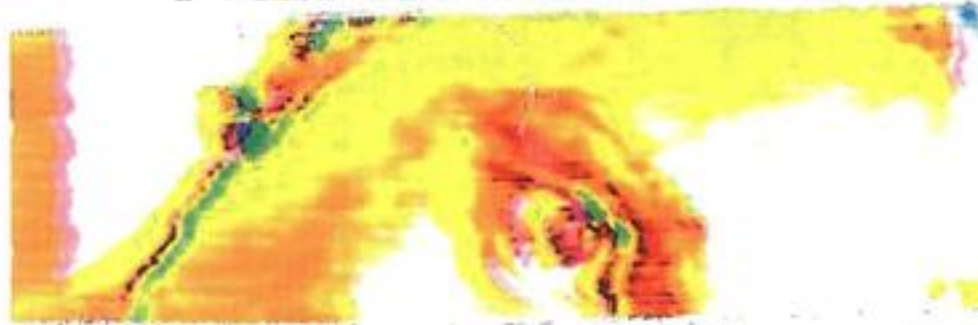


**AZANDE Press**



# Demographic Profile



**COVID-19**

**Issues Facing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual  
and Transgender Inmates in  
California Prisons**



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# Major Findings

4

①

a) All California Department of Corrections policies have been by way of Litigation Settlements refocused, with all care and attention to Department Responses to PREA - Prison Rape Elimination Act, claims are all designed to primarily effect the safety and security of inmates that identify as Transgender, which by default leaves inmates that identify as gay, or bi-sexual underserved and vulnerable to abuses.

②

b) At San Quentin, the Lead PREA Investigator presents as Lesbian, as do the Statewide PREA Coordinator.

c) The one, SQ mainline program is also headed by a volunteer that also presents as lesbian

with the combination of all three of these observations from within an All Male prison,

③

San Quentin State Prison officials who are unaware of a 20 year devision within the LGBTQI+ community where a growing number of Programming agendas have been controlled by a contengency of Lesbians that have mission to retaliate against predominantly gay males that exluded Lesbians, and Trangender persons from the early days of the Gay Liberation movement

④

When CDCR, and San Quenitn State Prison defer to the contengency of Lesbians to foster a curriculum designed for the programming of inmates that identify to some degree as LGBTI+, by default, CDOR exacerbates the ongoing deprivation for the resources, and funding, social justice, historical, and educational and spiritual and mental health of the continuum, and spectrum of all LGBTQI+ incarcerated Americans.

5



# An Insider's View

6

Senator Scott Wiener:

ASSEMBLY BILL

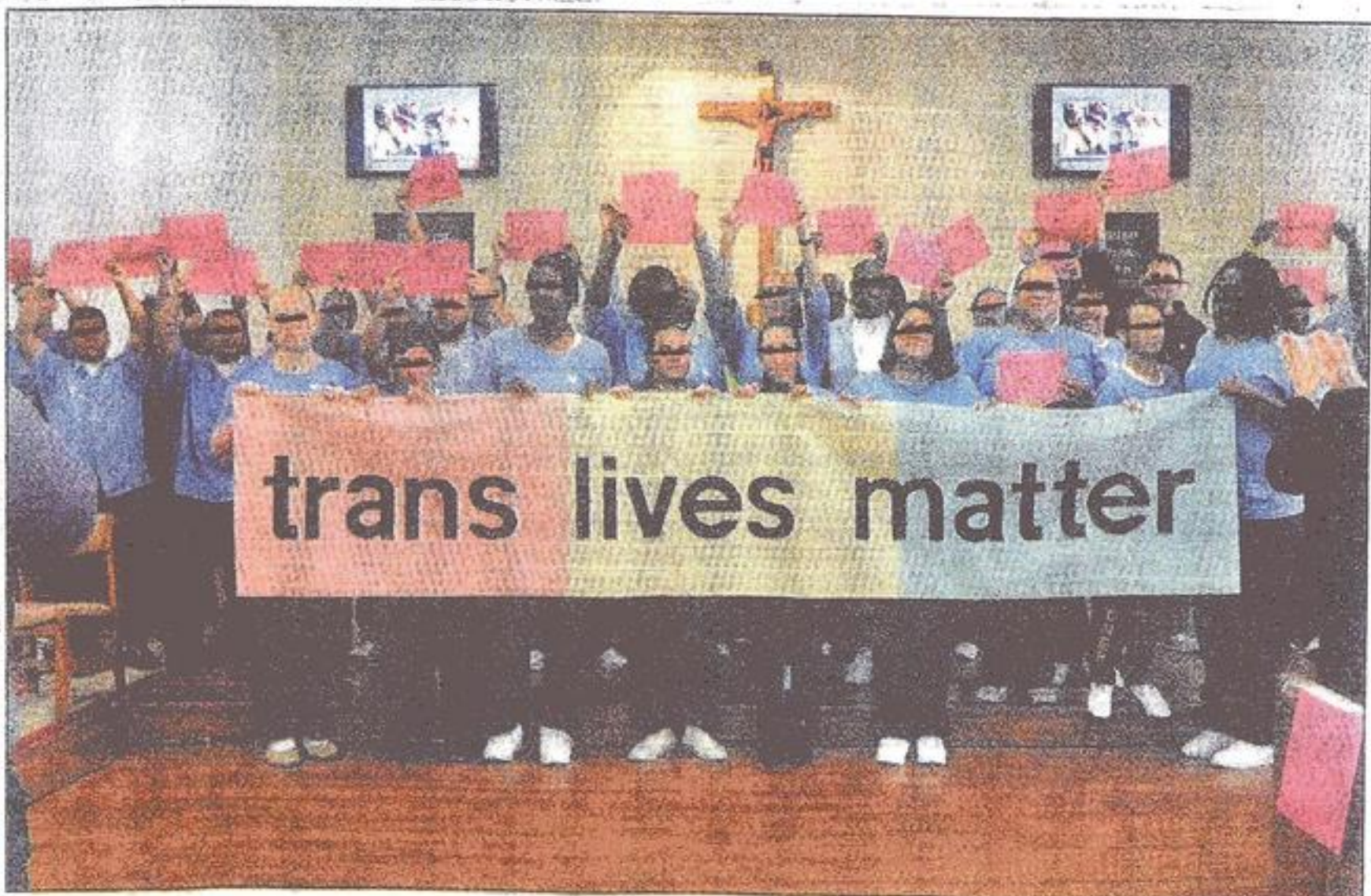
No. SB132

California State Senator Scott Wiener, a publically noted gay person, and his policy team wrote Senate Bill 132 and worked hard to get it approved. SB132 is amazing, in that it aims to improve housing options for incarcerated transwomen, whether they've had gender reassignment surgery or not.

In January 2020, San Quentin News published a newspaper article titled: SQ Transgender Day of Remembrance.

What appears on the surface to be a historical first program that recognizes the human value of transwomen, factually excluded the value of transmen, and moreover, the health, safety, and inhumane treatment of gay and bisexual inmates at San Quentin State Prison.

Yes, you just read that, just a few feet away from where this event was being held, Senator Scott Wiener said and has still done ZERO about inmates that identify to some degree as LGBTQIA+ being beaten, spit on, and doused with human feces and urine in Housing Units Donner Section, Badger Section, and Alpine Section, and mistreatment in East Block.



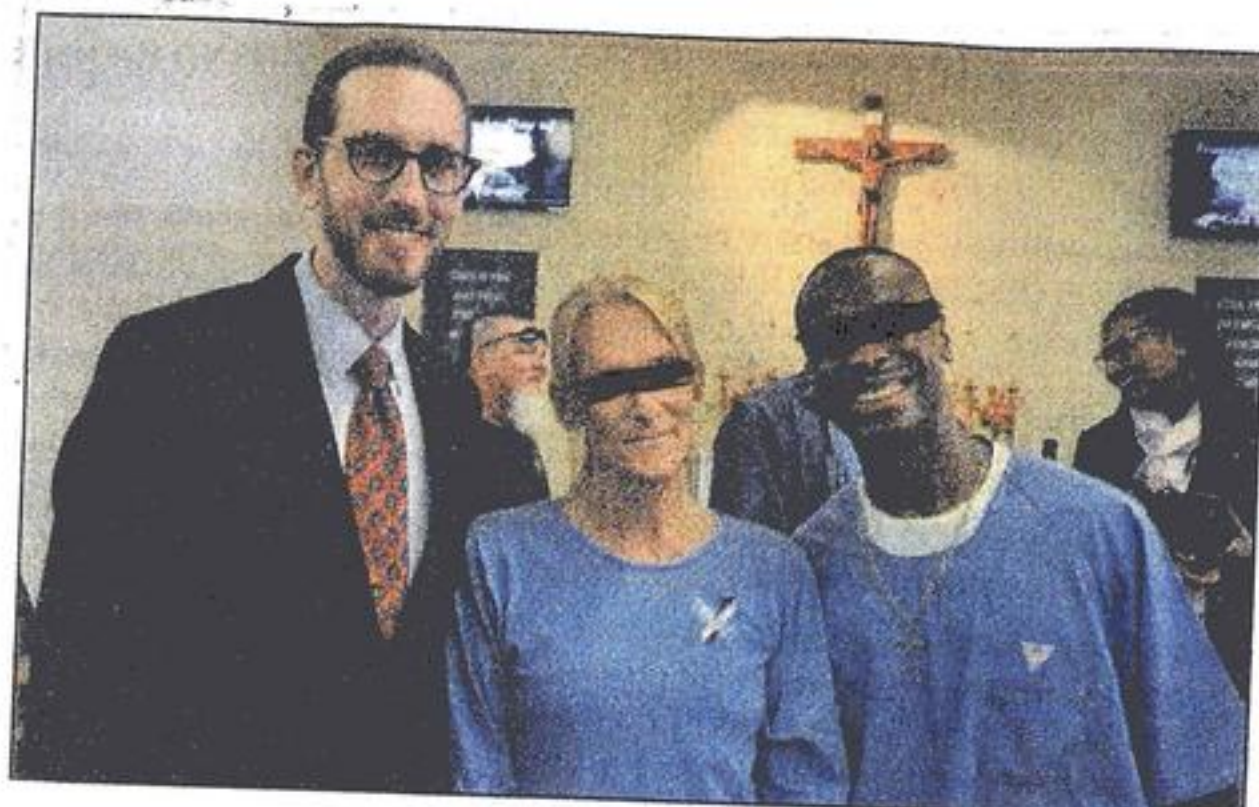
Participants hold up trans lives matter sign on Nov. 20

Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

SQ Transgender Day of Remembrance

7





Calif. State Senator Scott Wiener, Lisa [redacted] and Max [redacted] after the event

Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

## Demographic Profile

As you view in the photos in the news article, you will notice that Senator Wiener is taking a photo-op with LGBTQIA+ identifying inmates at San Quentin, what the readers do not know, is that, these inmates are dry, and not wet with spit, water feces, and urine because they are housed in units that CDCR have enforced for all inmates that sign an agreement with the Department to not forfeit said endorsement to SQSP by actively participating in gang or violent activities and behavior; these inmates lives are not in danger, especially not while in the company of a state senator.

Sen. Scott Wiener, his Policy Team, Amy Miller, Associate Director of CDCR, and her direct relationship to Billie Mizell- a vocational volunteer that heads Acting With Compassion and Truth Mainline Group, have systematically excluded, denied, and withheld resources within the Department to provide SQSP true First LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Group and Programming, because the founders are on Condemned Row, also partially housed in Donner Section, and with a volunteer



base of, content donors, for The Sound Mind Streamer- which is the first LGBTQIA+ urban perspective in-cell televised broadcast that is accessible to the participation of all interested inmates, yet denied broadcasting.

Sen. Scott Wiener's bid to get his bill passed created a total systemic shutdown of all services provided by The Condemned LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Group spearheaded by the influence of Billie Mizell, who introduced herself to the Condemned Group as Chair of the Board at Death Penalty Focus Organization, yet, after most of the Condemned Group members have been on Death Row for over 20 years, have never heard of Billie Mizell until a Jewish rabbi invited her to engage the Condemned LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Group, as a guest.

In May, the 26th of 2019, Billie Mizell told NBC News Reporter Kate Sosin that "CDCR allowed her to replicate her 'ACT' program on San Quentin's death row, with meetings on Tuesdays, and comprised of five people, and not open to reporters."



ACT sponsor Billie Mizell

It was later a question from Sgt. Frank had Mizell "Mispoken"?

We have a witness stating that Mizell "Wanted to Take Over" available by request. Leave your email address to receive [redacted]

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/san-quentin-lgbtq-prisoners-once-biased-inmates-try-heal-together-n1010026>

Excerpt

## At San Quentin, LGBTQ prisoners and once-biased inmates try to heal together

The California prison's Act with Compassion & Truth group brings together LGBTQ inmates and some prisoners who've been convicted of extreme hate crimes

May 26, 2019, 4:44 PM GMT+2

By Kate Sosin

Mizell's attempt to halt The Sound Mind Streamer Broadcast and Take Credit FOR The Condemned Group is not mistaken here. She misused her Freedom of Speech to disrespect the process.

Working with several inmates, Mizell brought a yearlong curriculum to the prison. She has been leading the Acting With Compassion & Truth group as a volunteer at San Quentin ever since.

This year, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation allowed her to replicate the program on San Quentin's death row, which remains intact despite California Gov. Gavin Newsom's recent decision to halt executions. That group, comprised of five people, meets Tuesdays. It is not open to reporters.



Not only was this statement a lie, Billie Mizell has still not recanted her statement, she has not apologized to The Department, the Jewish rabbi, nor The Condemned Inmate founders of the group. For the entire series of meetings between the Condemned LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Group and guest Billie Mizell, Mizell was alerted to the ongoing violence against gay inmates and it was explained that the violence was the very reason and purpose for the creation of the group, and she vowed to help. *"I'm leaving this meeting today to purchase the equipment you need."*

Sen. Scott Wiener has also not responded to the misconduct of his associates, The Sound Mind Streamer has still not been restored, nor have any of the resources promised by Billie Mizell for the operational support of the televised LGBTQIA+ SQTV channel.

Sen. Scott Wiener, Amy Miller, Asst. Director of CDCR, and Billie Mizell are so focused on a bill that protects transwomen, they failed, and neglected the most vulnerable and underserved demographic of the population in the state's prison system.

Billie Mizell, in her political ignorance, either didn't know or should've known that no volunteer has the authority to turn a spirituality group that is facilitated by Religious Department personnel, into a vocational exploratory group, as that transition alone violated LGBTQIA+ incarcerated, to an equal opportunity, to participate in, religious and spiritual programming under safe conditions within the institution.

*The following obviously was abandoned by Billie Mizell, and Prison officials that collectively covered up her misconduct*

"California Code of Regulations  
Title 15. Rules and Regulations"

<https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/1C000B8A02EC311E38929D3B349823D8F7?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=DocumentItem&contextData=sc.Default>

#### § 3210. Establishment of Religious Programs.

(a) Institution heads shall make every reasonable effort to provide for the religious and spiritual welfare of all interested inmates, including, but not limited to, affording inmates a reasonable accommodation to attend a scheduled Religious Service if they are unable to do so due to conflicting work/education assignments. Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to, modified work schedule, use of accrued time or allowable breaks, granting of a job/assignment change, changes of regular days off, etc. Use of reasonable accommodation shall in no way adversely impact an inmate's credit earning status.

(b) Depending upon the number of inmates of the various faiths, chaplains may be employed or their services may be accepted on a nonpaid volunteer basis. When feasible, separate space for services of the faith groups represented by a substantial number of inmates shall be provided. However, in some facilities, such as camps, it shall be necessary for the various faith groups to share such space as is available for religious services.

(c) Reasonable time and accommodation shall be allowed for religious services in keeping with facility security and other necessary institutional operations and activities. Insofar as possible, other facility activities shall be planned so as not to conflict with or disrupt scheduled religious services.

(d) A request for a religious service accommodation that requires a specific time, location and/or item(s) not otherwise authorized, will be referred to a Religious Review Committee (RRC) for review and consideration. The RRC shall be comprised of designated chaplains, and a correctional captain or their designee. Accommodation for religious services that are not granted, shall be for reason(s) which would impact facility/unit safety and security, and orderly day to day operations of the institution.

Note: Authority cited: Section 5058, Penal Code. Reference: Sections 5009 and 5054, Penal Code; and Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000cc, et seq.



## a Vulnerable Population

We are calling on **CONNIE GIPSON**, Ron Broomfield-SQSP Warden, and Gov. Gavin Newsom to rectify this matter with inquiry, and reinstate the responses to the exact causes of the direct rapid spread of COVID-19 virus within San Quentin State Prison, by tracing the spread to the bus loads of infected Chino prison inmates that was housed in between each cell of yelling, spitting, water tossing, feces and urine dousing inmates in Donner Section; Badger Section; and Alpine Unit, and how those droplets infected the Condemned Population, and claimed more Condemned lives than Mainline Inmates, and Reception Center Inmates put together.

*VOTE TO • Jody Lewen, Prison University Project Executive Director.  
It is the sensationalistic scandals, out of deeply entrenched systematic problems within SQSP, that caused, and spread COVID-19 infections, and DEATH, We need each other, not ignorance, nor deflective non-accountability.  
— J. Smith, Condemned Inmate, COVID-19 survivor*



Excerpt

Urgent Memo

June 15, 2020

COVID-19 Outbreak: San Quentin Prison

#### 4. Develop Additional Medical Isolation and Quarantine Housing.

**Background:** It is our understanding that on May 30, transfers from CIM arrived at San Quentin on five buses. Several among those who were transported on Bus 5 tested positive at arrival. While all transfers on Bus 1 and 3 initially tested negative, several later developed COVID-19 symptoms. At the time of our visit, there were no reports of symptoms or positive tests among those who traveled on Buses 2 and 4. At the advice of the local health department, all individuals from the five CIM buses who tested positive or reported symptoms were placed in the Adjustment Center. Those who either tested negative or did not report symptoms were placed individually and in every other cell on the Reception Area's Badger and Donner Units 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> tiers (among people who were incarcerated at San Quentin prior to the transfer).





The irony here is that a recommendation for televised content for inmate populations during the COVID-19 virus by AMEND @ Berkely University, was met by The SQTV Media Center with implicit bias toward LGBTQIA+ inmate population, spiritually, mentally, and recreationally.

- **Physical and mental health during quarantine and medical isolation must be prioritized with adequate consideration for how need may vary across people incarcerated at San Quentin.** While awaiting testing results, people should receive resources to support their well-being as much as possible during isolation/14-day quarantine period (quarantine should not exceed 14 days after a single exposure). Such resources, at a minimum, should include free access to personal tablets with movies, increased access to free canteen items, personal effects and free phone calls, perhaps on state-owned cell phones, and daily opportunities for yard time. While some of these comforts may seem beyond the normal routine of prisons in California, they are simple, low-cost measures that are essential if there is any hope of minimizing the risk of adverse short- and long-term physical and mental health outcomes of isolation among those who are currently in the Adjustment Center for

## ***Illuminating Commentary***

As Founder of The Condemned LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Group at San Quentin State Prison, I require, specifically; the Warden take into serious account that the LGBTQIA+ were also infected by COVID-19 virus, and was totally excluded from televised programming on SQSPTV network, including during the month of June, National Gay Pride Month.

Members of The Condemned LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Group was also infected by COVID-19 virus, including Johnny Avila, one of the inmates that presented The Sound Mind Streamer TV Program Billie Mizell and Admins Public Informations Officer- Lt. Sam Robinson.

Johnny Avila died from complications of COVID-19 virus, as we trace the rapid spread of infections to the neglect of, and deprivation of, and the denial of services and televised programming of The Sound Mind Streamer by Billie Mizell, Amy Miller, and Sen. Scott Wiener.

Floyd Smith- Founder of SQSP/Condemned LGBTQIA+ Spirituality Group, Innovative Program Designer for The Sound Mind Streamer





## OOG ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND CLOSURE OF GRIEVANCE

Offender Name: SMITH, FLOYD D.

CDC#: K72700

Date: 10/15/2020

Current Location: SQ-Facility A

Current Area/Bed: A EB 4009001L

From: Office of Grievances at San Quentin State Prison

a). No due date noted  
b). Violation of PRLA Mandate.

Re: Log # 000000049420

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Office of Grievances at San Quentin State Prison received your grievance on 10/14/2020. Your grievance has not been assigned for review and response because your claim(s) is being handled as specified below.

### Claim # 001:

This request concerning Offender Services; Request for item, assistance, or service has been reviewed and is outside the scope of the grievance process.

Your request will be addressed by an administrator at San Quentin State Prison. Any questions about the status of this request should be addressed by your counselor or agent.

e). Leaves Grievance in a state of intentional limbo, and outright denial of access to the courts  
f). Did not name an Administrator,  
g). Counselor nonresponsive

Stonewalled is an understatement. They say we are all in this together, yet the proof at San Quentin State Prison shows clearly that Black Incarcerated Gay Lives don't matter to anybody,

There is an agreement between gangs, and other prison subcultural groups in the entire state of California to remove all gays from Level 4 and now some level 3 prisons, and this removal has been ultra abusive, violent, and amounting to the deracing of all Black men that identify as LGBTQAI+, by fellow inmates, who present as Heterosexual.

When Black gangmembers file lawsuits, or join movements to expose corruption and abuses in prison against them, they all call it "A Solitary Struggle and Movement."

When Black Gays file complaints that expose abuses against them at the hands of corrupt officers in collective conspiracy with gang members, they all call it snitchin.

h). Department responses to Grievances like above, is greater proof of collective Retaliatory activities and implicit bias towards Gay inmates

of  
10/16



# **The Problem of Gangs and Security Threat Groups (STG's) in American Prisons and Jails Today: Recent Findings from the 2012 NGCRC National Gang/STG Survey**

by

George W. Knox, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
NGCRC

Excerpt

Copyright © 2012, National Gang Crime Research Center.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Reported here are the preliminary findings from a statistical analysis of the 2012 NGCRC National STG Survey. The survey data collection time period was from the Fall of 2011 to Spring 2012 and resulted in a useable sample size of N = 148 facilities from N = 48 states. It focuses on the adult portion of American corrections and includes both county jails and state prisons as the unit of analysis.

Adult corrections reflects the more serious side of gang/STG problems in America today. While it is true that almost all juvenile correctional facilities have gang/STG problems, the deadlier version of gang conflict is found in the adult system. The adult portion of the American gang/STG problem therefore reflects a higher level of threat.

Generally, any gang problem found in jails is also found in prisons. Jails are for persons awaiting trial, while prisons are for sentenced prisoners. But the gang/STG problem in any state is going to be inextricably intertwined when it comes to the county jail and the state prison. The county jail inmates, once convicted, flow into the state prisons. Both the jail and the prison manifest serious aspects of the gang/STG problem. Both types of facilities have similar needs and functions when it comes to gang/STG intelligence.



## DEFINITIONS

Gang denial is a social policy whereby the entity involved — the city, the facility, the company, the school, or the entire state corrections agency — denies there is a gang problem or reports a significantly lower gang problem than actually exists. Sometimes called the “Ostrich phenomenon”, it means ignoring the problem, hoping it will go away on its own. In some jurisdictions, it is politically imposed because awareness could have implications for the local tourism trade. Or more typically, there is an assumption that if the entity reports a gang problem, it attracts further “bad news”. It is hard to attract new employees to low paying high turnover jobs in corrections when the newspapers are reporting gang fights behind bars. It usually takes a serious crisis or a local news media investigation to reverse a “gang denial policy”.

The term “validation process” as used in California was their innovative way of dealing with a high gang density rate: it is reasonable to believe that California’s prison system, as a producer of gangs, that is as a major national epicenter of gangs, is probably comparable to Illinois with regard to gang density. In Illinois, approximately 80 to 90 percent of the inmates coming into the prison system were gang members on the streets. Gang inmates are told to behave, and if they do not, they face the risk of being a “validated gang member”. Thus, when California reports to a prison researcher that “six percent of our inmates are STG/prison gang members” they are couching this unbelievably low statistic in the magical language of “validated gang members”: those who within the inmate population continued to be gang bangers and we caught them doing it in very serious offenses after being incarcerated. One might ask, of course, is this policy of obscuring the gang problem the way it is reported to the public — a variation on the “gang denial” theme ---a policy that could also encourage a greater personal safety threat to the correctional officers who work there?

## 4. THE ISSUES AND CONTROVERSIES ABOUT RELIGIOUS WORSHIP FOR INMATES AND PRISONERS

There are a myriad of problems involving religion that overlap with gangs, STG’s, racial conflict, extremism, and other challenges to the correctional system. The correctional system has to maintain safety and security as a foremost goal. We will see that there are new challenges facing corrections today from the abuse of religious practices behind bars.

### GANGS WILL USE RELIGION AS A “FRONT” FOR MEETINGS IN PRISON

The survey included the question “have inmates attempted to use religious services as a front for a Security Threat Group or gang”? Some 62.4 percent of the respondents indicated “yes”, that inmates have tried to use religious services for their gang. Only 37.6 percent of the respondents reported not seeing this kind of abuse of religion behind bars.

### DO ISLAMIC INMATES HAVE A SEPARATE GANG?

The survey included the question “do Islamic inmates have a separate gang”? Some 23.6 percent of the respondents answered “yes”, that Islamic inmates had a separate gang in their correctional facility. About three-fourths of the correctional facilities reported that Islamic inmates did not have a separate gang.



### **MOST EXPECT THE PROBLEM OF GANG VIOLENCE BEHIND BARS TO INCREASE IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS**

The survey included the question "in your opinion, do you expect the problem of inmate violence from gang members to increase or decrease in the next few years, or do you think the problem will remain at the same level it is now"? Some 81.4 percent of the respondents felt the problem of gang violence behind bars will increase in the next few years. Only 1.4 percent felt the problem will decrease. And 17.2 percent felt the problem will remain at current levels.

### **MOST EXPECT THE PROBLEM OF GANG MEMBERS ABUSING THEIR RELIGIOUS RIGHTS TO INCREASE IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS**

The survey included the question "in your opinion, do you expect the problem of gang members abusing their religious rights to increase or decrease in the next few years, or do you think the problem will remain at the same level it is now"? The results of the survey show that 79.6 percent believe the problem will increase. Only 1.4 percent felt the problem will decrease. And 19 percent believed that the problem will remain at the same level.

### **HAVE GANG MEMBERS TRIED TO CONTROL ANY RELIGIOUS PROGRAM CHOICES IN PRISONS AND JAILS?**

The survey included the question "have gang members tried to control any religious program choices at your facility"? Some 27.9 percent of the respondents answered "yes", that gang members have tried to control religious services inside their correctional institution. Still, some 72.1 percent reported no such attempts by gangs to control religious program choices.

### **FEW PRISONS AND JAILS USE TELE-RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMING**

The survey included the question "does your facility use videotaped or televised services when a chaplain/volunteer is not available for inmate worship services"? Only 17.5 percent of the respondents indicated "yes", that their facilities used this kind of religious service. Most of the prisons and jails (82.5%) reported they did not use such televised services when they do not have an actual chaplain/volunteer on hand to provide the service.

*Sound Mind Streamer #1  
was created to provide Gay inmates some  
measure of safe space program engagements.*




[Up^](#) [Add To My Favorites](#)
**PENAL CODE - PEN****PART 1. OF CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS [25 - 680.4]** ( Part 1 enacted 1872. )**TITLE 7. OF CRIMES AGAINST PUBLIC JUSTICE [92 - 186.36]** ( Title 7 enacted 1872. )**CHAPTER 11. Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act [186.20 - 186.36]** ( Chapter 11 added by Stats. 1988, Ch. 1256, Sec. 1. )

**186.20.** This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "California Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act."  
 (Added by Stats. 1988, Ch. 1256, Sec. 1. Effective September 26, 1988.)

**186.21.** The Legislature hereby finds and declares that it is the right of every person, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or handicap, to be secure and protected from fear, intimidation, and physical harm caused by the activities of violent groups and individuals. It is not the intent of this chapter to interfere with the exercise of the constitutionally protected rights of freedom of expression and association. The Legislature hereby recognizes the constitutional right of every citizen to harbor and express beliefs on any lawful subject whatsoever, to lawfully associate with others who share similar beliefs, to petition lawfully constituted authority for a redress of perceived grievances, and to participate in the electoral process.

The Legislature, however, further finds that the State of California is in a state of crisis which has been caused by violent street gangs whose members threaten, terrorize, and commit a multitude of crimes against the peaceful citizens of their neighborhoods. These activities, both individually and collectively, present a clear and present danger to public order and safety and are not constitutionally protected. The Legislature finds that there are nearly 600 criminal street gangs operating in California, and that the number of gang-related murders is increasing. The Legislature also finds that in Los Angeles County alone there were 328 gang-related murders in 1986, and that gang homicides in 1987 have increased 80 percent over 1986. It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this chapter to seek the eradication of criminal activity by street gangs by focusing upon patterns of criminal gang activity and upon the organized nature of street gangs, which together, are the chief source of terror created by street gangs. The Legislature further finds that an effective means of punishing and deterring the criminal activities of street gangs is through forfeiture of the profits, proceeds, and instrumentalities acquired, accumulated, or used by street gangs.

(Amended by Stats. 2011, Ch. 719, Sec. 30. (AB 887) Effective January 1, 2012.)



# Powerful Gay Rights Groups Excluded Trans People for Decades — Leaving Them Vulnerable to Trump's Attack

① By Evan Greer

*The Washington Post*,  
October 29, 2018

The U.S. government is reportedly considering policy changes that would attempt to definitionally “erase” transgender and non-binary people from federal civil rights law. In practice, this could make it nearly impossible for many of us to get a driver's license or passport, go to the doctor for basic medical care, get food stamps or rent an apartment.

An attack on marginalized people

② from the administration behind family separation policies and Muslim travel bans is hardly a surprise. But there's a reason the transgender community is in the government's crosshairs. There was a target painted on our backs. And it was put there not just by the religious right and gender essentialist crusaders, but by the mainstream gay rights movement, which for the better part of the last century has repeatedly backed away from — and sometimes even fought on the wrong side of — the battles that most affect trans and gender nonconforming people.

The Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, two of the first formally organized gay and lesbian rights organizations in the United States, actively discouraged members from engaging in “deviant” expressions of gender and sexuality. Rather than challenge the

③ rigid and repressive gender roles of postwar America, they embraced them in the interest of political gain. For example, their “Annual Reminder” pickets for gay rights in the late 1960s had a strict dress code: Men had to wear white shirts and slacks, and women had to wear dresses. They fought against discrimination on the grounds that they were “normal homosexuals,” and trans people did not fit under that rubric. These groups thought that conforming to societal standards would advance their singular cause: acceptance.

④ Throughout the '60s and '70s, white, middle-class, cisgender gays and lesbians made advances in both legal protection and social status. States started decriminalizing homosexuality, the American Psychiatric Association declared that it was not a psychiatric disorder, and Elaine Noble, the first openly lesbian or gay legislator, took her seat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. But those outside the mainstream continued to live in untenable conditions. For gender-nonconforming people, it was nearly impossible to find steady employment, and police routinely raided bars and establishments where they gathered.

Resistance swelled in uprisings like the Compton Cafeteria riot in 1966, in which trans women and drag queens resisted arrest at a 24-hour eatery in San Francisco, and

⑤ later the Stonewall rebellion, where crowds led by trans and gender-nonconforming people of color, sex workers and youths fought back against the police who regularly harassed, beat and violated them. Gender-defiant activists such as Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson emerged as leaders. As a direct response to the failure of other gay rights groups to fight for the most vulnerable, they founded the collective Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries, which provided a shelter for trans people in New York.

⑥ Still, the leadership of the Gay Activists Alliance cut trans people out of New York City's landmark 1971 attempt to pass anti-discrimination legislation, by removing protections for gender identity and presentation. They claimed that such an “extreme” bill could never succeed. Even with this “compromise,” it didn't pass until 1986.

Overt anti-trans sentiment came from the top down of the burgeoning gay rights movement. The predominantly white, cis, gay male leadership saw trans people as a threat to their slowly but surely growing social and economic power. It was echoed among some lesbian leaders who painted trans women as impostors and mentally ill, even as they fought against these labels for themselves. Some lesbian leaders even claimed that trans men



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were traitors to their sex. These attitudes have persisted within the movement.

When Rivera took the stage at a 1973 rally that would later be seen as a predecessor to Pride, she faced boos from the crowd and was referred to as a "man in a dress" as she spoke about the daily brutality faced by trans and gender nonconforming people on the street, in prisons, and at the hands of police. Later that year, Rivera and Johnson were banned from participating in the New York City Pride parade. In interviews, Johnson recalled organizers telling her that they gave the movement "a bad name."

Despite their marginalization, trans people helped lead powerful LGBTQ organizing in direct response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic

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in the 1980s and early '90s. Leaders like Miss Major Griffin-Gracy provided direct health-care services, while others became prominent voices in groups such as Act Up that forced the issue onto the national stage when the U.S. government was trying desperately to cover it up. But the upper crust of national gay rights leaders continued to silence and ignore trans voices into the next decade. In 1993, the organizing committee of the National Gay and Lesbian March on Washington voted to keep the word "transgender" out of the official name for the march. While trans people fought for and gained more power and visibility within the movement and in society as a whole in the early 2000s, our advances continued to lag behind our cisgender gay and lesbian counterparts

In 2007, the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest

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LGBTQ rights organization, infamously threw trans people under the bus by cutting a deal that left gender identity protections out of the Employment and Non Discrimination Act after promising trans activists that they'd fight for their inclusion in the bill. In recent years, the organization has continued to face criticism for silencing trans people at events: At a 2013 rally, a staffer asked an activist to lower a transgender flag to keep it out of view of TV cameras. HRC still doesn't have any trans people in top leadership positions, where our lived experiences would help shape strategy and priorities.

To their credit, many large LGBTQ organizations have expanded their advocacy on trans issues. But the groups with the most funding, lawyers and lobbyists have too

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often focused narrowly on inclusion within institutions such as marriage and the military, while grass-roots trans activists fought on matters of basic survival: youth homelessness, criminalization of sex workers, systematic isolation and torture of trans people in U.S. prisons, police violence, forced unemployment and inadequate health care. Decisions at the top to leave trans people behind have always been justified as strategic considerations, couched in an ideology of "trickle-down rights," whereby advancing the causes of the most powerful, least-oppressed members of the LGBTQ community will allow the more vulnerable and marginalized to eventually receive the same incremental gains. But these political maneuvers have had real life-or-death consequences for our community.

By prioritizing their acceptance within an unjust society, the

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mainstream gay rights movement helped sow the seeds that the Trump administration is now coming to reap. The government made a cold calculation: An open attack on existing gay and lesbian rights might fall flat — even to their base — but history told them that targeting trans people, who have fewer legal protections and less public understanding and support, would instill division among LGBTQ people. The White House wants to paint some of us as outcasts and extremists, and hope the rest will go along. There is no room for us to undermine each other's struggles for justice. It's time to fight not for assimilation, but for liberation. We are all targets. We are in this together whether we like it or not.

The administration's latest attack

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must serve as a wake-up call. The LGBTQ community needs to unite behind our most vulnerable members like we've rarely done before. To do that, we'll have to grapple with our history. We can't go back in time, or undo what's been done. But we can commit to doing better. We can respect and honor those who fought before us, and learn from the moments where they failed.

