

Sylvia Rivera at Christopher Street Liberation Day, 1973.

Surveilling Sylvia:

histories of policing gender and sexuality through the life of sylvia rivera

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|Sylvia Rivera |(1951–2002)

photo by valerie schaff, 2000.

"i still continue the struggle. i will struggle til the day i die and my main struggle right now is that my community will seek the rights that are justly ours... after all these years, the trans community is still at the back of the bus." terrorizing non-normativity in incarceration

EXPLICIT

Police & prisons violently enforce homogenized gender and sexual expression by:

excluding from legal economies

IMPLICIT

criminalizing
non-normative
gender
expression

endorsing assimilationist LGBT agendas

Exclusion from Legal Economies



"Sylvia Rivera in front of fountain" photo by kay tobin, new york public library digital collections (1970) "before trans people sign on to what looks good about being recognized by law in ways that seem desireable (e.g., being added to anti-discrimination and hate crime laws), we have to strongly consider why those laws have failed to provide the change that many have hoped for"

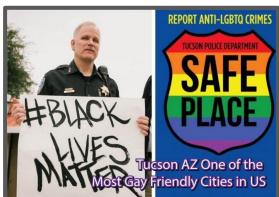
Dean Spade

in Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the

Endorsing Assimilationist LGBT Agendas I









Endorsing Assimilationist LGBT Agendas II



Image by Micah Bazant; deanspade.net/projects/pinkwashing-exposed/

Criminalizing Non-normative Gender Expression

Subject to profiling and harrassment; excessive police presence in poor communities; increased exposure to police

Charged with survival crimes (sex work, drugs, theft, etc.) due to lack of access to legalized employment or education

Charged with "Quality of Life" crimes like sleeping outside, turnstile jumping, loitering, etc., due to lack of resources (housing, money) Criminalization of Poor and Homeless People False arrests for using the "wrong" bathroom

Criminalization of Trans People False arrests for lack of proper identity documents (by ICE, police, etc.)

Trans women are often falsely arrested for soliciting just for being transgender

Trans masculine people of color often face increased profiling

Disproportionately High Exposure to Arrest, police harrassment, Incarceration, and Violence for I ow-Income trans people

Terrorizing Non-Normativity in Incarceration

"As a non-op trans woman new to the carceral system... I imagined that after hearing me out, the officers, being of sound mind and judgement, would see the error of their ways and simply let me go. Instead, I was placed in community custody for twenty days. Community custody, according to one of the guards, was reserved for sex offenders, the mentally ill, and those with special needs."

Kalaniopua Young

"From a Native Trans Daughter: Carceral Refusal, Settler Colonialism, Re-routing the Roots of an Indigenous Abolitionist Imaginary," in Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex (2015)



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