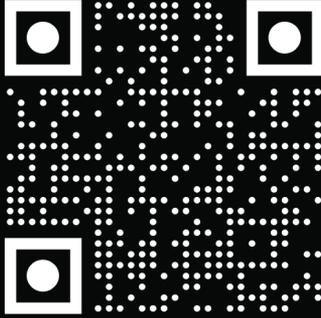
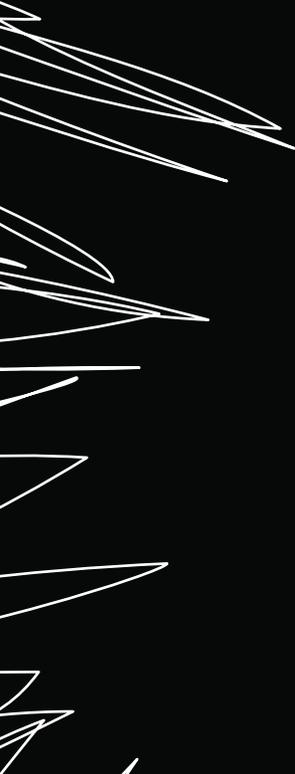


SILENCED



silenced.in/



Produced in collaboration with people
inside solitary confinement in Michigan,
Open MI Door Campaign, Prison Creative
Arts Project, American Friends Service
Committee: MCJP and Prison Watch,
We Are the Work and Zealous



01

**OVERVIEW:
THE SOLITARY SITUATION**

02

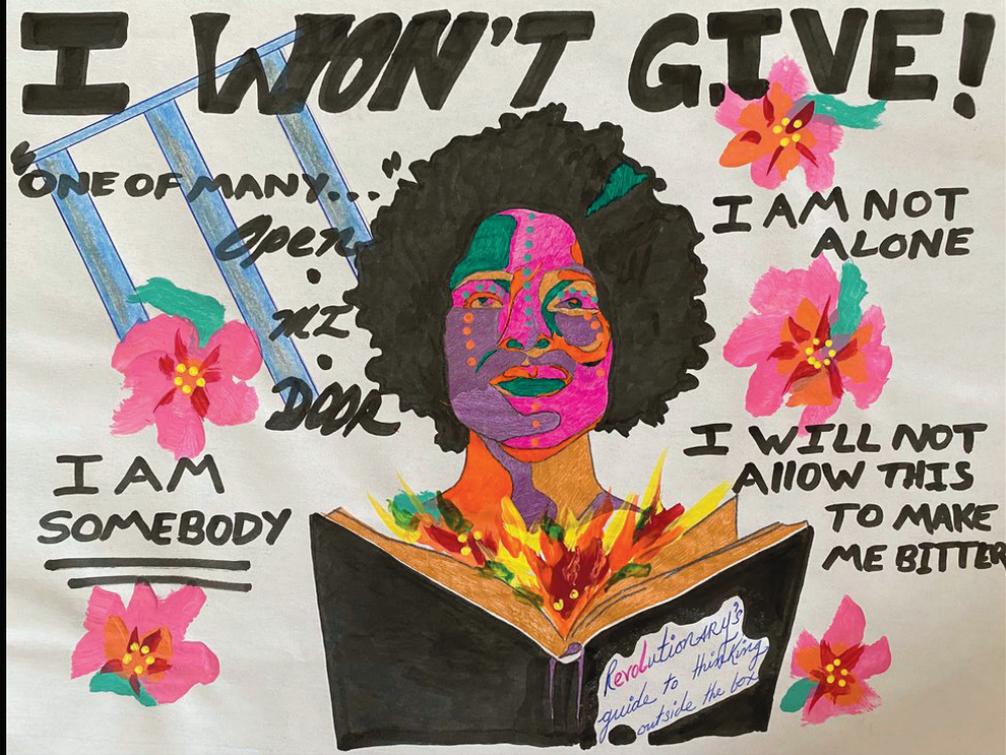
SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION

03

**HUMAN COSTS
OF CONDITIONS**

04

**RESISTANCE
AND ACTIVATION**



Artwork by
Jodi Hill

THIS ZINE HAS A

CONTENT WARNING

The words of real people, their letters, their handwriting and names are woven throughout this book. They are annotated and amplified with truths about the realities they endure. This is heavy, and like anything heavy we carry, we must know ourselves and our limits. When we as organizers, comrades, family members, and formerly incarcerated people read letters from inside, we take breaks, reflect in margins and empty pages, feel our feet on the ground, and remember we, too, are alive and worthy of space to breathe.

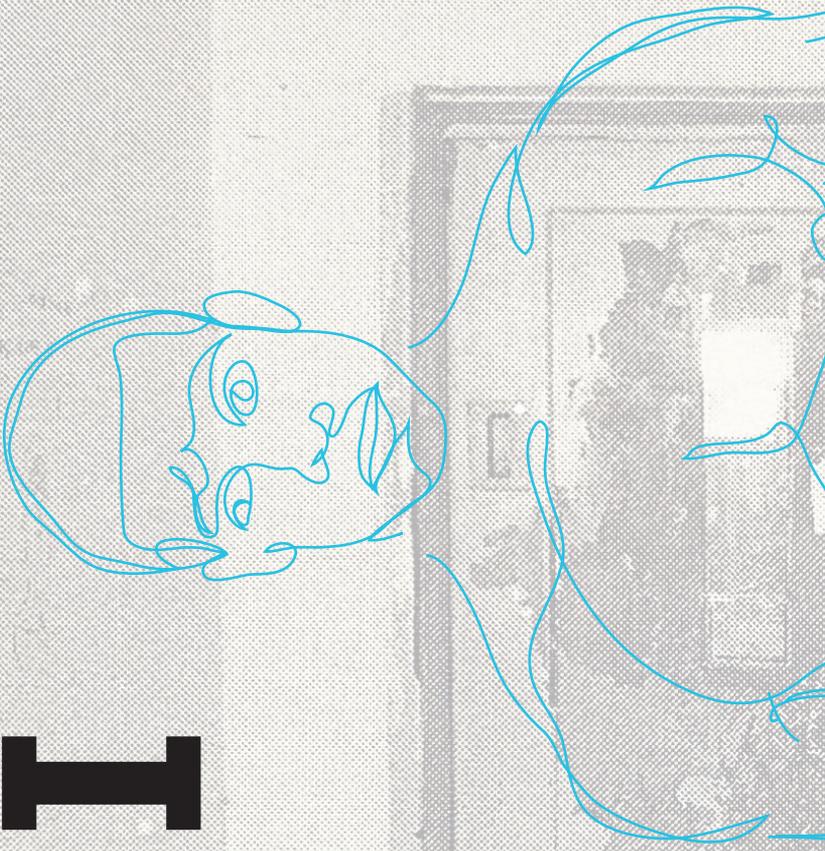
Follow your own wisdom and the gentle guidance of this book as you engage deeply with our people who are Silenced.

RUTIKANGA

AKESI

Rutikanga Akesi (formerly, Mario Lee) is a **New Afrikan Communist Revolutionary**, anti-prison activist and organizer against solitary confinement, and chief-commander of the Un-Breakables Collective: a New Afrikan Revolutionary cadre-organization of the New Afrikan Independence Movement (N.A.I.M).

He is being held captive at **Ionia Maximum Correctional Facility in Ionia, Michigan**, where prison/kamp officials presently have him confined to solitary confinement or isolation in the control unit.



On this occasion, i affectionately wish all you truth and justice-loving people good health and long life, and ask you to convey my greetings to all those wonderful human beings out there who stand in solidarity with us, though We do not know them.

i want to salute you, commend you, for your tireless work, and convey to you my asante sanak (a thousand thanks, in Swahili). We, those of us who languish in these torturous solitary cells, appreciate you and your many sacrifices—the tremendous effort, energy, time, and dedication that you all, individually and collectively, contribute to putting a stop to state-sanctioned torture of imprisoned human beings held in prolonged solitary confinement.

Generally speaking, you have rendered a great, noble and much needed service that has been absent or otherwise lacking in Michigan for far too long. You've provided effective support and great encouragement for guys like myself, who've been going it alone for years, risking life and limb to expose and oppose the violence and torture carried out in Michigan's segregation and solitary confinement units. For many of us, this campaign and project restored our hope and renewed the belief that societal and institutional change is actually possible, or inevitable if We fight for it. We attach great importance to the empathy and support of the forces of change on the outside, and consider it an extremely important factor for bringing the never-ending torture of solitary confinement to an end. While many of you may deem it your noble duty to support and fight for us from out there, We overstand that we also have a commitment and a duty to resolutely fight along with you, from within, until victory is finally achieved.

At the outset when Jacq, my brilliant advocate, friend and comrade, pulled me into this work with you fine folks, apart from our spirit of solidarity and determination to struggle, We possessed only small forces but threw all our energies into the work nonetheless. And look now at us—so far, We've managed to carry the day. Slow and minor changes have been made on this end, changes that the reactionary department would not have otherwise made if We didn't force them. And, i'm confident that quicker and more meaningful change will occur in the days ahead. But we mustn't relent one iota. We have to continue the struggle and advance further, otherwise, the pressure dissipates. It'll only be a matter of time before even the smaller cosmetic changes implemented will be rolled back.

With this in mind, We must overstand that we are waging a protracted struggle to oppose and expose the practice of solitary confinement as an instrument of state-sanctioned torture. No doubt We are up against a powerful institution with a reactionary and fascistic character. However, We know that We are even more powerful, with a powerful force of change (progressive humanity) behind us. We are fighting for justice with the mighty weapon of truth. Truth and justice will always overcome falsehood and organized injustice; believe that. We are bound to win. The practice of prolonged solitary confinement in Michigan prisons will certainly be rendered obsolete.

Remember: ours is a collective struggle. Struggle without cease, struggle without fail. Amani (peace).

Love and Revolution,
Rutikanga, He Who Fears Not

STATEMENT

BY ZEALOUS

Solitary confinement. The deprivation is unimaginable in this prison inside of a prison. Concrete, stainless steel, the sound vacillating between silence and screaming. The smell of blood and sweat and lost hope, the gray walls closing in. In the United States, 80,000 people are living in some form of solitary confinement each day.

In Michigan—tucked deep in national forests, along stretches of farmland and the banks of Lake Superior— some of the most remote and brutal prisons in the country stand tall and foreboding, yet largely unseen. Filling them are thousands of Black and brown men and trans women from far away in lower Michigan. Detroit, Flint, Saginaw. Most of these prisons bear multiple units dedicated to long-term isolation. Solitary confinement. Torture.

The Zine you are holding is the result of years of relationship building, mutual struggle and study, and advocacy work in solidarity with people inside solitary confinement in Michigan. This work was not built around presentation, but people. It was crafted with mutual respect, informed consent, and deep collaboration with the people living these experiences. This work sparked foreseeable retaliation from guards, many mail rejections, and difficult conversations, but ignited the spirits of those who worked on it, both inside and outside of the walls.

The Zine is part of Silenced, a growing archival website and exhibition project, built around letters and artwork from solitary over the years. The intention is to shed light on the inhumanity of long-term solitary confinement, both in Michigan and around the country. This work is not meant to be consumed and forgotten, but to illuminate hard truths and activate response; to amplify the voices calling out from solitary through letters, cards, artwork and shoddy satellite phones. The goal is to abolish solitary confinement forever.

Please visit <https://silenced.in> to get involved, to view the growing digital archive, and to follow Silenced as it moves across states. In the words of Assata Shakur: “It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win.”

STATEMENT BY

MAHOGANY L. BROWNE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JUST MEDIA AND POET-IN-RESIDENCE, LINCOLN CENTER

In a time where it is ever clear that the criminal legal system reflects the bones of modern day slavery, I find myself feeling more than hopeless. I feel like I can't see clearly or think clearly or feel deep enough for any word or sentence structure to be adequate. The harm caused by mass incarceration is unspeakable. It is designed to decimate the human spirit. It is designed to fracture the family structure. It is designed to further level the economics of impoverished communities. And still we must speak. My grievance is that of a child who has lost her father and uncles and brother and cousins to the prison system. I am from California. Several generations migrated from Louisiana for greener pastures and opportunities, just to be lost to the recidivism of this country's prison industrial system in a northern state. I lost years with my father due to the prison industrial complex. Every man in my family has been impacted by the criminal justice system. The shame is blinding. Three strikes will try to make a fool of us. Make us believe we deserve this kind of punishment. Life is for living. Life is for living. And prison is the antithesis to living. It is reducing lives to a single moment. With no promise of light or redemption. Prison is a hill that wants everyone to die on. The correctional officers. The people caged inside. The counselors. And the attorneys. The families and visitors. The business of it all is rooted in shame. But the people will always be the light. Behind bars is a place that must be demolished. The people most affected by the prison industrial complex are bordered by cruelty, rather than rehabilitation. The people behind bars are still people. There are over 7000 prisons, jails, detention centers, and correctional facilities in the United States. Redemption and healing and transformation is possible. But this is not the way. Prison is not the way forward. Through language we can see it clearly. The inadequate reach of this sentence is only a hand held out, reaching for whomever on the other side of this page. Reaching for an idea or policy or act that will finally see an "inmate" as someone capable of transformation. Reaching, reaching, reaching even still until all of our families are free from the trap that is.

This zine was published in coordination with [Mahogany L. Browne, Lincoln Center Poet-in-Residence](#), to engage students in her Racial Justice Writing Workshop and others to consider the impact of incarceration and cruelty on us all.

01

OVERVIEW: THE SOLITARY SITUATION





Artwork by
Trisa Shepard, "Freedom"



The human body is not meant to live in a cell the size of a parking space.

The human body is meant to move, to feel sun and wind and rain, to see color and hear birds. The trauma stored in a body isolated is trauma that gets repeated.

Imagine your dearest
loved one locked in a small
concrete room with a solid
steel door...

Diagram by
Rutikanga Akesi

My Name is Malachi Crenshaw #787654

Since I've been incarcerated, I have been to segregation many times. Because of the many months that I spent in there on different occasions, it has caused me to become paranoid, constantly stressed out, depressed all the time.

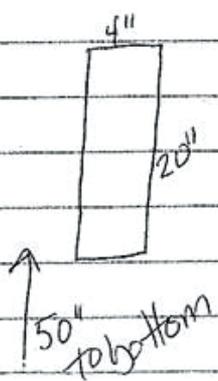
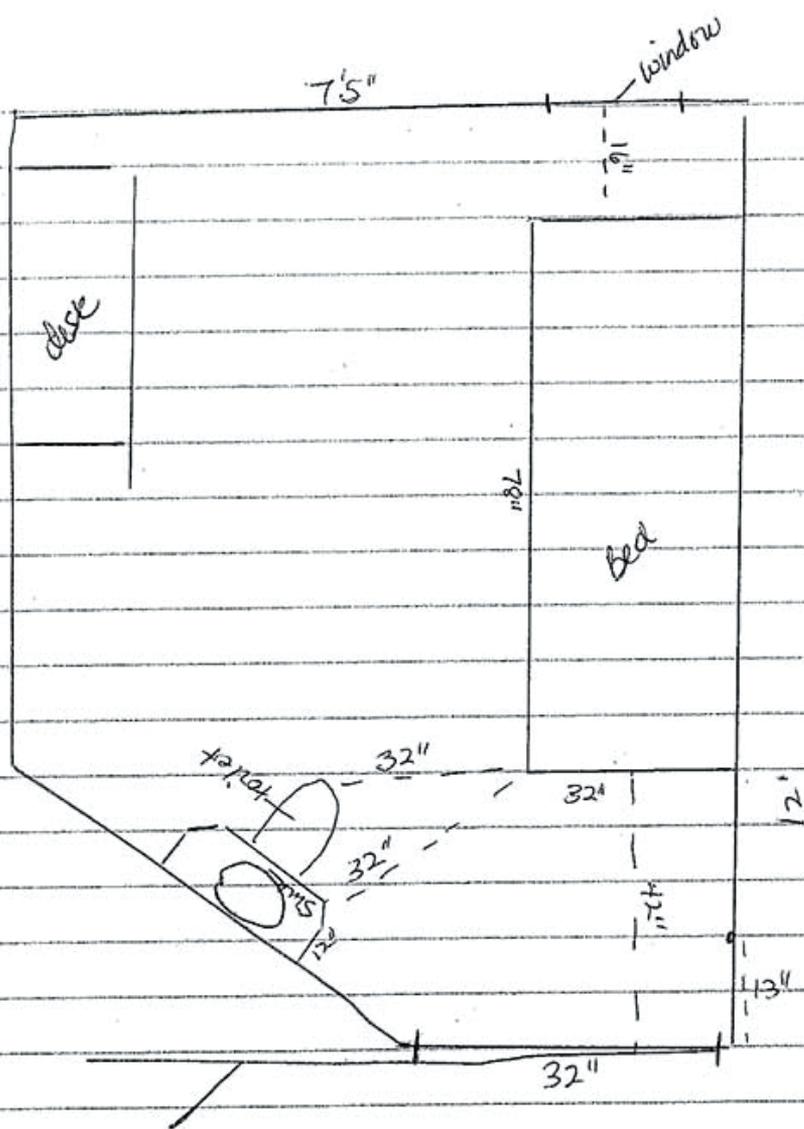
In 2017 while in seg at OAS Correctional facility, I tried to commit suicide twice, because I was afraid the C/O's were gonna kill me. I was afraid the C/O's would kill me twice while I was in the hole.

This has put me in fear for my life, because the C/O's will either starve you, or spit in your food. I would starve myself, just so I wouldn't have to be put through that.

I've had several C/O's not feed me at times, due to them being prejudice, at the same time being deprived of my dignity while being called racial slurs, being deprived as a human being.

I always fear for my life, my safety, and my mental when I'm in seg. Because at any moment anything can happen and that can be my last day on this earth. A lot of things about seg is not right. It's dehumanizing and torture at the same time.

No contact with another human being besides the rough voice through a food slot, the shouting of other caged people, or a guard who comes three days a week to walk them on a leash to an outside cage.



pegs 13" from wall
22" height ea

6/5/18

There are over 3,000 people in Michigan in solitary confinement on any given day.

3000
Michigan

Anthony

Anthony P. Richardson

Anthony

Clifton M. Foster

BARWOOD RAY TURNER

Erick

Deshawn A. Foster

DENZELL FARISH

DENZELL

Darrell Jarvis

DANIEL A. HENRY

Cortez D. Shisler

Mr. Maurice McNeely

Matthew

Mr. Kerwin M. Cook

Kerwin M. Cook

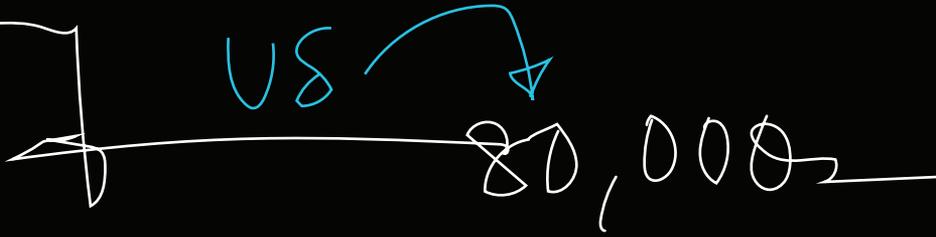
La'Vern

Joshua Greg Williams

Josh Salyers

Johnny H.

In the United States, there are over 80,000 people in solitary confinement.



- | | | |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| _____ | Andrew G. MacLachlan | ANDRAUS A. McCloud |
| Johnson | Wayne Taylor | Darby McMillan |
| EL BEERY | Dennis McFey | DeLawrence Billingsley |
| dale | Darrell A. Winters | d. BROOKS JR |
| w Sironen | Martez Norwood | Mark Rowe |
| s Coates | Molachi Crenshaw | MR. MALSA CARLIS |
| ffield | mentell z | Larry Adams |



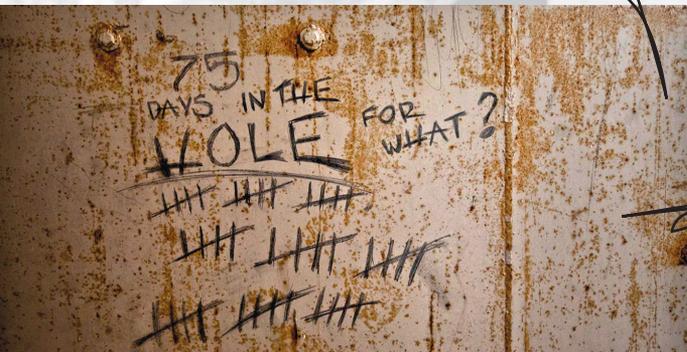
Photograph by
Matthew Christopher

The state of Michigan has no restrictions on the length of time a person can live in solitary confinement.





Photograph by
Matthew Christopher



One man has been there for 46 years. His friends write to us about his gentle nature, about his dreams. His name is Richard; he is seventy years old.

PUNISHMENTS IN SOLITARY

Advocates, families and organizers know about these tortures from our comrades inside.

Gassing	Food Loaf
Tear Gas and Pepper Spray	Cell Extraction
Hog-tying	Observation
Top of Bed Restraints	Sleep Deprivation

~~_____~~ I know it's too late now, of course, but I know that we're humans too, and we deserve to be treated like human beings, one of the most severe punishments humanly possible to a human is to banish and condemn us to the tombs, otherwise subject us to extreme social isolation and sensory deprivation, psychological and physical.

	Starvation	Paper Restrictions
tion	Fed Spoiled Food	Loss of Privileges
	Taunting and Embarrassment	New Charges
vation	Water Restrictions	

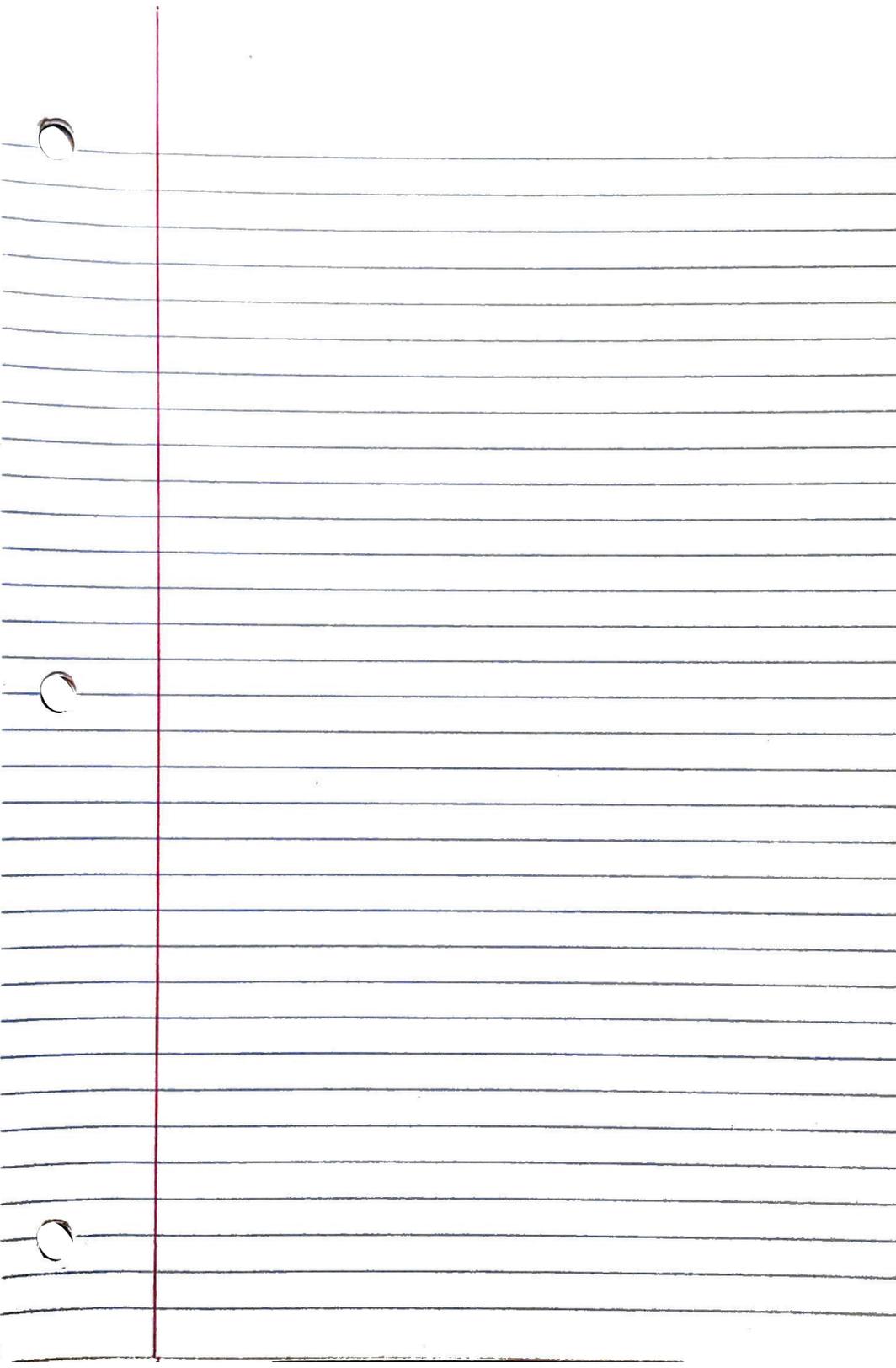


want those people to know
 as such. As social (i.e., human)
 le that society can mete out
 FOR the living — OR
 NSORY deprivation. It's endless

These are the words of [Rutikanga Akesi](#),
 Co-Producer of the Silenced campaign.

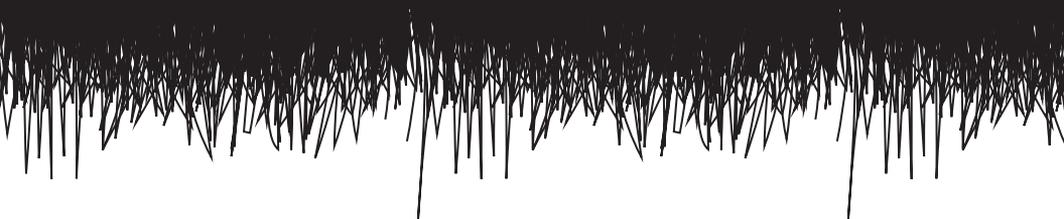
Reflections on the Solitary Situation

All of life's difficult work requires a conversation. As you think about circumstances of racism, state abuse and mass criminalization in your life or vicariously, what conversations come into your mind? Who would you like to talk to? What would you say?



02

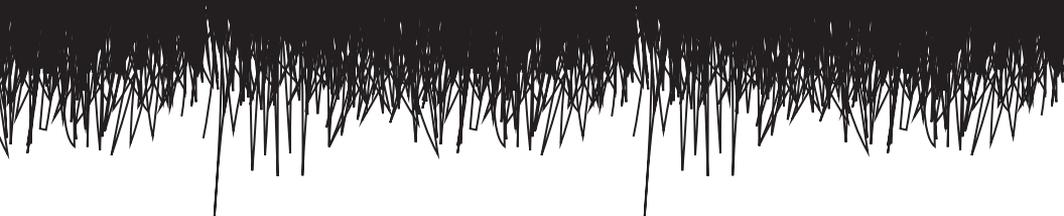
SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION

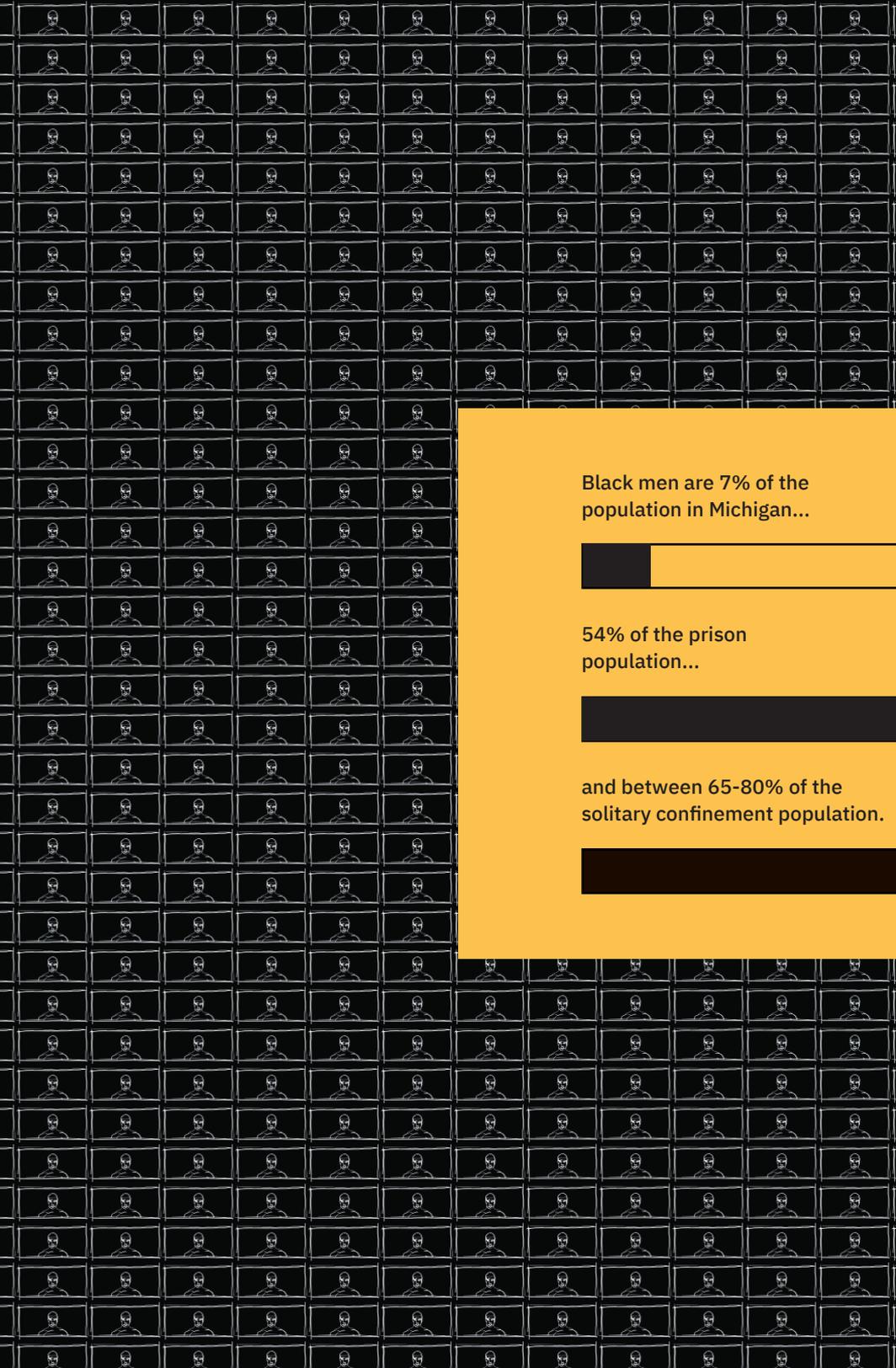


Every oppressive societal inequity on Earth is amplified behind razor wire. The racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, misogyny... they go from a constant murmur to a hellish unending scream.



Artwork by
Oliger Merko,
"Evening Yard Crew"

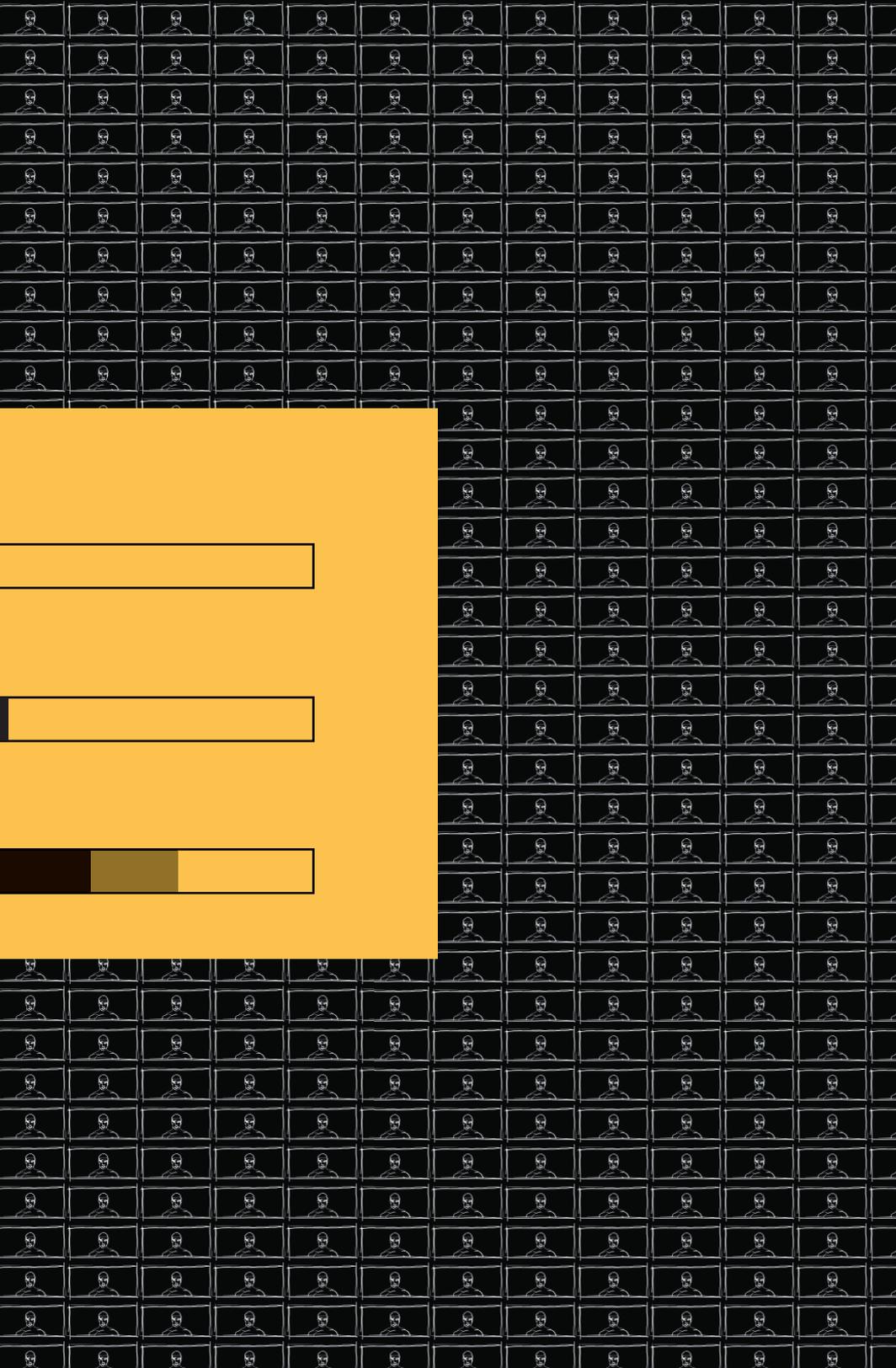




Black men are 7% of the population in Michigan...

54% of the prison population...

and between 65-80% of the solitary confinement population.





2) I have been through the war with racist white bullies in middle school since the beginning. They were in their boxes for me. Nobody is watching while they hate practices.

Victor Lindsey fights for recognition of the people who've died by suicide in Marquette's solitary confinement units.

I Dismissed...
AS A "Technician"...

Its all a mental

For most
right now. I'm being
in say for something
the S.T.G. title they pick me...

Personally
Suicide is
in this
die, person
the pass
which the
day that

Prisons with isolation units are often remote, settled deep in racist and dangerous backwood territory.

Marquette Branch Prison, in the Northern Upper Peninsula, 11 hours from Detroit.

witnessed over 50 (near) Attempt
While here in Marquette Branch Prison
(regional) Solitary confinement, and
witnessed "3" Suicides within
3 1/2 months and they all were kids
Newest one was on Aug 21, 2020 the
I received your 'ad' in the MI-cure.

I COULD TELL YOU
ABOUT DIAGNOSES, BUT
I WILL TELL YOU ABOUT
HANDWRITING,
THE WAY I CAN SEE
PEOPLE SLIPPING AWAY.
MAYBE IT WILL BE
CURVED MORE THAN BEFORE,
SLANTED ALONGSIDE
THE PAPER LIKE IT IS
LOSING ITS BALANCE.
MAYBE THE WORDS USED TO
FLOW AND SCROLL
BUT NOW
THE PEN IS PRESSED **SO HARD**
IT TEARS THROUGH THE PAPER.
~~ARE LOST~~
ARE CREATED,
SOMETIMES NEW LANGUAGES
INVENTED ALL TOGETHER,
UNCOLONIZED S/MBOLS
TO DECIPHER AND LEARN.
I COULD TELL YOU OF
PARANOIA,
HALLUCINATIONS, SCHIZOPHRENIA,
DEPRESSION,
PARALYZING ANXIETY,
STUTTERS,
SELF-HARM, *SUICIDE*, EXPOSURE.

"I hold that it is bad as far as we are concerned if a person... is not attacked by the enemy, for in that case it would definitely mean that we have sunk to the level of the enemy. It is good if we are attacked by the enemy since it proves that we have drawn a clear line of demarcation between the enemy and ourselves. It is still better if the enemy attacks us wildly and paints us as utterly black and without a single virtue. It demonstrates that we have not only drawn a clear line of demarcation between the enemy and ourselves but achieved a great deal in our work." — Mao Tse-tung

AND SHOWERS, I TALKED TO NUMEROUS SUPERVISORS AND FIELD OFFICERS REGARDING THESE ISSUES. BUT THEY FAILED TO REACH THE AGREEMENT OBTAINED, DUE TO CALCULATED EFFORTS BY STAFF TO CIRCUMVENT, UNDERMINE, AND THREATEN MY ACCESS TO THE INSTITUTIONAL COMPLAINT PROCESSES, IN ORDER TO CONEUP STAFF OCCUPATIONAL I WAS ULTIMATELY ABLE TO SEND TWO COMPLAINTS OUT BY A FELLOW OCCUPANT THAT WERE HANDLING ME, TREATMENT, I WAS METALICATED AGAINST ON TWO DIFFERENT OCCASIONS. ONCE WHEN I WAS SUSPECTED TO FULFILL THREATS OF PHYSICAL ASSAULT AND VERBAL ABUSE, BY A SGT. WHEN I REFUSED TO "SIGN OFF" ON A COMPLAINT. THE SECOND TIME, WAS A FEW DAYS AGO, WHEN I WAS SUSPECTED TO PHYSICAL BRUTALITY AND EXCESSIVE FORCE, WHILE BEING ESCORTED IN BENCHMANS AND HANDCUFFS BY KENEDS COMPLAINT BY TWO OF THE SAME OFFICERS I REQUESTED INTEREDS FROM THEY METALICATED AGAINST BECAUSE OF THE COMPLAINTS I FILED. I AM IN THE

MY MAIL TOOK A COUPLE WEEKS
d thing is that i've been mo
son, which provides me a fre
rt. Hopefully i can work my way out of segre

could help me
this staff mis
Whatever
IN SUM
prison policy.
of weekly review as

Artist and Poet Asia Johnson, an organizer and solitary survivor, in conversation with Jonathan Lancaster, a person with mental illness who was starved and dehydrated in solitary confinement in 2019.

Poem by
Asia Johnson

8/30/2020

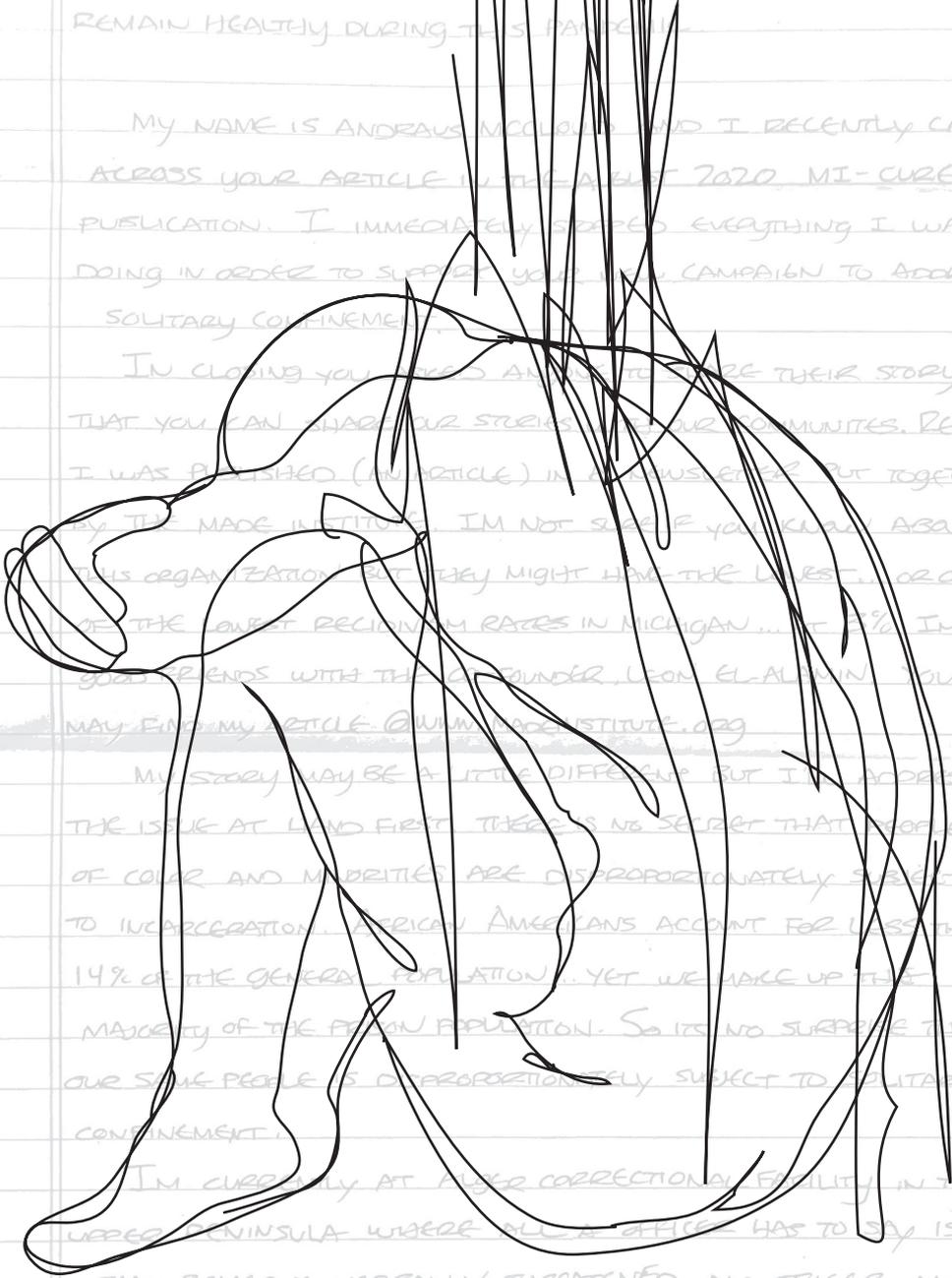
FIRST AND FOREMOST I PRAY THAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY
REMAIN HEALTHY DURING THIS PANDEMIC

My NAME IS ANDREAS NICOLAOU AND I RECENTLY CAME
ACROSS YOUR ARTICLE IN THE AUGUST 2020 MI-CURE
PUBLICATION. I IMMEDIATELY STOPPED EVERYTHING I WAS
DOING IN ORDER TO SUPPORT YOUR CAMPAIGN TO ADDRESS
SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

IM CLOSING YOU UP AS AN ACT TO TELL THEIR STORY SO
THAT YOU CAN SHARE YOUR STORIES WITH YOUR COMMUNITIES. RECENTLY
I WAS PUBLISHED (AN ARTICLE) IN A NEWS LETTER BUT TOGETHER
BY THE MADE INSTITUTE. IM NOT SURE IF YOU KNOW ABOUT
THIS ORGANIZATION BUT THEY MIGHT HAVE THE LIST. OR ONE
OF THE BEST REGIONAL RACES IN MICHIGAN ... IT IS IM
GOOD FRIENDS WITH THE CO-FOUNDER, LEON EL-ALAMIN YOU
MAY FIND MY ARTICLE @WWW.MADEINSTITUTE.ORG

My STORY MAY BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT BUT I WILL ADDRESS
THE ISSUE AT HAND FIRST. THERE IS NO SECRET THAT PEOPLE
OF COLOR AND MENTALLY ILL ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY SUBJECT
TO INCARCERATION. AFRICAN AMERICANS ACCOUNT FOR LESS THAN
14% OF THE GENERAL POPULATION. YET WE MAKE UP THE
MAJORITY OF THE PRISON POPULATION. SO ITS NO SURPRISE THAT
OUR SOME PEOPLE IS DISPROPORTIONATELY SUBJECT TO SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT.

IM CURRENTLY AT ANOTHER CORRECTIONAL FACILITY IN THE
UPPER PENINSULA WHERE ALL I OFFICE HAS TO SAY IS
THAT SOMEONE VERBALLY THREATENED AN OFFICER AND



More Than This

- ASIA JOHNSON

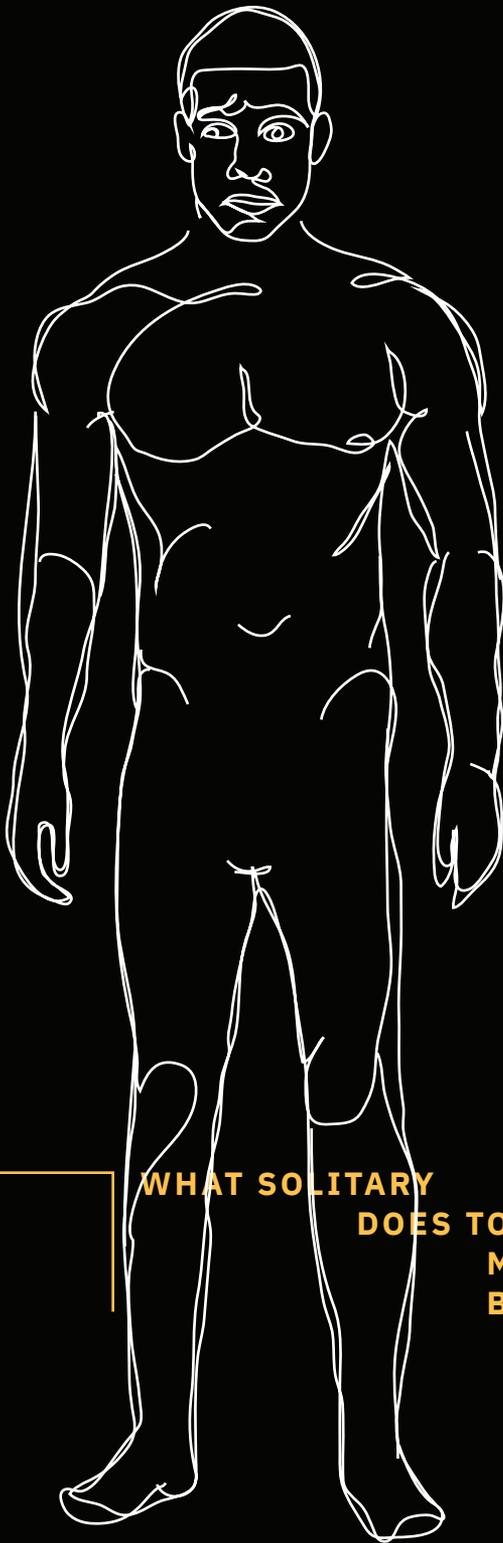
The fragility of his body should alarm them
Maybe someone could offer sustenance
The discretion in his voice should baffle them
Perhaps someone should give him company
Because his heart is still buoyant

He's dangling between the arms of an imaginary clock -
Clamoring to go back in time, forward in time, any time but this time
They ignore the human need like wall weeds, doing nothing
He's no longer doing time, time annihilates & devours
Hours are prolonged
How much life can they pack into 6x8 ft

The air is stale, his eyes watching memories in the dark
Dreamscapes where he can visit a different time
A time when he was more than this.
Time with balance, time with light, time with Breanna

Strength is out there beyond the locks.
Love is out there beyond the barbed wire
His thoughts on laughter, childhood, on stability -
On Freedom...

Just beyond his grasp



**WHAT SOLITARY
DOES TO
MIND &
BODY**



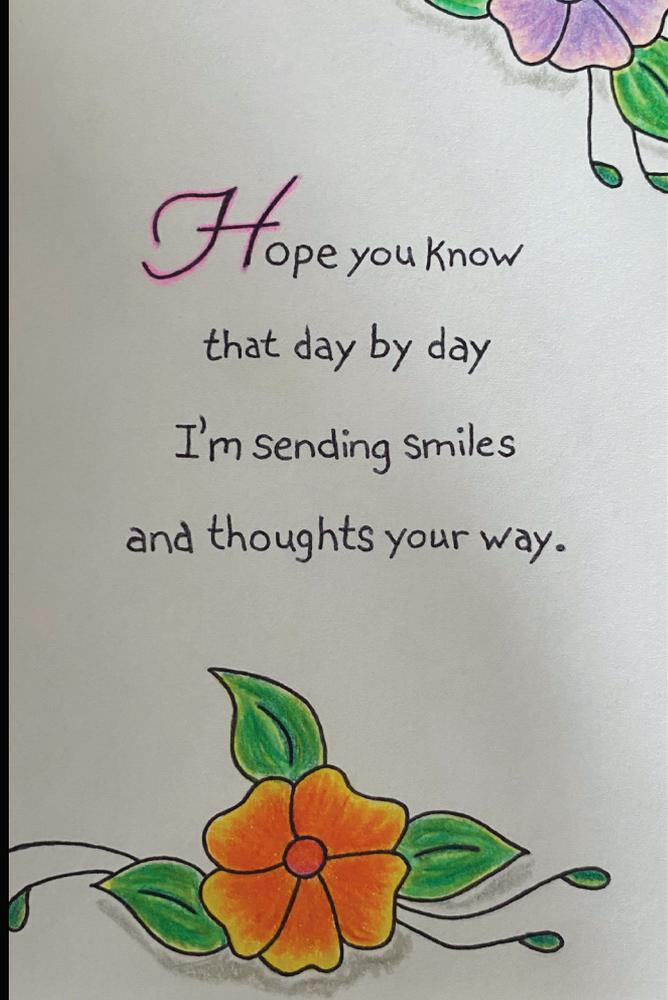
Creating and maintaining free world connections is often therapeutic for people in solitary.

Chronic Headaches

Eyesight
Deterioration

Digestive Problems

Dizziness



A greeting card from **Daniel Henry, Silenced Contributor and Open MI Door Inside Steering team** lead member who's lived in solitary for 13 years.

Excessive Sweating	Loss of Appetite	Sleep Problems
Fatigue and Lethargy	Muscle and Joint Pain	Trembling Hands
Heart Palpitations	Hypersensitivity to Light and Noise	Weight Loss
Genitourinary Problems		

Morris Weatherspoon # 471817

Mon, Aug 31st, 2020

10112 correctional facility

1576 W. Bluewater Hwy

10112, Michigan 48846

Dear afsc

In response to Aug. 2020 Mi-cure news I want to share my story of repeat solitary confinement continuing since 9/16/12, see Weatherspoon v. Thibault, case # 214 cv 108 trial 000186 - 000254, ecf # 176, ecf # 168 and ecf # 154, at these times it is charted, noted, and expressly noted/ documented that I am chronic problem nos psychosis, nos personality, and cognitive disorder during these periods of solitary confinement, see Weatherspoon v. George, case # 214 cv 12789, doc # 142 pg 1d 979. In addition, see Weatherspoon v. Choi, case # 114-cv-707 ecf # 165 pg 1d 1111-1144 (file # 01301901 MTR); Report and Recommendation of Hon. ESC on 7/12/17 is to support the MDOC knew and ignored the risk of harm and known pain, suffering, PTSD, fraud, and mental distress and neurological disorder. I am over 2 years pass the (per) of 5/23/18, and with Covid-19 threat and disability both mental and physical (unspecified schizophrenia, psychosis and Rheumatoid arthritis). My name is Morris Weatherspoon I request be provided the Statement of Principles and learn more about the Open Mi Door campaign. I can prove and show that I have been repeatedly confined to solitary confinement/ad seg more than I have in the MDOC general population, and exposed to sexual harassment and denied dental treatments etc during these ad seg periods. Thibault, case # 214 cv 108, ecf # 176

You have permission to share this continuing and ongoing injury to educate the public and community,

I am most passionate about justice, I enjoy golfing, basketball, football, baseball, swimming, hunting, and fishing and weight lifting when I was younger and in the community. I enjoy reading newspapers, criminal defense newsletter, Lawyer Weekly, Time, playboy, and current court ruling in civil and criminal cases. Other activities are cooking, barbeque, sled, and spending time with my children and girlfriends at the park, etc.

I dream of ~~seeing~~ justice and the prison official, public officials and court officials be prosecuted for the discrimination, misuse and abuse of public funding and the pain, suffering and trauma and side effects of Zyprexa (Risperdal, Amantadine, Benzotropime, Diphenhydramine)

I dream of commutation and pardon and or release from the MDOC and complete parole just like the "juvenile lifer" prisoners that are released back into the community and to be with their family and friends. In addition, I dream of now that I should be released and as an alternative to the MDOC programs I be allowed and permitted to complete a program in the community because the parole board keep changing program requirements such as VPP and change to Batterers Intervention and prior Bridges program, is false imprisonment to the MDOC because treating psychiatrist etc diagnose and involuntary panel order diagnosis currently as unspecified schizophrenia; psychosis thus I don't meet the criteria's if developmentally and intellectually disabled with weak immune Rheumatoid arthritis?

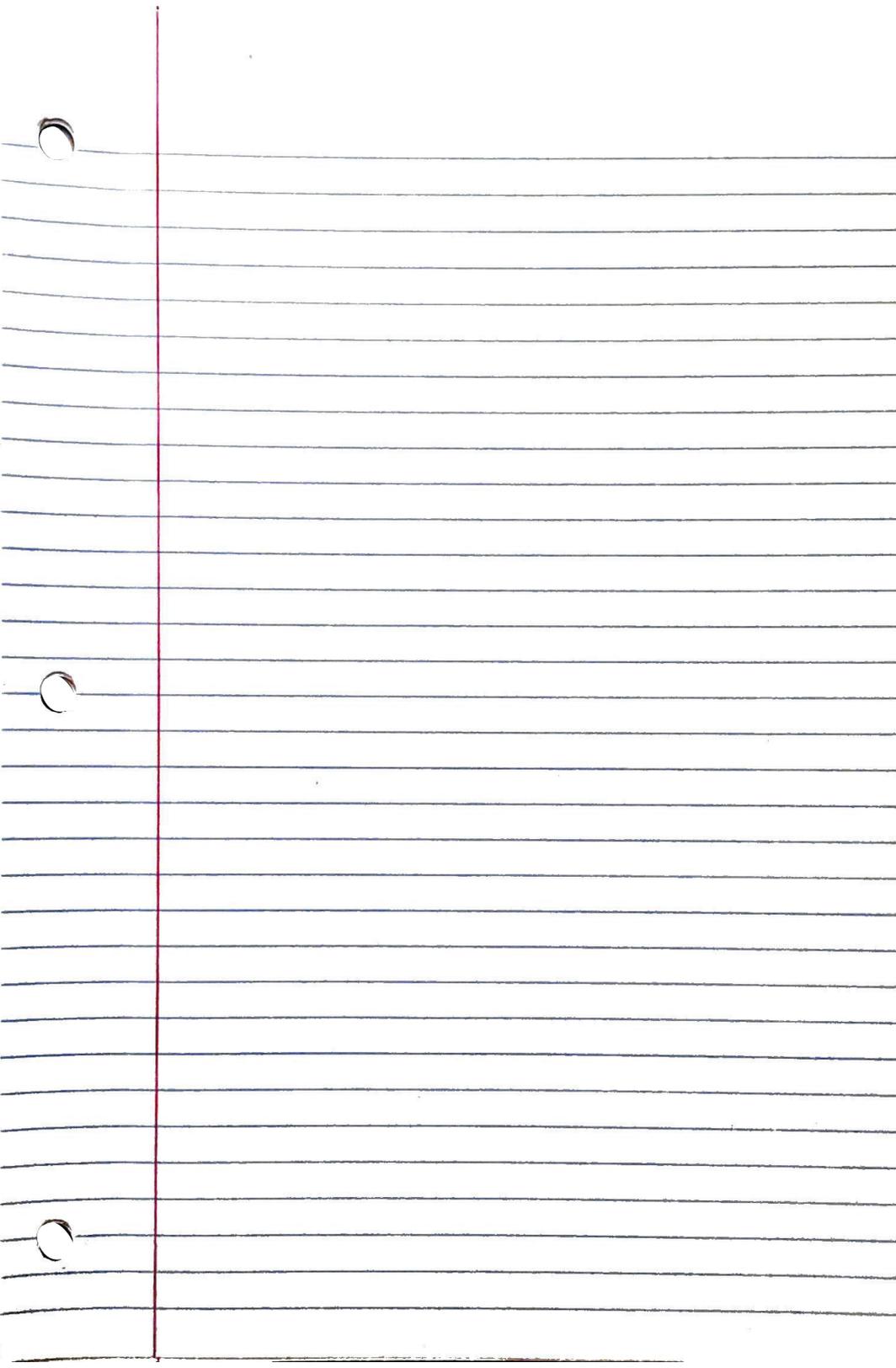
Any question and concern let me know!
Date: 8/31/20

2.

Black Lives Matter, cc
Morris Weatherspoon

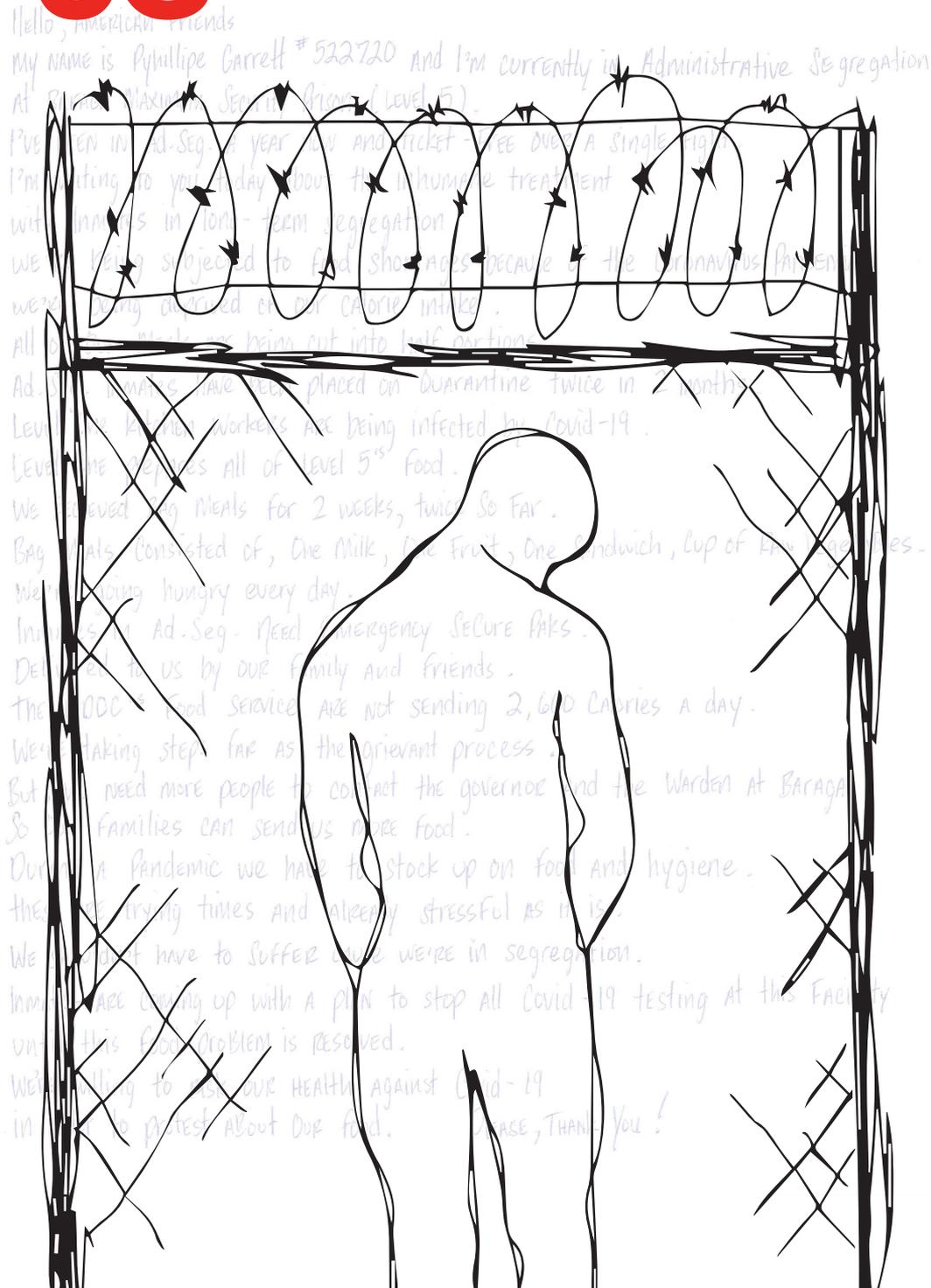
Reflections on the Systemic Oppression

As you read through this zine, notice the feelings in your body. When you think about solitary confinement, the inability to move beyond a few feet, does your breath get short, do your limbs tense up? Your body has a story to tell, what is it saying now?



03

HUMAN COSTS OF CONDITIONS



"In solitary, one can hear the madness coming from the throats of men who cannot take it any more, frustrated souls from behind the bars of each cell, rasping rackets from the walls, the hollow vibrations from sink and toilet combined into one. Our iron beds are bolted to the floor. Lights are never turned off. These things take on frightening significance. They result in loss of appetite, insomnia, irritability, emotional withdrawal, depression, paranoid ideation and easily provoked anger, which may escalate into 'acting out.'"

8/30/2020

My name is Andraus McCloud and I recently came across your article in the August 2020 MI-CURE publication. I immediately stopped everything I was doing in order to support your new campaign to address solitary confinement.

In closing you asked anyone to share their story so that you can share our stories with our communities. Recently I was published (an article) in a newsletter put together by The Made Institute. I'm not sure if you know about this organization but they might have the lowest... or one of the lowest recidivism rates in Michigan... at 3%. I'm good friends with the co-founder, Leon El-Alamin. You may find my article @ www.madeinstitute.org

My story may be a little different but I'll address the issue at hand first. There is no secret that people of color and minorities are disproportionately subject to incarceration. African Americans account for less than 14% of the general population... yet we make up the majority of the prison population. So its no surprise that our same people is disproportionately subject to solitary confinement.

I'm currently at Alger Correctional Institution on the Upper Peninsula where all a effort is being made that someone verbally threaten

Credits: I Am Buried Alive in a Michigan Prison by Lacio Hamilton who spent 9 years straight in solitary. He was exonerated after 26 years in prison. The op-ed was published on TruthOut in 2018.



**HOW TO
GET
TO
SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT**

Artwork by
James Fuson, "Suffocating"

Yelling

Disobeying a
direct order

Cursing

Arguing



Fighting	Filing grievances	Requesting protection
Peaceful protest	Standing up for vulnerable people in prison	Filing prison rape elimination act complaints
Refusing Meals	Too much medication or food	Too many alcohol swabs, toilet paper, toiletries
Asking to speak to a superior officer		

There are dozens of ways to hide the brutal practice of locking people away in concrete cages for years. One of them is changing the name of their cage.

OBSERVATION

THE HOLE

THE TOMBS

THE BOX

THE SWEATBOX

Y

Z

A

X

B

**SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT**

SEGREGATION

ISOLATION

**SPECIAL
HOUSING UNIT**

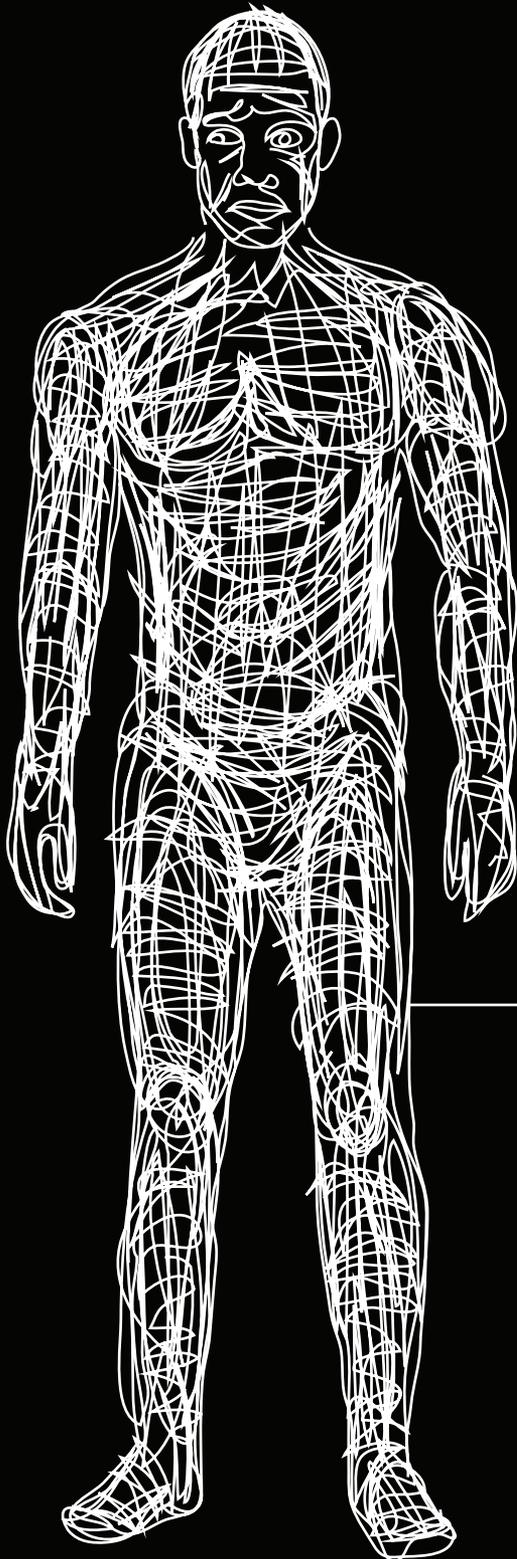
CONTROL UNIT

LEVEL V

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TH

Getting into solitary is one thing,
being released is another. Then,
of course, you must survive it.



Greater than 6 Months

Greater than 1 Year &

Greater than 2 Years

Greater than 5 Years

Greater than 10 Years

Misleading data the **Michigan Department of Corrections** provided to reporters investigating solitary confinement

& Less than or Equal to 1 Year	9
Less than or Equal to 2 Years	1
& Less than or Equal to 5 Years	0
& Less than or Equal to 10 Years	0
& Less than or Equal to 20 Years	0

ADMINISTRATIVE SEGREGATION

Departments of Corrections use semantics to hide people isolated for decades. When questioned by an investigative reporter this year about extreme solitary stays, the Official Michigan DOC spokesperson Chris Gautz provided this “chart from a report” and the following quote:

As of February of this year, there was one prisoner who has been in [administrative segregation] for more than one year, but less than two, out of 32,000 prisoners,” Gautz said.

When the reporter came back with far more names, he stopped speaker to her and referred her to the Freedom of Information Act if she had more questions.





Artwork by
Martin Vargas, "Solitary"

9/24/20

My name is Andrew MacLachlan. I am 27 years old, and as of right now, ~~am~~ classified to Administrative Segregation or otherwise referred to as "Solitary Confinement." I have been incarcerated since I was 18 years old. I am from a family whos background isn't familiar with "prison or jail" at all; which kind of makes me the blacksheep or the odd one out. However ~~over~~ the years I have used these experiances and life lessons as motivation to be a better and more successful citizen of the community once I return, which now is ~~about~~ only 2 years away. I am a high school graduate from Heritage High School in Saginaw, MI. I once looked down on ex convicts and inmates, but after being through the system and humbling experiances, I am not ashamed to admit that I am an ex con myself. I wanted to write this letter to show others that there are so many good, ~~the~~ intelligent, creative and hardworking individuals in the system that are capable of so many positive things in their communities. However the system and the Department of Corrections makes it so difficult on these brothers and ~~the~~ sisters to do the educational opportunities they need to do upon release and get the help and care that they need. I currently am in Oaks Correctional Facility in Manistee, MI after receiving a class 1 misconduct for "incite to riot." My story, or part in this incident was not to be malicious or destructive or insubordinate by any means. I was participating in a peaceful protest by asking the staff and shift command to get the answers from the warden or administration as to why they are moving individuals from a positive covid 19 unit to our unit who's inmates had no cases yet. At least ~~resolving~~ ^{resolving} us to why they are moving them with out being properly tested first. I myself have been a chronic care asthma patient for several years now, and recently went to the hospital in May for upper respiratory problems. This made me high risk and I couldn't afford to catch the covid 19 virus. After peacefully refusing to leave the hallways till we could get proper answers to our questions, the administration and staff gassed and pepper sprayed inmates and used excessive force on some as well. In result they rode some of us out from Muskegon that night on an emergency ride out to Oaks Correctional Facility. As of today Muskegon has the highest covid 19 case rate in the state of Michigan (DOC). This has been the most difficult time for me in my whole prison term. I am in a room with nothing but a desk and a toilet for 24 hours a day. No interaction with inmates other than through a door or talking through an AC plug in the wall. It is also so stressful and difficult to maintain healthy ~~the~~ relationships with your family and loved ones. They as well as yourself are the ones who suffer with not know whats going on with their family member either. Several times my mother had called the facility to ask if she could get information as to whats going on, and they continued to state that "they didn't know." The staff only lets you use the phone or other privlages when they feel like it. The treatment is totally ridiculous and it just gets more stressful and more difficult to handle everyday. ~~the~~ I'm finally approaching my chronic care doctors check up, or else all my medical issues would also be ignored or neglected. Its like you are treated less than ~~the~~ human. There is no respect or empathy given towards an individual in Administrative Segregation. I feel even worse for the inmates with psych issues because even the psych related doctors dont make their routine rounds in

"Ad seg" sometimes. I also can observe the long term effects that "solitary confinement" has on individuals just by listening to them. I believe helping someone consists of programming and learning. Not ~~continuous~~ continuous or consistent punishment and neglect. I believe positivity should be implemented more in the administrative segregation practices. Not just telling a person "do 6 months" or "do 12 months" in a room by yourself and then they ~~will~~ will consider letting you back out to the same thing... It's still prison! This dis communication causes only further relationship and communication related problems amongst inmates again. To me it is not only unjust, but it is more importantly unhealthy to inmates.

As my ERO (earliest release date) approaches in less than a year, I want to remain ticket free and continue doing all the positive things I was doing before I was placed in 'Ad Seg.' I want to participate in more programming like I have in the past and remain focused. I want to become fully involved in prison reform, and I want to be a voice and bring ~~awareness~~ awareness to the outside world of what brothers and sisters, moms and dads, and friends and loved ones have to deal with or go through in our struggles to make it to freedom. I always like to remind myself with the quote "without struggles, there would be no progress." I will continue to participate in educating the ones who are not educated with this corrupt side of the system, in hopes that one day things will change for the better and most importantly, benefit our fellow brothers and sisters who will one day return to the community. My heart goes out to all who are behind bars, the wall, or in the hallways, and the ones who gives us a chance and listen.

Best Regards,

Andrew G. MacLachlan # 844 474

A Careless whisper in a dark room.
An undertone of voices carried throughout
a lightless cell.

The mumbling drones on.

But the whisper, "Come back" it says

Hearing the voices, the screams.

I still feel so alone.

How is that possible?

Shoulder to shoulder, Not seeing any faces.
Just their distorted voices as they
utter their displeasure and pain.

Reverberating their discouragement in this
abyss.

But the whisper, its steady, tangible.

"Come back" it repeats.

Host in this dismal depressing place.

All but a foot placed upon my head to
assist in my descent.

But the whisper, "Stay calm, focus,
relax, don't give up.

The whisper is needed.

The constant monotony of the screaming
scratching at my eardrums is overwhelming

But the whisper is right, is reason.

Justin J Gibson

Justin Gibson served the first 18 months of his life sentence in a solitary cell in a juvenile facility. He was 15 years old, and was not allowed any clothing for a year except two pairs of underwear.

date 8/18/2020

DEAR Jacq Williams
I read what you wrote and you gave Me Hope
because As I write this letter To you
I'm In Solitary Confinement. I have This
Mental Health Condition of (PTSD) and Some
other Stuff Not too long ago I got gased
with chemical agents over My Mental health
Condition because i hear Voices and see deamons
and they gased Me and they NEVER let the unit
Porters clean My cell when and after I got
gased. I got gased on 8/6/2020 They were Taking
My Showers I finly got Cleaned on 8/17/2020 It
was clear Vilation of the Civil Service Commission Rules
and The Facility P.D. and P.P. 03.03.130/ Inhumane Treatment.
I was wondering IF You Could Help Me get The Specific Footage
From the office of Legal affairs and the Post auditor
of Freedom of INFO act I put All My grievance In
So we I got The Footage Then I can start My 183 Date.
Wood do a wonder IF you Could Help. It was between 4:00 PM to like
8:00 PM

TOMMY JULIAN
#618469

And yes you CAN share
with other

30000

PEOPLE

1000

DEGREES IN SUMMER

30

DEGREES IN WINTER

23

HOURS IN CELL

**MINUTES ON THE PHONE
PER MONTH**

15

HOURS OUTSIDE PER WEEK

5

SHOWERS PER WEEK

3

SCANT FOOD TRAYS PER DAY

3

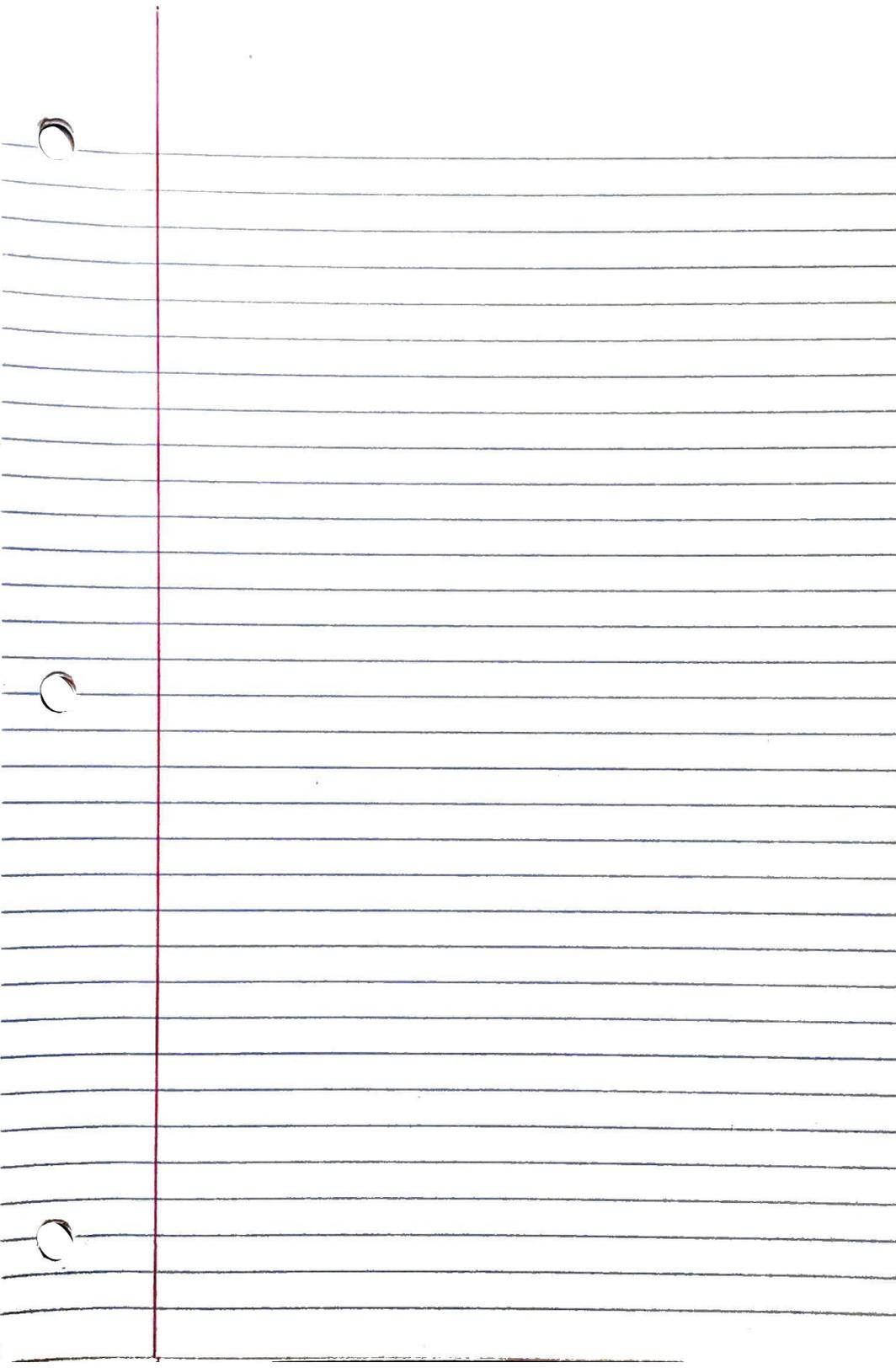


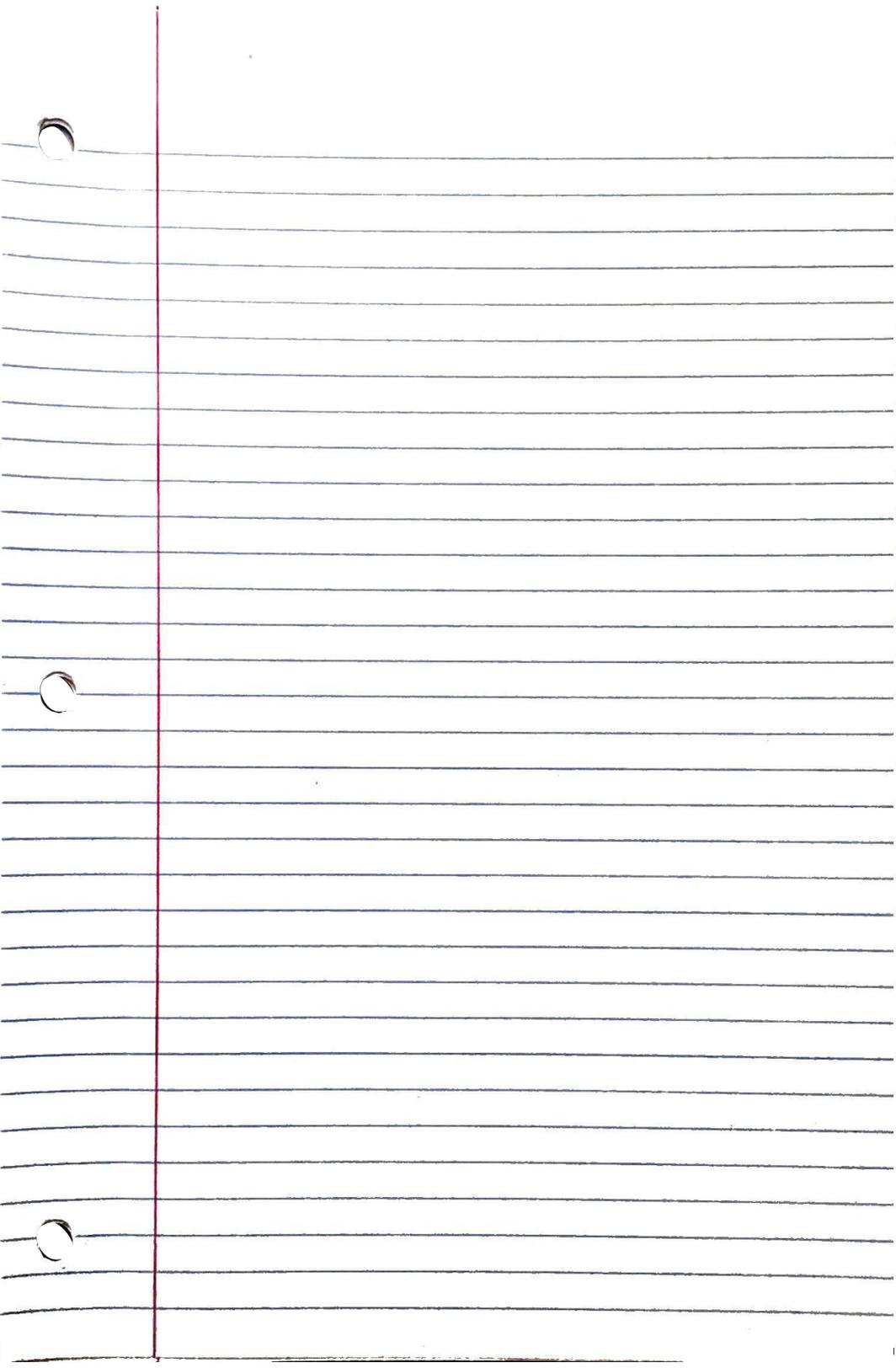


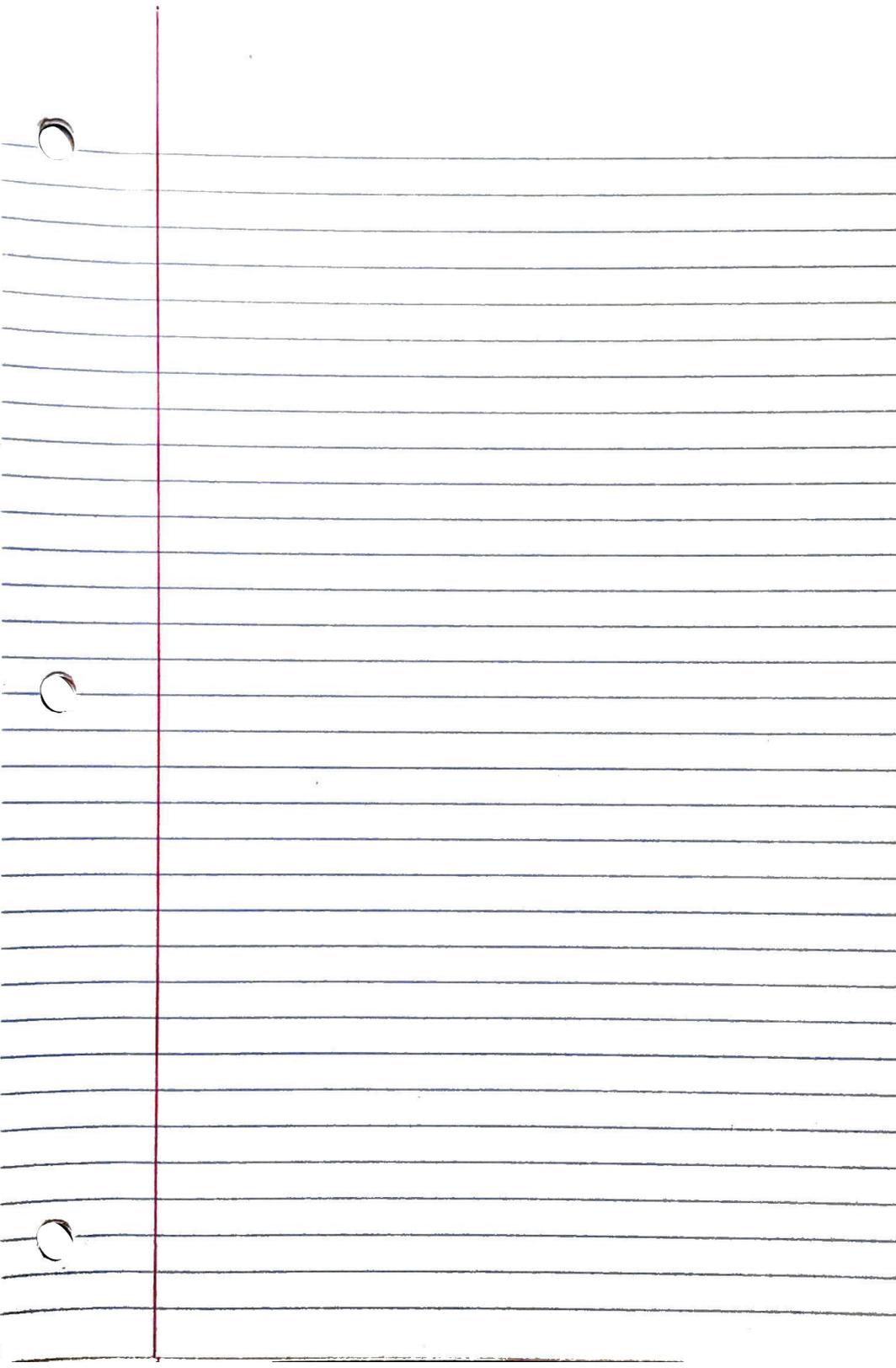
Artwork by
DaJuan Ainsworth, "Playing for Freedom"

Reflections on the Human Costs of Conditions

Whether or not you identify as part of a group that's been affected by state oppression, enslavement, incarceration, or exploitation--we're all affected by it in some way. How do you think this shows up in your everyday life? What words could you put to it?



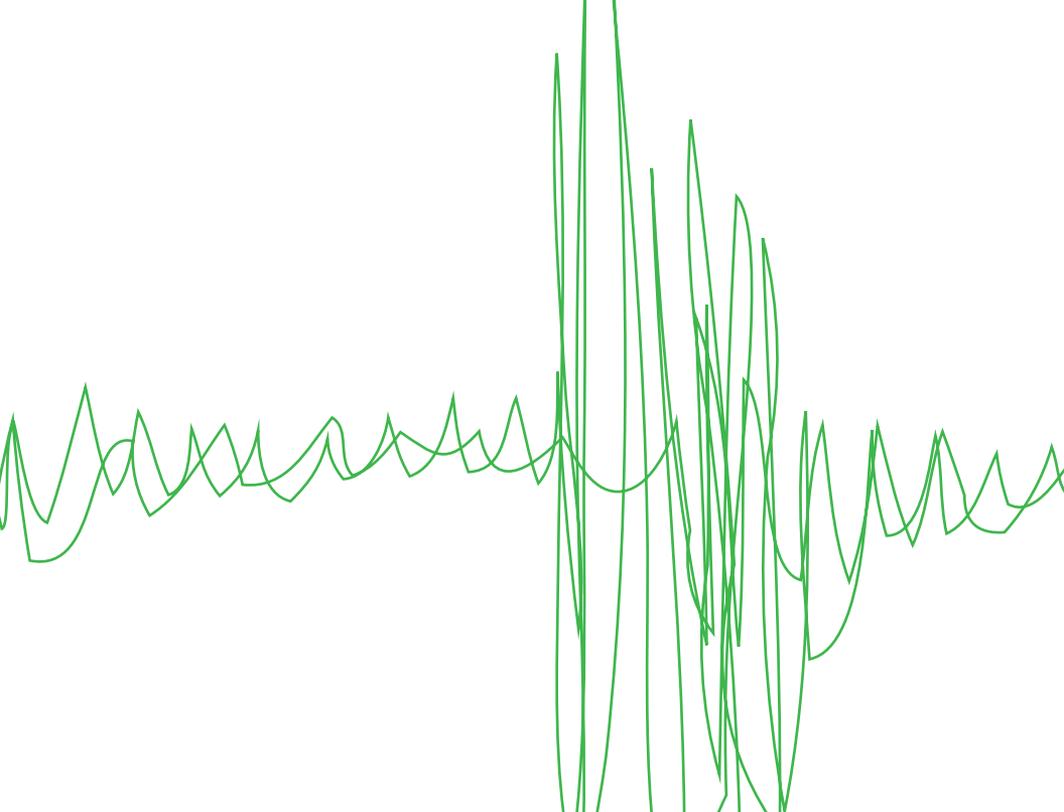




04

RESISTANCE AND ACTIVATION





“We Demand an end to the segregation of prisoners from the mainline population because of their political beliefs. Some of the men in segregation units are confined there solely for political reasons and their segregation from other inmates is indefinite.”

Credits:

Manifesto of Demands from The Attica Prison Uprising.

50 years ago on September 9, 1971, people incarcerated in abhorrent conditions in Attica Correctional Facility in Attica, New York took control of the prison to demand humane treatment. 43 people were killed, nearly all at the hands of guards and the police.

8/29/20

HELLO,

We stand in solidarity with political prisoners, and prisoners whose punishments have endured so long they are inherently political

Assata Shakur

Russell Maroon Sho

Nelson Mandela

Mumia Abu-Jamal

Sundiata Acoli

Rutikanga Akesi

Money Mont

Money Mont has been in solitary confinement for 35 years. He is a prolific writer and a shepherd to young men inside. Mont is 67 years old, but known for his incredible strength of will and body. In the yard cage, he walks on his hands.

As long as you will them, in later. And to weak your soul mortal. To die b

My NAME IS... AND I HAVE BEEN IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR SEVERAL YEARS. THE BEST PER DAY FOR THE... RUSSELL MAROON SHO... NELSON MANDELA... MUMIA ABU-JAMAL... SUNDIATA ACOLI... RUTIKANGA AKESI... MONEY MONT... I AM CURRENTLY... DIFFICULT TO GET... DUE TO THE AUTHOR... TO RECOMMEND STE... TO GET THE STG DESIGNATION... THE STG COORDINATOR USES WHATEVER... TO FOR DENIAL. NO EVIDENCE NEEDED, BELIEVE. FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON... REDUCE OR REMOVE THE STG DESIGNATION... CHECK THE STATISTICS.

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF STG DESIGNATIONS. STG-I ALLOWS 2-HOURS OF OUTSIDE ACTIVITY PER DAY AND AN IN-CELL ACTIVITY PER DAY. STG-II ONLY ALLOWS 1-HOUR OF OUTSIDE ACTIVITY PER DAY AND AN IN-CELL ACTIVITY PER DAY. VISITS WHICH ARE ONLY TWO A MONTH FOR ONE HOUR. THE STG DESIGNATION LIMITS YOUR PHONE CALLS TO 5 PER WEEK, YOUR

... TO GET TO SCHOOL... GET A JOB, AND... PAK. I'M CURRENTLY... LIKE A PRISONER... DIFFICULT TO GET... DUE TO THE AUTHOR... TO RECOMMEND STE... TO GET THE STG DESIGNATION... THE STG COORDINATOR USES WHATEVER... TO FOR DENIAL. NO EVIDENCE NEEDED, BELIEVE. FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON... REDUCE OR REMOVE THE STG DESIGNATION... CHECK THE STATISTICS.

	<p>Bill Dunne</p>
<p>atz</p>	<p>Leonard Peltier</p>
	<p>Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald</p>
	<p>Mutululu Shakur</p>
	<p>Rev. Joy Powell</p>
	<p>Red Fawn Fallis</p>
	<p>Kamau Sadiki</p>

ng as you do not give in to them,
 always find ways to beat
 one way or another, sooner or
 and even if they do find ways
 en or kill your mind and body,
 should be impenetrable and im-
 but your mission should be: not
 ut to multiply.



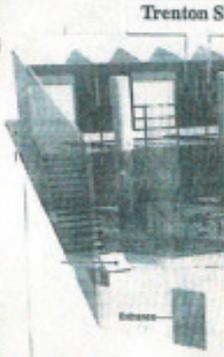
**BELL
BEA**

**TY
R
A
N
N
Y**

OR IT COULD BE SATURDAY OR SUNDAY...

OR IT COULD BE THURSDAY OR FRIDAY...

NOT THAT IT MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE, BUT I'M GOING TO SAY IT'S MONDAY!



"no touch" torture?

Ojore Lutalo
Former Political Prisoner
Bonnie Kerness
AFSC Prison Watch Coordinator

prison's general population to an extraordinary level

**BEHIND
ENEMY
LINES**

This collage by Lutalo and other art related to solitary confinement is on display at the **Broad Museum at Michigan State University** from **September 4th, 2021 to Jan 30th, 2022.**

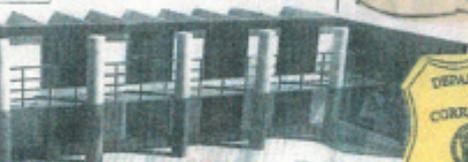
LY of the ST

IT COULD BE
TUESDAY OR
WEDNESDAY...

IT'S HARD TO SAY...
EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK
IS THE SAME ON THIS
LITTLE ISLAND...

Management Control Unit (MCU)
State Prison, Trenton New Jersey

WHAT DAY
OF THE WEEK
IS THIS?



Cage

Political

Telephones
Inmates are permitted to place two
15-minute collect calls per day

Hard Times

Experiments

PIG
Bath One officer
watched from behind of cage

CULTURE OF EXTREMES: ISOLATE

Management Control Unit NEW JERSEY STATE PRISON

This unit isolates activists and leaders from the
prison, as it attempts to reshape their convictions by subjecting them
to a regimen of physical control and sensory deprivation.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES

New Jersey Department of Corrections
LUTALO, OJORE



INMATE



0000901548

SB# 0000901548

DOB - 08/06/1945

Height - 5'11" Weight - 182

IN# 59860



8-22-20

AFSC Jacq Williams I was reading MI-Cure News August 20. This is a prisoner [REDACTED]

at the Ionia Maximum Corr facility / Icf. I used a friends Stamped

Envelope a prisoner [REDACTED]

We are both in the Start program at Icf and we are both Confined More then 20 Hours per day and are in cells. We both have psychiatric Mental Health problems Very bad.

I have a Bipolar Disorder and it is a stage one. I have been Confined to a cell since December 2018. I have talked to the Chief psychologist

Maranka and A.D.W Traylor to let me on the B Wing upper in the

Icf 3 unit Start program and they just keep me on the side that is just like Segregation. We only get 5 yards a week and on Saturday OR

Sunday we can use the JPay Machine once a week. We only get 5 showers a week and have to

go to Group once a week to talk to a psychologist. I have all

done alot of time in the past in

long term Segregation in the past. I

8-22-20

Can feel the damage being done to me just about every day, this December will be 2 years in confinement coming out my cell with handcuffs on. The Start Program was ~~not~~ stop confinement for psychiatric prisoners and get us back in General Population and at Icf Start Program on A wing and B wing lower we are still confined to hour cells more than 20 hours a day, please Respond back to this letter and if you can I would like to file a Law Suite on the M.D.O.C for Keeping me in lock down for so long with Major Mental Health problems, I'm also on years worth of Sanctions which is loss of privileges and stops me from going to yard, per M.D.O.C Rule I can get a 7 day yard break every 30 days and that is it, On the Law Suite if you can file it for me, that would be the best thing that happened to me.

Thank you for your
time



Artwork by
Theodora Moss, "Warrior on Black"

INSIDE RESISTANCE

INCLUDES

Hunger strikes	Petitions
Coordinated grievances	Refusal to lock
Inside/outside organizing	Political study
Individual training	Holding food slots
Flooding cells	Workgroups
Group advocacy	Lawsuits
Demonstrations	Creating book lists
Sharing resources	Intentional silence
Full rebellion	

The Beauty is ...
They can't put my mind
in a box.



Jodi “Ladi Da” Hill is an artist, educator, and organizer for trans rights. She is serving a life sentence on a wrongful conviction, and has been incarcerated in a man’s prison for 18 years, five of those in solitary confinement.

"I am fighting a system that
refuses to acknowledge
my existence."



9 SOLIDARITY COMMITMENTS

TO/WITH

INCARCERATED PEOPLE FOR 2021

1. LEARN SOME BASICS ABOUT INCARCERATION AND CRIMINALIZATION.
2. WRITE AT LEAST 6 LETTERS TO AN INCARCERATED PERSON IN 2021.
3. MAKE AT LEAST 4 DONATIONS (OF ANY AMOUNT) TO INCARCERATED PEOPLES' COMMISSARY ACCOUNTS IN 2021.
4. JOIN AT LEAST 4 PHONE ZAPS FOR IMPROVED CONDITIONS INSIDE OR FOR INDIVIDUAL PRISONERS IN 2021.
5. SEND 4 BOOKS TO INCARCERATED PEOPLE IN 2021.
6. DONATE TO AT LEAST 1 BAIL FUND IN 2021.
7. VISIT AN INCARCERATED PERSON AT LEAST ONCE IN 2021.
8. READ 2 BOOKS ABOUT CRIMINALIZATION IN 2021.
9. MAKE A MONTHLY CALL OR SEND A MONTHLY EMAIL TO YOUR GOVERNOR DEMANDING MASS RELEASE OF INCARCERATED PEOPLE THROUGH CLEMENCY.



Arkansas	decarceratear.org
Connecticut	stopsolitaryct.org
District of Columbia	dcjusticelab.org
Georgia	schr.org
Louisiana	lastopsolitary.org
Massachusetts	umassaction.org/end-solitary
Michigan	openmidoor.org
Nebraska	aclunbraska.org
Nevada	aclunv.org
New Jersey	njpjw.org
New Mexico	aclu-nm.org
New York	nycaic.org
North Carolina	disabilityrightsn.org/ current-campaigns/help-stop-torture
Pennsylvania	pacaic.org
Rhode Island	closehighside.com
Virginia	interfaithactionhr.org/ virginia_isolation
Washington	aclu-wa.org

**SOLITARY CONFINEMENT
UNLOCK THE BOX)**

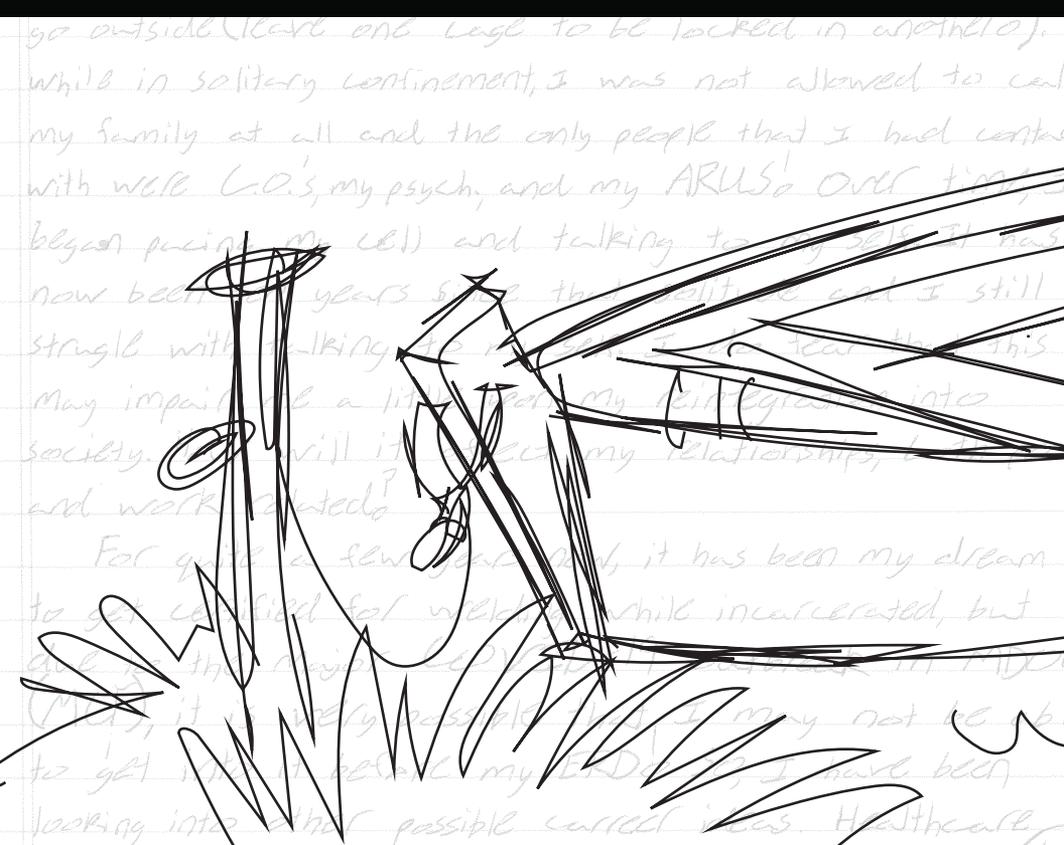
**END
BY**

TO

**CAMPAIGNS WORKING
(SUPPORTED**

I'M SICK

The head, I know it, and I'm
holding on the best I can.
All I know is I will not
A crime, but I am like a ship, in
dark, with no where to go, but I
felt like that all my life, when
got out of the county jail -
can not constrict, I have a
sensory deprivation - I do not
know how to have meaningful
contact - I know I am permanently
damaged, but don't know how
to fix it, or if it can be fixed.



in
m
do
The
I
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I
T
HUMAN
NT
I To
I

it may concern, MY name is sebastian Knidler 851771
e Recent micure about possibly publication of my
a Dreams BY Prison And After ~~the~~ PRISON, I give
sion, TO Publish it all in the next micure, I want
t difference Analyst M.D.O.C. inmates. I just ask
ing. Keep my last name And M.D.O.C. # ANONYMOUS.

reads micure. MY name is sebastian just like many
en And women that reads micure am incarcerated.

wasnt All cupcakes and Rainbows. But I still Am A
"People from prison return to us.
We must love and support each other."
city at all. Im from a really small town that 95% of
Gene W., writes while on parole after
serving a long time in isolation. He
describes to us unending loneliness, and
later, his search for a winter coat.

micure was asking for publications of inmates
PRISON TO PRISON, MY DAY TO MY LIFE
I had to my strictions. I was a family
the
the
trapping, music, AND spending time with
and passion in helping those that need
someone was feeling down and depressed
my priority was that
then someone
Thats someone to talk to, I took great pride and enjoyment in
helping that person with whatever it was they was going through
at that time. I didnt care what your background was, Gender
Race, Rich or poor, Sexual preference. I didnt care if I knew that
person or not. You could be a damn stranger, and if I picked
up the phone/seeing they needed someone to talk I was there
Iv made it MY main priority since a young age to make
a difference in someones life and prevent as much suicides

An invaluable part of our communities before their incarceration, during, and after they return.

Michael Mullins

SOCO

Nicholas James Spencer

Paul Gross

Quincy Howard

Roummel Ingram

R. Collins

Reynold Hankemeier

Shane Stee

Shenan McFarland

Thomas A.

TOMMY JULIAN

TUNE URAZ

Victor Rindsey



Mamey Almont

Morris Weatherspoon

Rutikanga Akesi

Paul D. Richardson

Rufus Chmar Devin Spearman

Pyhillipe Garrett

Sebastian P. Pablos

Mr. Butts

Mr. David L. Hibbs

STEVEN WILSON

Frank Gaudette

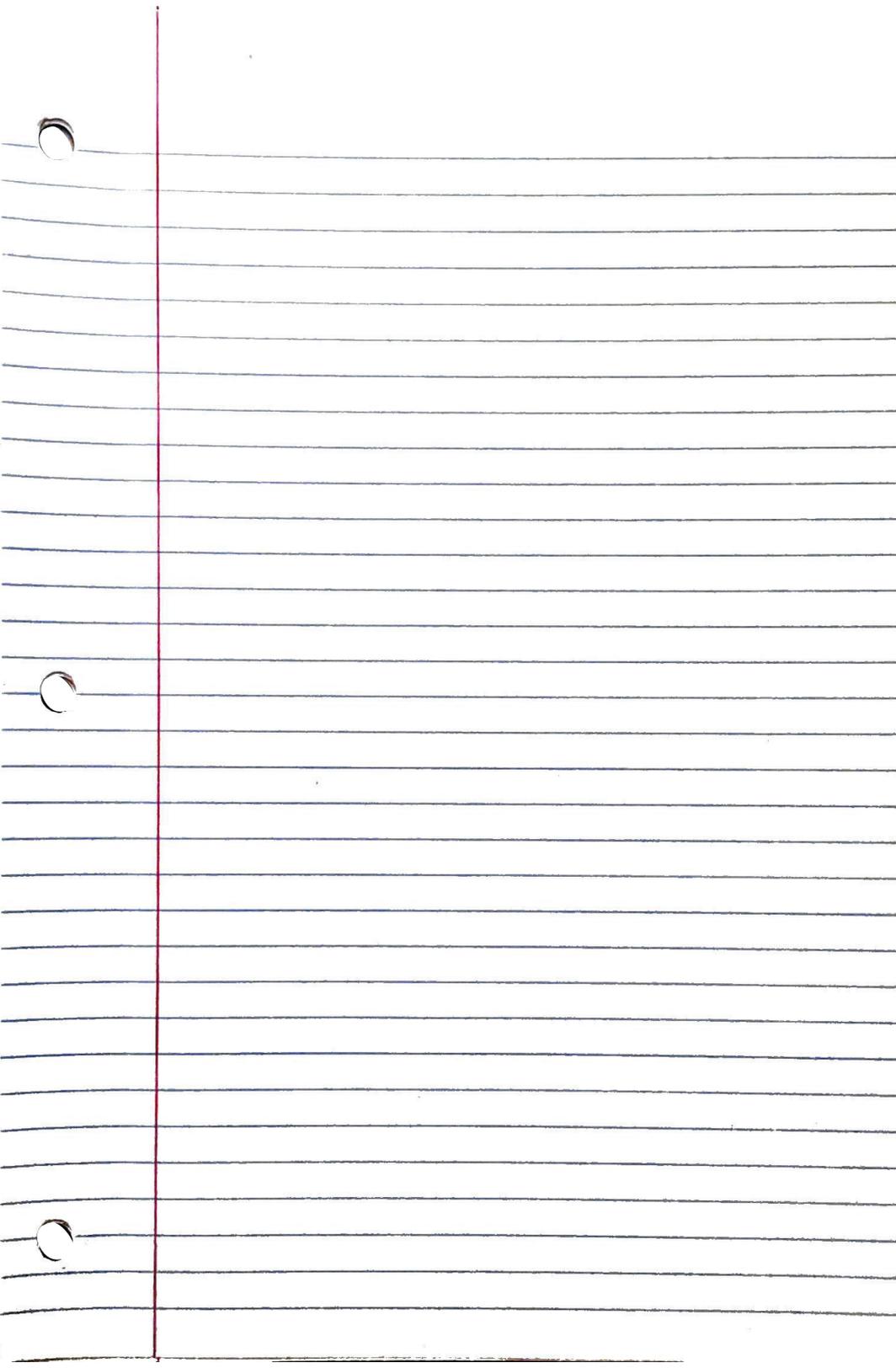
TRINIDAD PAREDES JR.

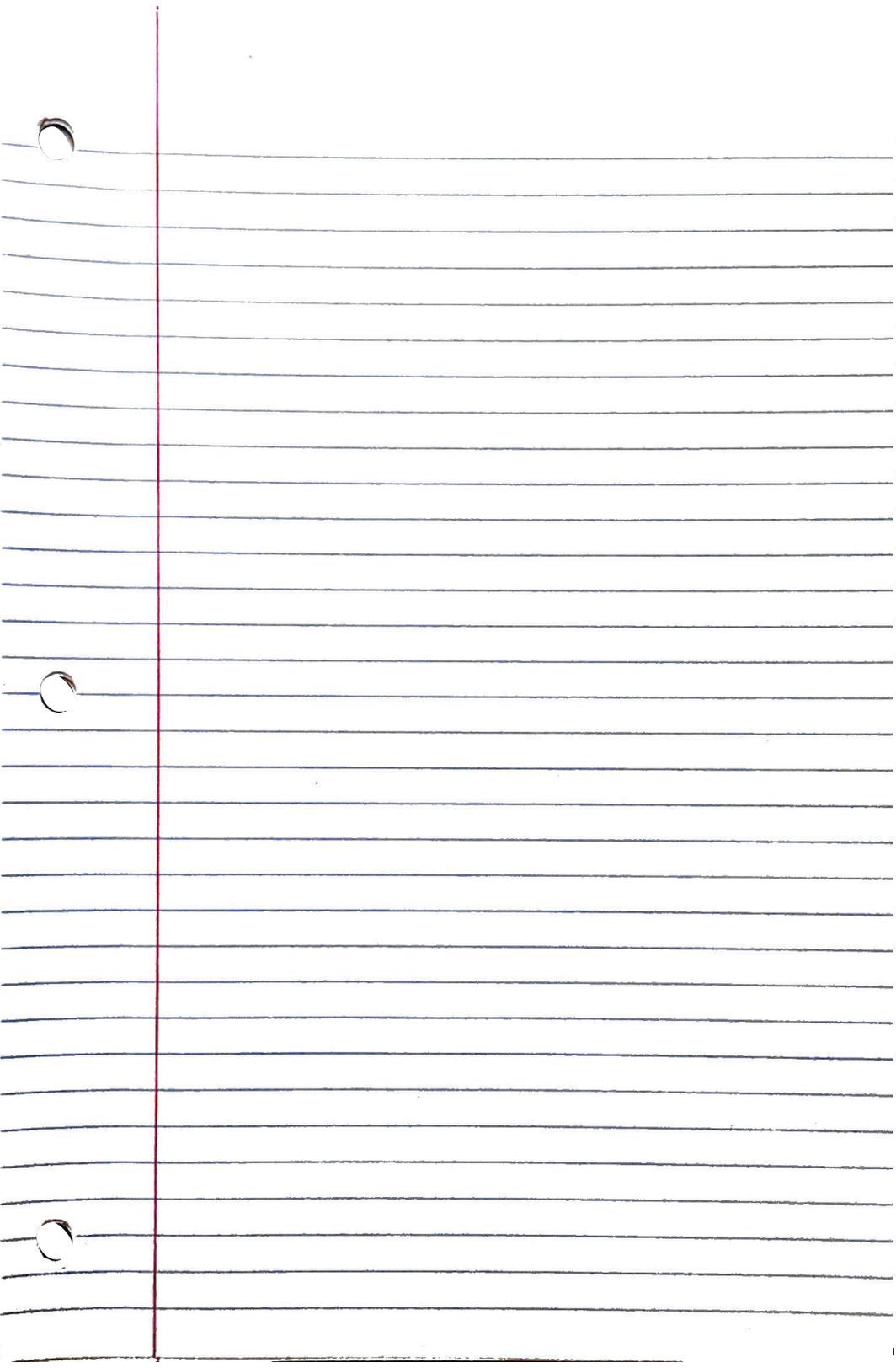
D. Sanders

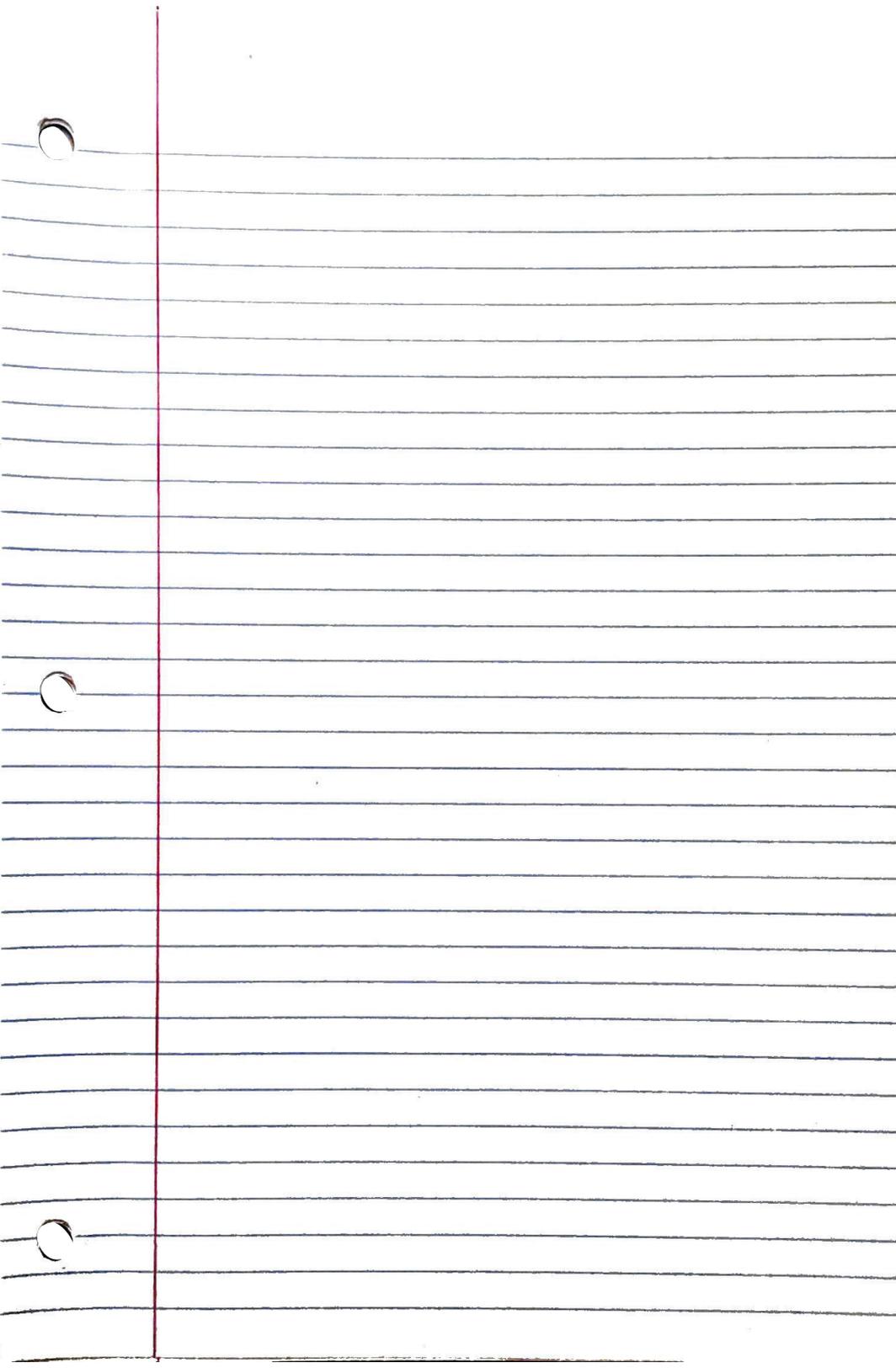
Zach

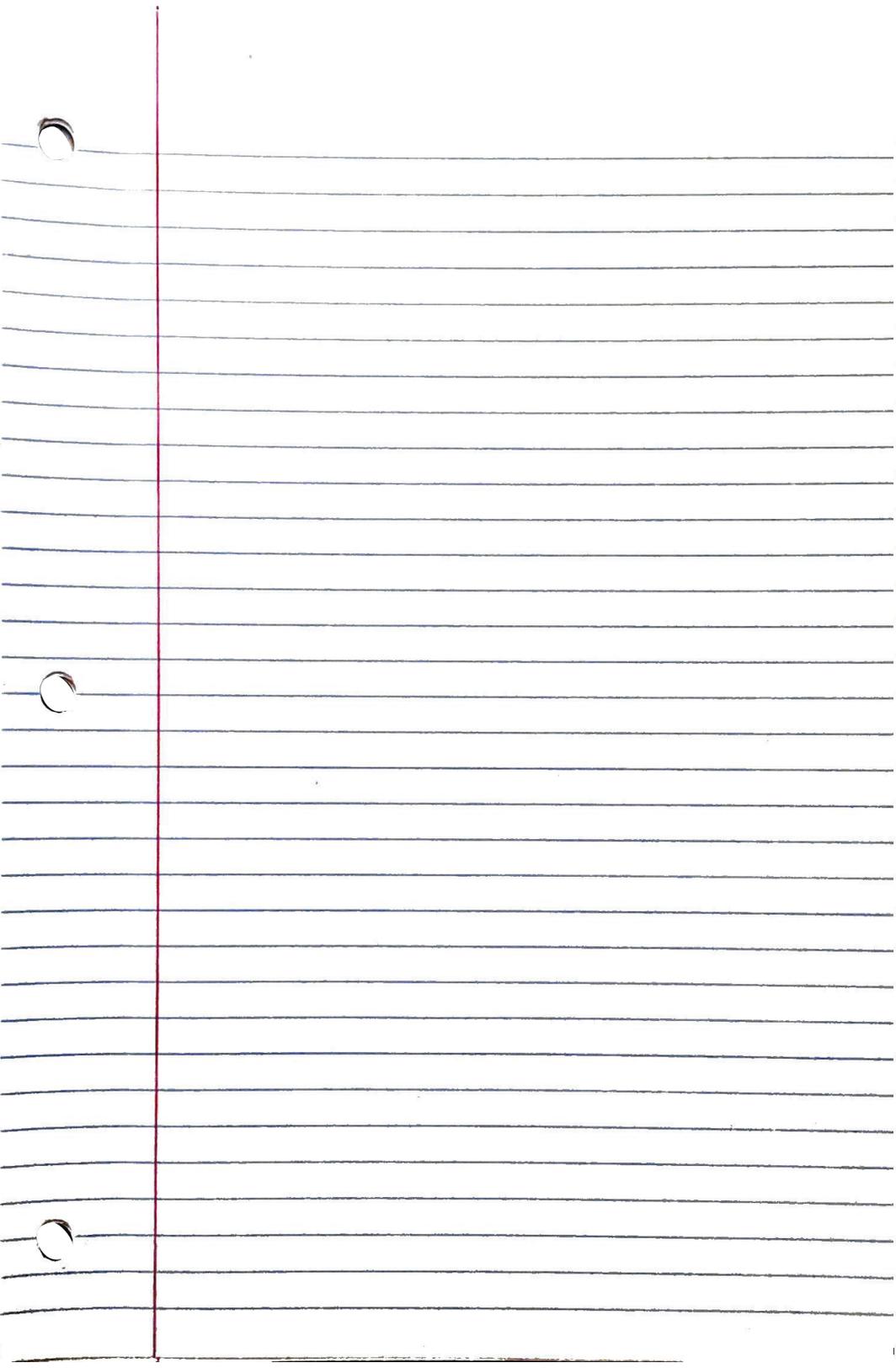
Reflections on the Resistance and Activation

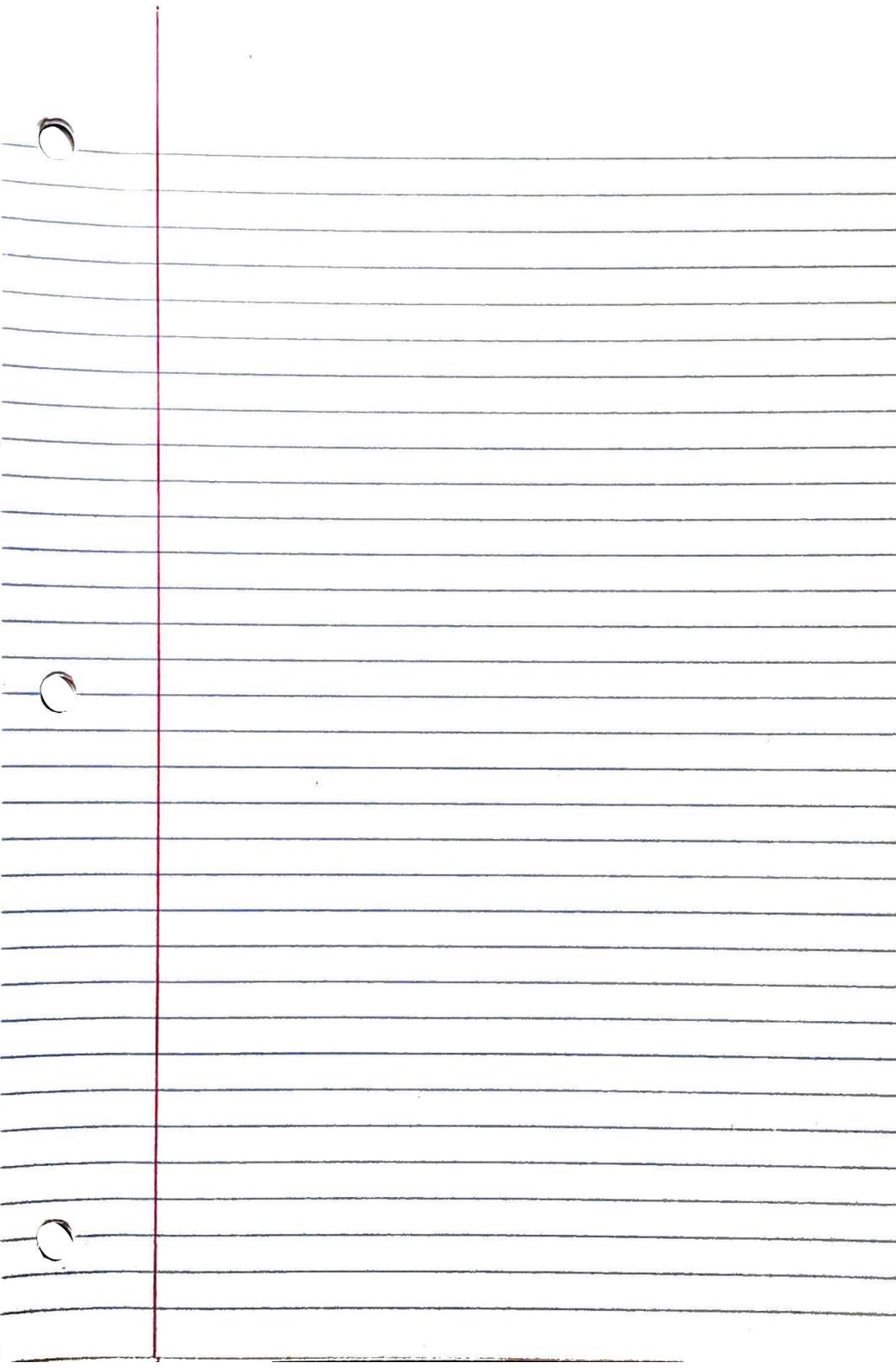
Where do you find hope as you navigate the world? Mariame Kaba tells us "hope is a discipline." How do you find your strength in your darkest hours, and where do you find light?

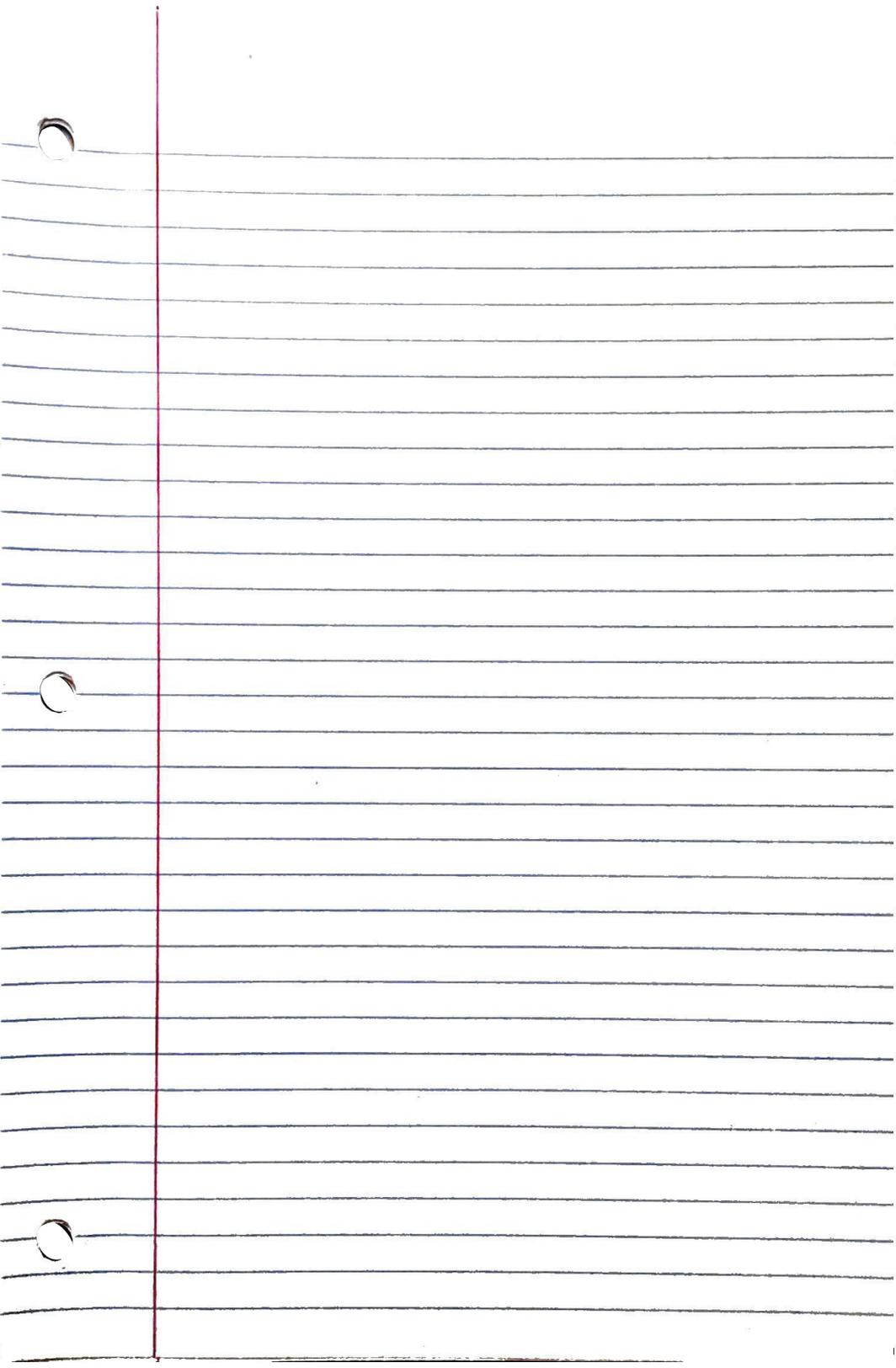


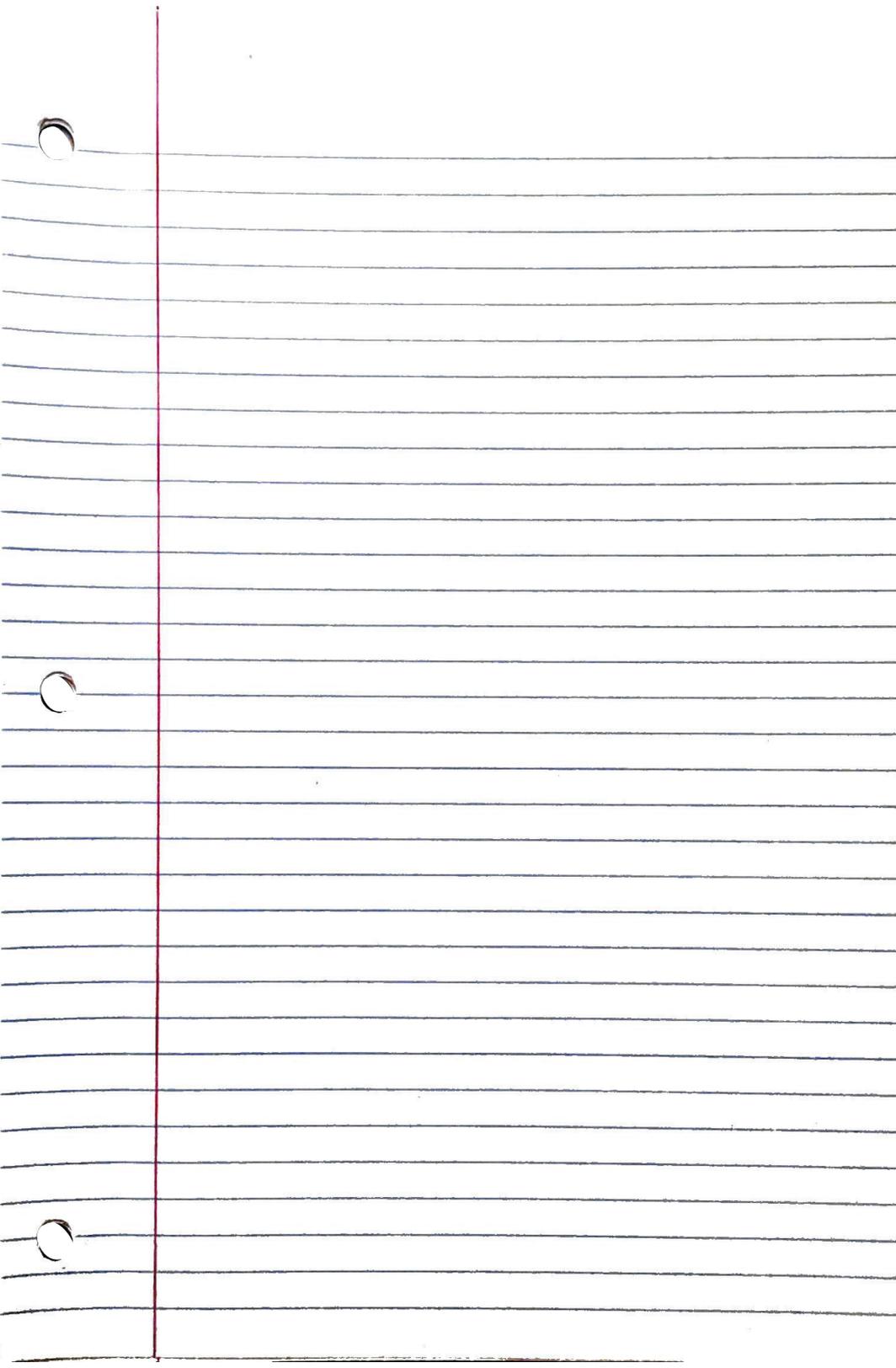










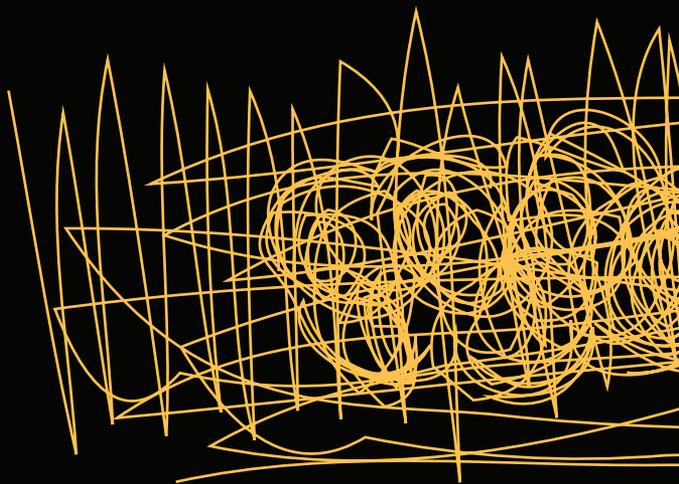


CONSOLIDATED
ARTIST
CREDITS

Jodi Hill	Colored pens on paper
Tricia Shepherd, "Freedom"	Oil on canvas
Matthew Cristopher, "Abandoned America"	Photograph
Oliger Merco, "Evening Yard Crew"	Oil on canvas
Daniel Henry, Greeting Card	Colored pens on paper
James Fuson, "Suffocating"	Unknown medium
DaJuan Ainsworth, "Playing for Freedom"	Unknown medium
Ojore Lutalo, "Belly of the Beast"	Collage
Theodora Moss, "Warrior on Black"	Unknown medium
Jodi Hill	Colored pens on paper



Thank you for engaging with the voices of
the people the state has tried to disappear.
To find out more about ending solitary in
Michigan, visit the local campaign's page at
openmiddoor.org



VOICES FROM SOLITARY IN MICHIGAN