

# Abolitionist Resources Handout

Compiled by [5 Elements Youth Program](#)

## Guiding Definitions & Key Terms:

- **Abolition:** a political vision with the goal of eliminating imprisonment, policing, and surveillance and creating lasting alternatives to punishment and imprisonment ([Critical Resistance, n.d.](#))
  - Abolition is both a practical organizing tool and a long-term goal. Abolition isn't just about getting rid of buildings full of cages. It's also about undoing the society we live in because the PIC both feeds on and maintains oppression and inequalities through punishment, violence, and controls millions of people.
  - Because the PIC is not an isolated system, abolition is a broad strategy. An abolitionist vision means that we must build models today that can represent how we want to live in the future. It means developing practical strategies for taking small steps that move us toward making our dreams real and that lead us all to believe that things really could be different. It means living this vision in our daily lives.
- **Prison Industrial Complex (PIC)** - a term we use to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems ([Critical Resistance, n.d.](#))
  - There are many ways this power is collected and maintained through the PIC, including creating mass media images that keep alive stereotypes of people of color, poor people, queer people, immigrants, youth, and other oppressed communities as criminal, delinquent, or deviant. This power is also maintained by earning huge profits for private companies that deal with prisons and police forces; helping earn political gains for "tough on crime" politicians; increasing the influence of prison guard and police unions; and eliminating social and political dissent by oppressed communities that make demands for self-determination and reorganization of power in the US.
- **Capitalism:** the economic system that benefits the rich, at the expense, exploitation & neglect of poor people and the planet.
- **White Supremacy** (also known as: **Racism**) the systems of social, political, economic oppression that benefit white people (WASP) at the expense of BIPOC communities, historically rooted in colonialism.
- **State Sanctioned Violence** (also known as: **Police Brutality**): Violence experienced today at the hands of the police, is a modern-day manifestation of the deep historical roots of white supremacy in the foundation of government. State power is allowed to carry out a violence agenda targeting communities of color over centuries without consequences or accountability. Policing institutions are sanctioned with the power to inflict violence as a form of social control and repression ([Delgado, 2020](#)).
- **Police Impunity:** The systemic double-standards for law enforcement to act (against protocols, violently, or with deadly force) without transparency and accountability for their actions. Officers are protected by policies and unions, and in many ways operate in ways "above the law," with added protections; even as they're "public servants" paid with public tax dollars.

## Local Campaigns & Movement Builders:

- **SFPD Budget 2020 Documents & Context:**
  - [Budget and Appropriations Hearing Calendar FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22](#)
  - [\\*\\*\\* PRESS RELEASE \\*\\*\\* MAYOR LONDON BREED ANNOUNCES ROADMAP FOR NEW POLICE REFORMS \(June 11, 2020\)](#)
- **No New Jails Coalition: San Francisco, CA**
  - [NNJSF Ten Point Program \( Fight Against the Criminalization of Our Communities\)](#)
  - [NNJSF \(March 2020\) Protect Prisoners against COVID-19 Letter](#)
  - [NNJSF \(March 2020\) Mitigating the Spread of COVID-19 in the SF County Jails and Criminal Legal System](#)
- **Critical Resistance: Oakland, CA**
  - ["Reformist Reforms vs. Abolitionist Steps in Policing."](#)
  - [Public Health is a Strategy for Abolition Fighting for Healthy and Safe Communities](#)
- **Anti-Police Terror Project (APTPT): Oakland, CA**
  - [Black New Deal \(Platform of Demands\)](#)
- **Young Freedom Women's Center San Francisco, CA**
  - [A Radical Model for Decriminalization: Research Model & Initial Findings \(Centering the lives of San Francisco system-involved women and TGNC people: a participatory and decolonizing model.\)](#)
- **DefundSFPDNow.com: San Francisco, CA** → Afro-Socialist Caucus of DSA [Democratic Socialists of America]
  - [Roadmap to SFPD Abolition - Budget Considerations 2020](#)
- **Coalition on Homelessness: San Francisco, CA** → [Budget Justice Advocacy](#)

## National Organizations, Campaigns & Resources:

- **#8toAbolition Campaign Towards Abolition, National Network of Abolitionists**
  - [8 Abolitionist Policy Changes to Demand \(Platform\)](#)
- **MPD150: Minneapolis, Minnesota**
  - [Police Free Cities Toolkit](#)
- Care Not Cops, **Portland, Oregon** | [carenotcops.org](#)
- No New Jails NYC Abolition Plan: **New York City, NY** | [nonewjails.nyc](#)
  - [Close Rikers NOW - Policy Demands](#)
- No New Jails DC: **Washington D.C.** | [bit.ly/nnjdc](#)

- Close the Jails ATL; **Atlanta, Georgia** | [closethejailatl.org](http://closethejailatl.org)
- Transform Harm Resource Hub | [transformharm.org](http://transformharm.org)
  - [6 Areas of Work]: Transformative Justice, Community Accountability, Restorative Justice, Abolition, Healing Justice, Carceral Feminism
- Justice LA COVID-19 Decarceration Proposal | [justicelanow.org](http://justicelanow.org)
- Carceral Tech Resistance Network: "Police Industrial Complex" | [carceral.tech](http://carceral.tech)
- We Came to Learn: A Call for Police-Free Schools | [advancementproject.org/wecametolearn](http://advancementproject.org/wecametolearn)
- Collective Action for Safe Spaces 2018 Policy Platform | [collectiveactiondc.org](http://collectiveactiondc.org)
- She Safe, We Safe Campaign | [shesafewesafe.org](http://shesafewesafe.org)
- [Interrupting Criminalization Defund Police Toolkit](#), 2020.
- *Dream Defenders*, *Defund Police*, *Rebuild Our Communities*, 2020.

#### Shorter Readings:

- [Prison Policy Institute: Mass Incarceration "Whole Pie 2020"](#): Comprehensive snapshot → correctional system
- Alex Vitale, 2018. [interview with author linked]
- Meghan G. McDowell and Luis A. Fernandez, "Disband, Disempower, and Disarm: Amplifying the Theory and Practice of Police Abolition," 2018.
- Amna Akbar, "Toward a Radical Imagination of the Law," 2017.
- Dan Berger, Mariame Kaba, and David Stein, "What Abolitionists Do," 2017.
- Mariame Kaba and Kelly Hayes, "A Jailbreak of the Imagination: Seeing Prisons for What They Are and Demanding Transformation," 2018.
- Rachel Kushner, "Is Prison Necessary? Ruth Wilson Gilmore Might Change Your Mind," 2019.
- Dean Spade, "Prison Abolition Argument Chart," 2017.
- Benji Hart, "You Are Already an Abolitionist," 2017.
- Joshua Dubler and Vincent Lloyd, "Think Prison Abolition in America is Impossible? It Once Felt Inevitable," 2018.
- Ruth Wilson Gilmore and James Kilgore, "The Case for Abolition," 2019.
- John Washington, "What is Prison Abolition?," 2018.
- K Agbebiyi, "Prison Abolition FAQ," 2020.
- Micah Herskind, "Some Reflections on Prison Abolition," 2019.
- Mariame Kaba and John Duda, "Toward the Horizon of Abolition: A Conversation with Mariame Kaba," 2017.
- Mychal Denzel Smith, "Abolish the Police. Instead, Let's Have Full Social, Economic, and Political Equality," 2015.
- Rose City CopWatch, "Alternatives to Police," 2008.
- Sarah-Ji and Monica Trinidad, "Community Compilation on Police Abolition," 2016.
- Garrett Felber, "The Struggle to Abolish the Police is Not New," 2020.
- Edward Ongweso Jr., "Defunding the Police Actually Means Defunding the Police," 2020.
- Tasha Amezcua, Ejeris Dixon, and Che J. Rene Long, "Ten Lessons for Creating Safety Without Police," 2016.
- Amber Hughson, *Alternatives to Police Flyers*, 2018.

#### Longer Pieces and Books

- [Black Perspectives: Prison Abolition Syllabus 2.0 \(17 Weeks of Reading Resource List\)](#)
- Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, 2003.
- The CR10 Publications Collective, *Abolition NOW! Ten Years of Strategy and Struggle Against the Prison Industrial Complex*.
- Julia Sudbury, "Reform or Abolition? Using Popular Mobilizations to Dismantle the 'Prison-Industrial Complex,'" 2016.
- Allegra McLeod, "Prison Abolition and Grounded Justice," 2015.
- Patrisse Cullors, "Abolition and Reparations: Histories of Resistance, Transformative Justice, and Accountability," 2019.

#### Listening and Viewing

- Reina Gossett and Dean Spade, YouTube Abolition Series, 2014:
  - "Prison Abolition and Prefiguring the World You Want to Live In"
  - "Practicing Abolition Every Day"
  - "What About the Dangerous People?"
  - "Gun Control and Producing Dangerousness"
- Kim Wilson and Brian Sonenstein, "Beyond Prisons" podcast series.
- Chris Hayes, "Thinking About How to Abolish Prisons with Mariame Kaba," 2019
- Josie Duffy Rice and Clint Smith, "Justice in America: Mariame Kaba and Prison Abolition," 2019.
- Derecka Purnell, "The Police Can't Solve the Problem. They Are the Problem," 2019.
- Alex Vitale, "The Police Are Not Here to Protect You," 2017.
- Maya Dukmasova, "Abolish the Police? Organizers Say It's Less Crazy Than It Sounds," 2016.
- Mariame Kaba, "Police Reforms You Should Always Oppose," 2014.
- José Martin, "Policing is a Dirty Job, But Nobody's Gotta Do It: 6 Ideas for a Cop-Free World," 2014.