

# BEYOND THE BARS

Transcending the Punishment Paradigm

7th Annual Justice Conference at Columbia University



Women Transcending the Punishment Paradigm

**THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2017**

# Conference Schedule

## **THURSDAY, MARCH 2ND**

**Women Transcending the Punishment Paradigm**  
Columbia Law School - 6:30-9:00pm

## **FRIDAY, MARCH 3RD**

**Building the Movement:  
Conversations with Angela Davis**  
Lerner Hall - 7:30-9:30pm

## **SATURDAY, MARCH 4TH**

**Transcending the Punishment Paradigm:  
Morning and Afternoon Panels**  
Columbia School of Social Work - 10:00-5:30pm

## **SUNDAY, MARCH 5TH**

**Building the Grassroots:  
Organizing Workshops**  
Columbia School of Social Work - 10:00-5:00pm

# WOMEN TRANSCENDING THE PUNISHMENT PARADIGM PROGRAM

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## Narratives of Women: Violence, Punishment and Criminalization

### PANELISTS

**Shagasyia Diamond**, Activist, Singer and Community Organizer, Red Umbrella Project

**Elaine Lord**, Former Superintendent of Bedford Hills Correctional Facility

**Keila Pulinario**, Advocate for Currently and Formerly Incarcerated People / Owner, Keila's Catering

**Jonel Beauvais**, Community Outreach Worker, The Seven Dancers Coalition

MODERATOR: **Victoria Law**, freelance journalist and author of *Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women*

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## From Pain to Power: Women on the Front Lines

### PANELISTS

**Janetta Johnson**, Executive Director, Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project

**Marissa Alexander**, Marissa Alexander Justice Project

**Hariette Davis**, Family Unity Project Coordinator, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children

**Aida Cuadrado**, National Reinvestment Organizer, Center for Community Change

MODERATOR: **Tina Reynolds**, Co-Founder and Chair of Women on the Rise Telling HerStory (WORTH)

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HOST: **Felicia Henry**, Founder, *Behind the Walls, Between the Lines*

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## BIOS

**Marissa Alexander** an MBA graduate, was fulfilling a career in IT Management when she was arrested and charged with aggravated assault in August of 2010 for firing a single warning shot after being attacked by her then estranged husband. In August of 2012, Marissa was sentenced to twenty years in prison under Florida's harsh mandatory minimum sentencing policies. Her story gained national attention and shed light on harsh mandatory minimum sentencing policies as well as the Stand Your Ground Law. In 2013 an appellate court overturned her case as a result of faulty jury instructions. In November 2013 she was released on bail and required to stay on house arrest. After a long journey fighting for her freedom Marissa accepted her original plea agreement of three years and completed her sentence of 65 days of incarceration, followed by ankle monitor under strict probation supervision. While reunited with her three children, in January of 2017, she completed the conditions of her sentence and has started her own nonprofit and is completing detailed accounts of her journey in upcoming book. Today, Marissa publicly speaks as a domestic violence advocate.

**Jonel Beauvais** is a young Mohawk woman, who is the proud mother of three children and chosen auntie, sister and friend to many. She works diligently to empower and induce healing within all Native/Indigenous communities so that we may continue to find a way to our good medicine with good minds. She's employed as a community outreach worker for the Seven Dancers Coalition, located on the U.S. portion of her home territory in Akwesasne. Seven Dancers Coalition seeks to educate Tribal communities and service providers through trainings and presentations on Sexual Assault, Domestic violence, Campus Safety, Teen Dating, Sex Trafficking and Stalking.

She is also entering her 4th year as lead Auntie for all the girls entering their first year of fasting in Oheronkon "Under the Husk", which is the Rights of Passage for youth in Akwesasne. These youth commit to four years of fasting in which they attend weekly gatherings throughout the winter months in hopes of receiving a vision or some guidance on the purpose of their journey here on earth.

She is in her fifth season as a volunteer dance teacher for the St. Regis Recreation Dance Club. The Dance Club provides free dance classes to over 200 children under the age of 12, so that they may experience the art and fun of dancing with hopes to build confidence and self-esteem.

She is also a new member to the Neh Kanikonriio Council which is a restorative Justice initiative that integrates indigenous ways of mediation to reduce incarceration and provide a more interpersonal means of healing for both parties. Ms. Beauvais is invited to various speaking engagements to share her life experiences as a native woman who has witnessed and lived the adversities of addiction, caretaking, incarceration, sexual assault, suicide and other forms of violence. Her intent is to offer support and insight for those struggling spiritually and emotionally, with hopes to revive the strong medicine she feels we all possess. Her vision is that we may attain peace within and have more prosperous and nurturing communities for the grandchildren yet to come.

**Aida Cuadrado** is a the National Reinvestment Organizer for the Center for Community Change. Aida is the former Executive Director of Action of Greater Lansing, a faith-based non-profit centered out of Cristo Rey Catholic Parish. A dynamic public speaker, she is also a national leadership development trainer with extensive experience in non-profit management and grassroots community organizing.

Raised in Saginaw in a Puerto Rican family, Cuadrado graduated from Arthur Hill High School and Delta College. Aida will earn her B.B.A. in Non-Profit/Public/Organization Management from Cornerstone University in 2018. Aida states, "I focus on helping brown and black led organizations build capacity and power in their communities so that they are able to establish economic and political power."

**Harriette Davis** is a Family Unity Project Coordinator for LSPC and also All of Us or None co-founder and health educator. As a Family Unity Project coordinator, she oversees the work with family law conferences and classes, as well as the policy work to support the maintenance of family bonds when a loved one is incarcerated. Formerly incarcerated herself, she has 30 years of experience doing advocacy for incarcerated people, starting with domestic violence issues. She is also a mother of 3, grandmother of 9, and a registered nurse. Harriette wants to be part of bringing solutions to an impacted population many don't understand or sympathize with, and going beyond mere maintenance to wholeness and health. The key word for her in organizing work is "people."

**Felicia A. Henry** is the Restorative Justice Social Worker at the Brownsville Community Justice Center, a project of the Center for Court Innovation. In this capacity, Felicia oversees the Brownsville Youth Court program, Alternative to Incarceration programming, provides individual services to justice involved youth, and manages restorative practice initiatives. Felicia is the founder of Behind the Walls, Between the Lines (BTWBTL), a movement that uses the power of art to transcend racial lines while at the same time catalyzing necessary conversations about why those lines exist. Through spoken word and other art mediums, BTWBTL deeply and critically examines the visceral reality of incarceration and state sponsored violence in order to empower people to drive real change in their communities. Although born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Felicia Henry has strong ties to her Caribbean roots. A Temple University alumna, Felicia received her Master of Social Work degree from the School of Social Policy and Practice at the University of Pennsylvania. Her background in both social work and criminal justice gives her the language to describe her own personal experiences and pushes her to use her platforms to share the stories of those impacted by racial injustice, especially to those who consider racism to be over, are averse to having discussions about racial justice, are not within the black and brown community, and/or are not well versed in racial justice principles. Felicia is also a 2016-2017 Beyond the Bars Fellow.

**Janetta Johnson**, Executive Director, Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project. Janetta is an Afro-American trans woman who was raised in Tampa, Florida. She is a healer through her work at the Transgender Gender Variant and Intersex (TGI) Justice Project and facilitator invested in decolonizing spaces. Since 2006, she has been organizing around the intersections of violence she and her trans and gender non-conforming communities of color face. She has been both politicized and mentored by Miss Major who has been deeply influential in her life, and she is honored to have accepted Miss Major's former position as Executive Director of the TGI Justice Project. The spiritual force that drives her to dismantle the violent systems that black trans people are subjected to and oppressed by is one that awakens her. As a formerly incarcerated trans person, Janetta has faced adversity and this has informed her community work as well as her deep investment in the liberation of all black trans and gender non-conforming people. Janetta works to restore her community's spirit from the confines of the prison industrial complex: she has developed a grassroots reentry program with the focus on recidivism and reentry, she is a member of the Bay Area chapter of Black Lives Matter, and is dedicated to ending capitalism, patriarchy, and white supremacy, and building the organizing capacity of trans and gender non-conforming communities of color as a trans warrior. She enjoys working to shift and reframe the value of black trans lives through media, education, and community building. Janetta uses she/her pronouns.

**Victoria Law** is a freelance journalist who writes about the intersections between incarceration, gender and resistance. Victoria is the author of *Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women*. She is the author of *Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women*, which won the 2009 PASS (Prevention for a Safer Society) award. Victoria has over ten years of experience working with writers to shape and revise their works for publication. Since 2003, she has edited *Tenacious: Art and Writings by Women in Prison*. In addition, she has worked with incarcerated women to develop their writings for other publications. Victoria has also worked with writers

outside of prison. She is the co-editor of *Don't Leave Your Friends Behind: Concrete Ways to Support Families in Social Justice Movements and Communities* (PM Press 2012) and has worked with other published authors to ensure that their ideas are clearly articulated in ways that engage a wide range of readers.

**Elaine Lord**, Former Superintendent of Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. Elaine was Superintendent of the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women for almost 20 years until her retirement in 2004. Lord earned her master's degree in Criminal Justice from SUNY, Albany. She received training in restorative justice at the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking at the University of Minnesota under the direction of Mark S. Umbreit, Ph.D. During her tenure as Superintendent, Lord oversaw the creation and implementation of programs that enabled the women of Bedford to continue their educations, maintain close relationships with their children and other family members, and prepare to re-enter society.

**Keila Pulinario** is a formerly incarcerated activist who served most of her twenty year sentence at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. Since her release three years ago, Keila has dedicated herself to raising awareness about the struggles of reentry. Her speaking tour "Life After Life," has taken her to a number of institutions including Columbia University, SUNY Purchase, and Hunter College. Keila has also spoken on several different panel discussions in regards to the struggles of both incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women. She is also the co-author of "What I Want My Words To Do To You," a collection of stories written by women in prison. In the day to day, Keila is developing a catering business called "Keila's Catering."

**Tina Reynolds** is the co-founder and chair of Women on the Rise Telling HerStory (WORTH) which is an organization run and led by currently and formerly incarcerated women in Harlem NY. Reynolds gained her Masters in Social Work from Hunter College and is an adjunct professor in York, CUNY behavioral sciences department. She is also co-editor of "Interrupted Life: Experiences of Incarcerated Women in the United States".

## CO-SPONSORS

*This event is organized by the Center for Justice at Columbia University, the Beyond the Bars Fellowship, the Criminal Justice Caucus at CSSW and is generously supported by the Center for Community Change as well as the many Co-Sponsors listed below:*

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