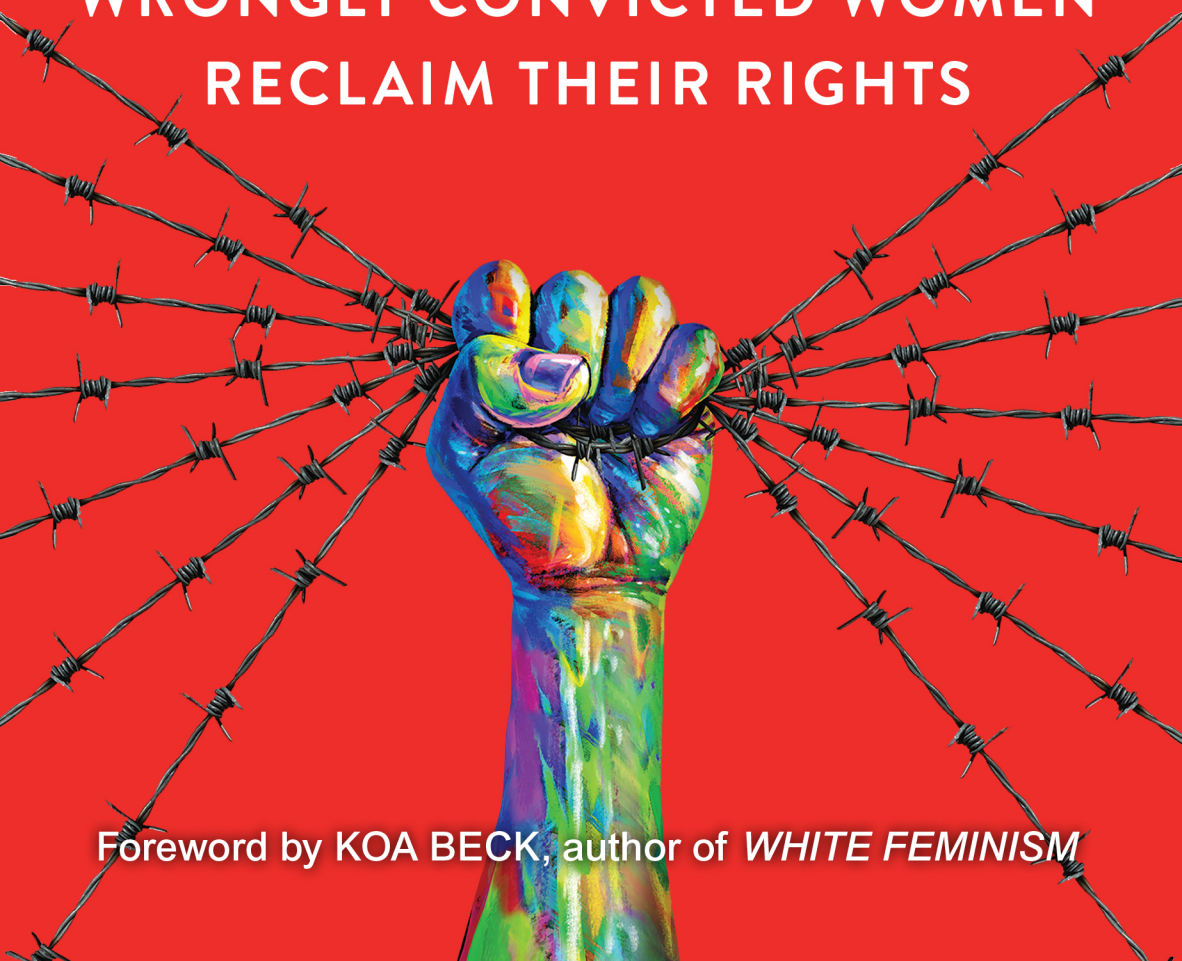


VALENA BEETY

Founding Director of the
WEST VIRGINIA INNOCENCE PROJECT

MANIFESTING JUSTICE

WRONGLY CONVICTED WOMEN
RECLAIM THEIR RIGHTS



Foreword by KOA BECK, author of *WHITE FEMINISM*

MANIFESTING JUSTICE

WRONGLY CONVICTED WOMEN
RECLAIM THEIR RIGHTS

VALENA BEETY

Foreword by KOA BECK



CITADEL PRESS

Kensington Publishing Corp.

www.kensingtonbooks.com

CHAPTER 16

Women in Rankin Prison, Mississippi

Interstate 55, down from Memphis, intersects with Batesville on its way south to Jackson, Mississippi. Perhaps surprisingly, Batesville is home to Magnolia Grove Monastery, a mindfulness practice center established by followers of Thich Nhat Hanh. Batesville also has a Chili's. I watched and celebrated the Saints victory over the Colts in the 2010 Super Bowl at that Chili's—my adopted regional home team, since Mississippi doesn't have professional sports teams, versus my birthplace home team for Indiana. At the time, alcohol couldn't be sold on Sundays in my nearby town of Oxford, and the restaurants closed on Sunday and Wednesday evenings when people went to church services and mid-week potluck dinners. Chili's, half an hour away, was open on Sundays, had a TV, and had beer.

I'd also stop at that Chili's late at night on my way back from visiting Rankin prison. Technically named Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, I could make it to Rankin in just under two hours from Batesville, speeding down the interstate with the Mississippi Delta to the west. Rankin prison, nicknamed after the county, is just east of the state capital, Jackson. The last stretch of the drive includes an oak-lined road far older than the tar and asphalt. Then the road curves past Whitfield, the state mental hospital. Whitfield was itself built on a former penal colony, and originally was known as the Mississippi State Insane Asylum. Similar to the farm prisons of the South like Parchman in Mississippi and Angola in Louisiana, Whitfield Hospital was at one

time self-sufficient with 3,500 acres and working inhabitants. But people incarcerated at Parchman prison farm had a target date to end their sentence. At Whitfield, people walked in and never walked out. Whitfield today has an official nursing home for residents.

Whitfield also now has a unit for Substance Use Services, though many Mississippians with substance use disorder are farther down around the bend in the road at Rankin prison. Rankin is the only prison for women in the state, meaning no matter where they're from they can't be moved to a prison closer to their family, or to their children. The only option for women is Rankin. Trans women are often placed in male prisons around the state that don't correspond to their gender.

Leigh and Tami moved to Rankin after they were sentenced by Judge Smith. I'd visit them every month or two, updating them on their case, asking about them and their health, and checking if there were any other women we should be representing. Not that the Mississippi Innocence Project had the bandwidth—we were a small non-profit and clinic out of the University of Mississippi School of Law. But at least we could try.

Sometimes the only way these women got out of prison was thanks to community mobilization, pressure on politicians, and attention from outside of the prison walls. Community fury is powerful, and prosecutors should not have a corner on outrage.

The stories below show how community outrage freed people when the legal system stalled.

Our guide through Rankin is another one of my clients, Tasha Mercedes Shelby. Incarcerated for over twenty years and still in prison today, Tasha has worked jobs inside at the Hair Zone, in the mailroom, as a tutor, and in the chapel. Most of the women she knew in this chapter are cisgender women.

Individuals who identify or are perceived as gender-nonconforming, such as people who are trans or non-binary, face additional challenges because they are often forced into prisons that don't correspond with their gender. Tasha knew an intersex person who identified as masculine through delivering mail to the women's Maximum Security Unit—the MSU. MSU is solitary confinement. Tasha delivered mail from friends

who sent “masculine” toiletries, a form of humanity. People who are gender non-conforming are cruelly housed in solitary confinement when prisons fail to consider other solutions—and even the solitary confinement units are gendered.

Each Christmas, the prison chaplain would send gift bags to the people incarcerated in the prison. The gift bags were gendered: “feminine gifts” or “masculine gifts.” Tasha was working in the chapel when she received a note from a trans woman in solitary confinement housed in the male MSU. She wanted a feminine gift bag.

When the chaplain said yes, Tasha put together the bag: barrettes, hair bows, “girly” shampoo, and deodorant. Even in these small ways, the recognition of someone’s identity matters. And it is often people on the outside creating both that recognition and change for incarcerated people.

STATE-SANCTIONED SEXUAL ASSAULT

Tasha, Leigh, and Tami were incarcerated with about 1,400 women at Rankin. The majority of incarcerated women are sexual abuse and assault survivors, who enter or leave with trauma-induced disabilities including PTSD, depression, and anxiety. Transgender and gender nonconforming people in prisons suffer physical and sexual harassment and abuse in prison at even higher rates than cisgender women.

Tasha, Leigh, and Tami spent years being strip-searched for every visit with family members or with me, their attorney. Each visit, the women had to remove all of their clothes and be examined and searched by fully clothed guards. The purpose of strip searches is nominally to search for contraband; it is overwhelmingly to denigrate the individual and their body, insult and humiliate them, emphasize their powerlessness, and turn them from a human with a soul into an object, a body. The message is that their body does not matter and that their body does not belong to them.

Tasha, Leigh, and Tami rarely mentioned the searches. They were a mandatory concession in order to see their family, friends, or attorneys.

One horrific example haunts me. A prison in Illinois was conducting a routine “training exercise for cadet guards.” The guards brought two hundred incarcerated and handcuffed women into a room with

male and female cadets, prison guards, and even civilian observers. The guards forced the incarcerated women to take off all their clothes and stand naked in front of the watching people.

The incarcerated women stood so close together that their bodies touched. They were ordered to remove tampons and sanitary pads, menstrual blood dripping down their legs and onto the floor. The guards, the cadets, the civilians, were all watching, all fully clothed. And under those staring eyes, the guards ordered the women to do what they're required to do before every family member visit, before every attorney visit: "raise their breasts, lift their hair, turn around, bend over, spread their buttocks and vaginas, and cough."

This was a routine training exercise. It's also rape culture. It is state-sanctioned sexual assault.

TASHA MERCEDEZ SHELBY: WRONGFULLY CONVICTED

I first learned about Tasha from Leigh and Tami. They told me about two women whom they believed to be innocent in prison. Tasha was one of them.

Tasha moved to Mississippi when she was a teenager. She attended high school through the tenth grade, when she became pregnant with her son Dakota and left school to work. Time passed, Tasha raised her son, and she started dating Big Bryan. Big Bryan was a few years older and had just gotten his long-haul trucking license. Big Bryan had a son of his own who was the same age as Dakota, two and a half years old. They called him Little Bryan. Little Bryan was big for his age, weighing thirty-three pounds and standing three feet tall.

He was already half the height of Tasha, who is a little person at four feet nine inches tall.

They were soon all living together in their own home, a trailer in Biloxi, close to the long beaches and water of the Gulf. Little Bryan was on a nebulizer for his asthma and had absence seizures, where he would stare off into space. Tasha and Big Bryan worried about him and took him to the pediatrician, who recommended a neurologist. The family made an appointment with the neurologist for mid-June.

Despite the concern about Little Bryan, the blended family was happy. Tasha was pregnant with a little girl. When she gave birth to that little girl in May, they named her Devin. Tasha had a C-section

and at the same time she had the surgeon tie her tubes; their family was complete.

Tasha was on bedrest after surgery and the birth of her daughter, and she stayed in the hospital days after giving birth. Tasha's doctor prescribed her pain pills for the C-section, but she couldn't afford them. The doctor advised against any heavy lifting, bending over, or exertion that could rip the stitches in her body. She had a hard enough time picking up her newborn baby. Her relatives would come by and pick up Dakota to give Tasha a break while Big Bryan worked a night shift at 9 Lumber.

It was on one of those evenings when Dakota was with relatives, and Tasha had put the baby and Little Bryan to sleep, when she heard a loud thump from Little Bryan's room. She went into his room to find Little Bryan convulsing on the floor. He had fallen out of his bed and was having a seizure. He couldn't breathe.

Tasha called the hospital where she had just given birth to Devin, and they told her to come in immediately—driving would be faster than an ambulance.

Tasha then called Big Bryan to come home and started performing CPR on Little Bryan. When her fiancé arrived, they all rushed to the hospital—so fast that police pulled them over. Big Bryan yelled at the police that he needed to get to the hospital. He started to drive off, but not before one of the officers jumped in their van and took over for Tasha performing CPR.

In the Emergency Room the doctors tried to revive Little Bryan.

It was too late. Little Bryan was brain dead from the lack of oxygen. His brain was swollen, and he had a trace of bleeding in his brain. They took him off of the oxygen machine the next day.

The hospital called the police to investigate if Little Bryan's death was the result of child abuse. The police interrogated Tasha. She said what she always has said since: she heard a thump, Little Bryan was on the floor having a seizure and not able to breathe, and she started performing CPR. She was never able to revive him.

At the time of Little Bryan's death, doctors did not yet know how damaging short falls can be, or how seizures can interact with a short fall. Instead, in 1997 the theory of "Shaken Baby Syndrome" was more prevalent in legal and medical fields than it is today. That theory held

that when a baby—usually less than six months old—presented with three specific symptoms (bleeding around the brain, bleeding in the back of the eyes, and brain swelling), then the child must have been shaken to death.

Little Bryan had brain swelling and a tiny spot of subdural hemorrhaging, but no retinal hemorrhaging. Even though Tasha's story never changed, no one believed that short falls or seizures could account for Little Bryan's symptoms. The autopsy report concluded that Little Bryan's death was the result of homicide. As the only person who had been at home with the child, Tasha was arrested and charged.

It was her first time ever being arrested.

Big Bryan married Tasha shortly after Little Bryan's death. Then Tasha was booked into jail to await her trial.

Tasha waited three years. By that point, relatives had taken both her daughter and her son; Big Bryan did not keep custody of their newborn daughter.

When Tasha went to trial, her defense attorneys agreed with the diagnosis that Little Bryan had been shaken to death—everyone did. But her attorneys argued that Big Bryan was the culprit. Tasha was four feet nine inches in height, and she had given birth via C-section and had her fallopian tubes removed less than two weeks earlier. How could she pick up a thirty-three-pound toddler and shake him forcefully enough to kill him? Tasha told her attorneys about the short fall, she told them about the appointment with the neurologist scheduled for a week after Little Bryan's death, she told them about the seizures and Little Bryan's asthma and nebulizer. None of it mattered.

In the very first sentence of the State's opening statement against Tasha Shelby, the prosecutor told the jury, "On May 30th, 1997, Tasha Shelby shook a two-and-a-half-year-old child, Bryan Thompson, so violently that the child died the next day from those injuries." By the end of the trial, the prosecutor told the jury, "[t]he things in this case, ladies and gentlemen, that are not in dispute . . . Bryan Thompson was violently shaken to death. That is undisputed." At the time of trial, that statement was correct: it was undisputed.

The State's star witness was medical examiner Dr. LeRoy Riddick. Dr. Riddick had performed the autopsy. He testified that Little Bryan

was violently shaken to death. He dismissed that the injuries could be caused by a short fall or another non-abuse-related accident.

Tasha's defense witness, similar to Leigh and Tami's defense witness, agreed with the State that the cause of death was Shaken Baby Syndrome.

In 2000, the jury found Tasha guilty of capital murder. She was terrified of going to death row. But then the jury sentenced her to life in prison instead, without any hope of parole.

In 2008, Audrey Edmunds became the first person to be exonerated on the basis of the newly discovered unreliability of Shaken Baby Syndrome.

In 2010, I first met Tasha. All these years later, I am still representing her. Since the time of her trial, advancements in pediatric medicine, traumatic medicine, and biomechanical engineering have undermined the State's essential contentions. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now identify falls as the most common cause of traumatic brain injury in children less than four years old.

The advancements in science also led the State's original forensic pathologist, Dr. LeRoy Riddick, to change his opinion on the cause and manner of death.

In 1997, Dr. Riddick concluded that Little Bryan's death was a homicide—in line with the prevailing wisdom of the time. However, upon reexamining his records in 2015, Dr. Riddick believed that he made a mistake with his diagnosis.

Dr. Riddick changed the cause of death on Little Bryan's death certificate from homicide to accident. He then testified for Tasha at a Post-Conviction Relief Hearing, along with three other defense medical experts.

The courts have not yet reversed Tasha's conviction or granted her any relief. She remains at Rankin. And as such, she is our guide through this chapter of wrongfully convicted women in Rankin.

WOMEN ON DEATH ROW

As the only prison for women in the state, Rankin is home to the women on death row in Mississippi. At the time of my regular visits to Rankin, there were only two women on death row. Both were white

and both were completely isolated. Lisa Jo Chamberlin was sentenced to death in 2006. Michelle Byrom was on death row until 2014.

Lisa Jo admits to her crime. But Michele Byrom was innocent, and freed thanks to community outrage and journalistic investigations.

Not many women are sentenced to death, but when they are, prosecutors often use gender stereotypes against the women, characterizing them as “abnormal.” Poor parenting, rarely used against cisgender men, is frequently claimed against cisgender women defendants.

Michelle Byrom was one of those women.

Michelle’s son Eddie Jr. shot and killed his abusive father Eddie Byrom Sr. Michelle was in the hospital when her son killed her husband. Indeed, she was in treatment on multiple prescribed medications at the hospital. Nevertheless, Tishomingo County Sheriff David Smith came to the hospital to interrogate Michelle about the murder. He encouraged Michelle to help out her son, to take ownership. He told Michelle that she must have hired someone, an accomplice, making this a conspiracy to murder. Michelle told the sheriff that she would take responsibility for her husband’s death.

After Michelle’s statement to the sheriff, the local prosecutors charged her with capital murder. At trial, Eddie Jr. testified against Michelle, stating under oath that his mom had hired his friend Joey Gillis to kill Eddie Sr. The jury found Michelle guilty.

Before sentencing in capital cases, defense attorneys present evidence of why their client should not receive the death penalty. A psychologist had evaluated Michelle and uncovered that Michelle’s stepfather had sexually abused her. Michelle ran away from home to escape the sexual violence and worked as a stripper to support herself. Her relationship with Eddie Sr. began when she was only fifteen years old and Eddie Sr. was thirty-one. Eddie Sr. physically and sexually abused Michelle, forcing her to have sex with him and with other men. Michelle tried to leave but her husband threatened her with violence every time. With no resources to support herself and her son, Michelle stayed.

The male prosecutor at trial, Arch Bullard, used this against her. “There’s been arguments made that maybe Eddie wasn’t the husband or the father that he should’ve been,” he told the jury. “Why didn’t she

just leave him? Why didn't she divorce him? Why didn't she seek sanctuary somewhere else?"

Michelle did—she would ingest rat poison in order to have a reprieve in the hospital from her home life. Michelle suffered from depression, alcohol dependence, and mental health issues. Her male attorneys did not present this information, or any of Michelle's history. They then waived her constitutional right to a jury sentencing and asked the judge to sentence her instead.

Circuit Judge Thomas Gardner sentenced Michelle to death.

It was only in 2014, when Attorney General Jim Hood requested an execution date of March 27, that Michelle's case actually received any scrutiny. That attention and ultimate outrage came from citizens and the media.

Journalists uncovered four written confessions by Michelle's son—all of which were known by the defense attorneys at the time of trial, and by the judge who sentenced her to death. Eddie Jr. even led the police to the murder weapon.

These white men in the courtroom had committed the true conspiracy—not conspiracy to murder, conspiracy to convict an innocent woman. Eddie Jr., Joey Gillis and Tishomingo Sheriff David Smith; then prosecutor Arch Bullard, Michelle's defense attorneys, and Judge Thomas Gardner all knew about the repeated confessions by Michelle's son. The only people who didn't know about the confessions were the jury. When the defense attorneys tried to admit some of the confessions at trial, Judge Gardner denied their request.

In 2014, weeks before Michelle's scheduled execution, citizens organized a call-in campaign to the governor's office. The *Jackson Free Press* covered Michelle's case and exposed the confessions. It worked.

In a shocking move, the Mississippi Supreme Court denied the attorney general's request for an execution date, and then reversed Michelle's conviction on March 31, 2014. Days after Michelle was initially set to be executed by the State of Mississippi by lethal injection, she was instead leaving prison.

Michelle was free thanks to community advocacy.

But that's not the end of the story.

The prosecutor re-brought the same charges against Michelle. He

demanded that Michelle be incarcerated until her new trial, rather than released on bail. The prosecutor couldn't charge the true perpetrator because Eddie Jr. had pled guilty to a lesser offense in exchange for testifying against his mother.

Michelle sat in jail for a year pending the new trial, just as Kenny Brewer had, incarcerated while the prosecutors waited them out.

Michelle's prosecutor was in no rush. But after sixteen years in prison, and fourteen of those years on death row, Michelle wanted to live the rest of her life free. The prosecutor offered her an Alford plea—she could plead guilty to the crime but maintain her innocence, instead saying the state had enough evidence to convict her rather than that she was guilty. In exchange, Michelle would get a sentence of “time-served” and walk free.

Michelle took the Alford plea. The prosecutor and judge agreed to release her from jail.

Michelle didn't know how little of her life would remain. While she was on death row she had developed breast cancer. The cancer bloomed across her body to stage IV, a reality she learned only when she went to a doctor as a free woman. Michelle died of breast cancer after three and a half years of freedom, in 2019.

Her son, Eddie Jr., who killed his father and set up his mother to take the blame, had choice words on her death: “Life's a lot like poker, sometimes you just don't have a winning hand . . . I believe she did the best she could with the hand she was dealt.”

He helped deal that hand against her, along with the police and players in the criminal legal system.

Michelle was not the only woman ever wrongfully convicted on Mississippi's death row, set to be executed for a crime she didn't commit. Sabrina Butler, a Black woman from Columbus, Mississippi, was the first woman on Mississippi's death row. At just seventeen, Sabrina was charged with murdering her baby son Walter. In her own powerful book Sabrina writes: “I was a teenager who, less than 24 hours before, had lost my precious baby boy. Ambitious men questioned, demoralized and intimidated me. In that state of mind, I signed the lies they wrote on a piece of paper.”

Sabrina lived on death row for thirty-three months, and in prison

for five years, until she was exonerated and proven not guilty in 1995 with proof that her son died from natural causes.

The prosecutor who brought the murder charge against teenage Sabrina, Forrest Allgood, also wrongfully convicted at least three Black men with the assistance of Dr. West: Kenny Brewer, Levon Brooks, and Eddie Lee Howard. In 2015 Forrest Allgood's reign as prosecutor in Columbus finally ended when he was defeated by challenger Scott Colom. Scott's father, a widely known and well-respected attorney, was a board member of the Mississippi Innocence Project. Change is possible.

Michelle Byrom and Lisa Jo Chamberlin were isolated from anyone else in the prison. But on occasion, the women on Mississippi's death row could have a reminder that they were human. They could have another person touch them kindly.

Tasha Shelby was the hairdresser at the Hair Zone—a salon in the women's prison. Tasha earned her cosmetology licenses while inside, and women could pay from their canteen to get their hair done up, share gossip, and get some personal attention.

Tasha cut Lisa's and Michelle's hair, an intimate experience for these women on death row. She tended to Lisa's long brown hair, an act of normalcy bringing them together. Even under the constant gaze of guards, it was a reminder of being human, of having an identity. Lisa would be bubbly and talkative the whole time, excited to see Tasha, catching up on her nails and hair. Michelle was subdued and quiet, never causing any trouble.

The guards would set up a barber chair in a little room in the Maximum Security Unit. Tasha had been in the MSU when she initially came to Rankin because she has a life sentence for a crime she did not commit. All women with a life sentence first go to MSU and then work their way to more freedom—within the prison, that is.

MSU is solitary confinement. The United Nations Mandela Rules, named after South African president Nelson Mandela who was imprisoned for twenty-seven years during South Africa's apartheid, define solitary confinement as twenty-two hours a day or more without meaningful human contact. Solitary confinement has existed in the

United States as a “solution” since the founding of our country. Cells are designed to block human interaction with solid metal doors, a combined toilet-and-sink in the cell, and little or no access to windows or natural light. Food can be inserted on a tray through a slot in the metal door. People in solitary can’t participate in educational or vocational programs, and generally can’t have televisions, radios, and only limited reading material. They exercise in a single person cage; sometimes outside sometimes not. And again, visits with family are limited and frequently no-contact.

The Mandela Rules prohibit prolonged solitary confinement, defined as more than fifteen days, because solitary confinement harms people. Isolating people from anyone else actually changes our brain activity. We as humans suffer mentally and physically from enforced isolation with panic attacks, paranoia, hallucinations, depression, self-harm, and suicide.

When Tasha first came to MSU she cried so hard that one of the sergeants took notice.

“Shelby, what is wrong with you?”

“Sergeant, it’s just me in here. And . . . I’ve never gone this long without a hug.”

One of the hardest sergeants then came and sat on the metal cot next to Tasha. She turned to Tasha and hugged her. Tasha cried into her arms.

Tasha never forgot. Each time she’d cut Lisa’s and Michelle’s hair, she’d ask the guard if she could give them a hug at the end. A simple gesture. A physical kindness that women on Mississippi’s death row could otherwise only receive from a chaplain or guards.

ORGANIZING COMMUNITY ACTIVISM TO FREE WOMEN

Through Tasha, I met still other women—women who were freed due to community activism.

Tasha shared a cell with Jamie Scott, a Black woman sentenced along with her sister Gladys to life in prison for stealing \$11.

Jamie and Gladys had no prior arrests or convictions when they were arrested by the Scott County Sheriff’s Department for armed robbery on December 24, 1993, Christmas Eve. At the time, both sisters were working full time at a nearby chicken-processing plant and at

Hardee's. The sisters started working before graduating from high school in order to support their families. Three teenage boys confessed to a robbery, and implicated Jamie and Gladys in the crime. In exchange for sentences of ten months to two years each, the boys gave statements to the police. They said that Jamie and Gladys were the masterminds of the robbery, even though the sisters hadn't even been present. Gladys was nineteen years old and Jamie was twenty-one.

The teenage boys testified at trial. Howard Patrick testified that the deputy sheriff told him that "if I didn't participate with them, they would send me to Parchman and make me out to be female." Only fourteen years old, Howard was kept in jail until the Scott sisters' trial.

The jury found Gladys and Jamie both guilty of armed robbery and sentenced them to two life sentences—each. Gladys was pregnant at the time and gave birth to her child while incarcerated, shackled to a hospital bed.

Attorney Chokwe Lumumba took on the sisters' case on direct appeal and post-conviction. In post-conviction, he obtained a written statement by the only Patrick boy who didn't testify, Chris. In the signed affidavit, Chris said the Scott sisters had nothing to do with the \$11 robbery. Lumumba gathered affidavits from other witnesses that the sheriff's office was coercive.

The courts refused to grant any relief to the Scott sisters.

In 2010, Jamie's kidneys began to fail and she went on dialysis. When the prison moved Jamie to its intensive care unit, family members and supporters began a petition for her to be released from prison. Jamie and Gladys's mom, Evelyn Rasco, began a "Free the Scott Sisters" blog, and talked with nonprofit organizations and the press. Lumumba by that point had become a councilman in Jackson, Mississippi, and he would later become mayor of Jackson. Lumumba filed a request for medical release. The prison denied it.

Then Lumumba filed a petition for pardon with Mississippi governor Haley Barbour, and organized a rally at the state capital for the next day. After sixteen years of incarceration, Governor Barbour granted clemency to Jamie and Gladys. He ordered them released from prison—on the bizarre condition that Gladys had to donate a kidney to Jamie. She did.

Community organizing had freed the two women and helped them regain their lives outside.

Can we do the same for Tasha? We're on social media, in contact with reporters, and I've talked with her family about purchasing a billboard, explaining her case in downtown Jackson, Mississippi—and in Los Angeles. We've drafted letters to the governor and the commissioner for the Mississippi Department of Corrections, asking for her sentence to be commuted. In the meantime, we fight her case in the courts, with claims of innocence and manifest injustice. In our last court hearing, she had friends, family, church members, professors, lawyers, and even state legislators in the audience supporting her. Next time we will have more.

- 149 They have their own sources:** (Trial Transcript, p. 818).
- 157 West: Almost:** (Trial Transcript, p. 559).
- 158 It was a small town and I knew:** Dara E. Purvis & Melissa Blanco, “Police Sexual Violence: Police Brutality, #MeToo, and Masculinities,” 108 *California Law Review* 1487 (2020).
- 158 West: I don’t believe that:** (Trial Transcript, p. 650).
- 159 Mississippi first criminalized sodomy:** *Doe v. Hood*, 345 F.Supp.3d 749, 752–53 (S.D. Miss. 2018).
- 159 making “unnatural intercourse” a felony:** *State v. Davis*, 79 So.2d 452 (Miss. 1955).
- 159 A 1950s Mississippi Supreme Court:** *State v. Davis*, 79 So.2d 452 (Miss. 1955).
- 159 When Dr. West testified about:** (Trial Transcript, p. 646).
- 163 Tasha, Leigh, and Tami were:** “2017 study, 86% of the women who had been detained in jail were survivors of sexual assault.” Jamelia N. Morgan, “Reflections on Representing Incarcerated People with Disabilities: Ableism in Prison Reform Litigation,” 96 *Denver Law Review* 973 (2019).
- 163 Transgender and gender nonconforming people:** Jamelia N. Morgan, “Reflections on Representing Incarcerated People with Disabilities: Ableism in Prison Reform Litigation,” 96 *Denver Law Review* 973 (2019).
- 163 The purpose of strip searches:** Lisa Guenther, *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and Its Afterlives* (2013).
- 163 A prison in Illinois was:** *Henry v. Hulett*, 930 F.3d 836, 837 (7th Cir. 2019).
- 166 That is undisputed:** (Trial Transcript, p. 583).
- 208 Lisa Jo Chamberlin was sentenced:** Michelle Liu, “Michelle Byrom, Who Narrowly Escaped Execution After 14 Years on Mississippi’s Death Row, is Dead at 62,” *Mississippi Today* (April 4, 2019), mississippi-today.org/2019/04/04/michelle-byrom-who-narrowly-escaped-execution-after-14-years-on-mississippis-death-row-is-dead-at-62.
- 168 Not many women are sentenced:** Sandra Babcock, “Judged for More Than Her Crime,” Cornell Law School, Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide (2018), www.deathpenaltyworldwide.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Judged-More-Than-Her-Crime.pdf.
- 168 Why didn’t she just leave:** Ronni Mott, “An Innocent Woman: Michelle Byrom vs. Mississippi,” *Jackson Free Press* (March 19, 2014),

www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2014/mar/19/innocent-woman-michelle-byrom-vs-mississippi.

169 Journalists uncovered four written confessions: Ronni Mott, “An Innocent Woman? Michelle Byrom vs. Mississippi,” *Jackson Free Press* (March 19, 2014),

www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2014/mar/19/innocent-woman-michelle-byrom-vs-mississippi.

169 In a shocking move: Ronni Mott, “Michelle Byrom Gets Stunning Sentencing Reversal,” *Jackson Free Press* (April 1, 2014), www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2014/apr/01/michelle-byrom-gets-stunning-sentencing-reversal.

170 Her son, Eddie: Michelle Liu, “Michelle Byrom, Who Narrowly Escaped Execution After 14 Years on Mississippi’s Death Row, is Dead at 62,” *Mississippi Today* (April 4, 2019), mississippitoday.org/2019/04/04/michelle-byrom-who-narrowly-escaped-execution-after-14-years-on-mississippis-death-row-is-dead-at-62.

170 In her own powerful book: Sabrina Butler Smith, *Exonerated: The Sabrina Butler Story*, sabinabutler.webs.com.

171 Solitary confinement has: See generally David Shapiro, “Solitary Confinement in the Young Republic,” 133 *Harvard Law Review* 542 (2019).

173 Howard Patrick testified that: Ward Schaefer, “The Tragic Case of the Scott Sisters,” *Jackson Free Press* (Nov. 3, 2010), www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2010/nov/03/the-tragic-case-of-the-scott-sisters.

173 Gladys was pregnant: Ward Schaefer, “The Tragic Case of the Scott Sisters,” *Jackson Free Press* (Nov. 3, 2010), www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2010/nov/03/the-tragic-case-of-the-scott-sisters.

173 He ordered them released: Holbrook Mohr Associated Press, “Jamie, Gladys Scott Out of Prison in Kidney Deal,” *SFGATE* (Jan. 8, 2011), www.sfgate.com/news/article/Jamie-Gladys-Scott-out-of-prison-in-kidney-deal-2462306.php.

176 Ninety-one percent of trafficking survivors: Jessica Emerson, *State Report Cards: Grading Criminal Record Relief Laws for Survivors of Human Trafficking* (2019). Available at scholarworks.law.ubalt.edu/all_fac/1079.