

# WOMEN'S RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN PRISONS

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# WORLD STATISTICS

- As of 2015, roughly 700,000 women and girls are in prison worldwide (World Prison Brief).
- According to the Ministry of Justice (2014), the countries with the highest number of female inmates are:
  - United States - 215,332
  - China- 103,766
  - Russia- 53,304
  - Thailand- 44,751
  - Brazil- 37,380

# UNITED STATES

- Females make up about 9.3% of all prisoners in 2014
- According to the Sentencing project, there has been an increase in female incarceration from 26,378 in 1980 to 215,332 in 2014.
- High rates of mental illness

# RUSSIA

- Females make up 8.1% of prisoners in the Russian Federation in 2014
- Generally overcrowded
- Limited access to health care, but high rates of HIV
- No gender specific programs for females to reduce re-entry and integration rates

# BRAZIL

- Females make up 6.4% of all prisoners in 2014
- 68% of women are serving time for drug charges
- Generally overcrowded
- Overall female prisons are better than male prisons

# PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE: UNITED STATES

Women in prison in the United States experience severe sexual and physical abuse from both male and female guards. Sadly, over half of these women experienced physical and sexual abuse before being put in prison, as well.

Casey Hodge, an inmate who was serving 3 years in prison, was manipulated into what she thought was a friendship, which turned into several years of rape and stalking from a male guard.



Sexual abuse of women in u.s. state prisons. (1996, December). Retrieved February 27, 2017, from <https://www.hrw.org/legacy/summaries/s.us96d.html>

Brown, J. K. (2015, December 13). Bartered sex, corruption and cover-ups behind bars in nation's largest women's prison . Retrieved February 27, 2017, from <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/special-reports/florida-prisons/article49175685.html>

# PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE: RUSSIA

Women in Russian prisons experience severe physical beatings if they deny anything a guard wants - whether it is sexual or not. They only get a few hours of sleep per day due to constant torture and forced labor.

Tatyana Gavrilova spent 16 years in various Russian prisons. "I was attacked constantly. The prison administration sent prisoners to (come and get me): one assaulted me with a razor blade."



Klimova, M. (2014, December 4). 'Violence breeds violence': one woman's story of 16 years inside a Russian jail. Retrieved February 27, 2017, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/04/sp-russia-prison-tatyana-gavrilova-pussy-rio>

# PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE: BRAZIL

Remarkably, Brazil's national prison law states that only female guards must be employed at women's prisons. There are a few prisons that allow male guards. If there is a male guard at the women's prison, they are restricted from being in certain areas of the prison, such as the housing or shower area.

Violence from staff in women's prisons in Brazil is rare - typically if it happens, it is from outside police, not from guards or even other prisoners.

Most of the abuse suffered is from the prisons that allow male guards - reports of both verbal and physical abuse have been common among these prisons.



# PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE: BRAZIL

A growing issue within Brazilian prisons has been the problem of overcrowding. Prisons typically hold two to five times more prisoners than what they are built to hold.

Prisoners suffer abuses such as being tied to the windows to open up floor space, and being forced to sleep over toilet holes. Because of this, female inmates are starting to be illegally placed in male prisons, where they suffer much more severe abuse from inmates.



# MEDICAL ABUSE: UNITED STATES

- Approximately 5% of women who enter prisons are pregnant
- Reproductive health care is “inadequate and dehumanizing” (Law)
  - Doctors do not explain process to inmates
  - The experience is painful
  - Delayed or lack of responses to testings
- Unrequested or forced sterilizations
- Untimely care
  - The likes of which has resulted in death

# MEDICAL ABUSE: RUSSIA

- HIV and tuberculosis are among the main medical concerns
- 50% of women at a St. Petersburg penitentiary are HIV positive
- These women are lacking access to HIV:
  - Education
  - Testing
  - Counseling
  - Treatment and care
  - Support
- High risk of tuberculosis due to:
  - Overcrowding
  - Poor ventilation
  - Poor hygiene

# MEDICAL ABUSE: BRAZIL

- Approximately 6% of women enter prison pregnant
- 36% reported that they were transferred to the hospital during labor in a police car
- 90% of women's family was not informed of the start of labor
- 30% experienced verbal, psychological and/or physical violence during stay from health staff and and/or prison staff
- 35% of women were handcuffed before, during and/or after childbirth

# CONNECTION WITH CHILDREN: UNITED STATES

- Fewer prisons for women than for men
- I.e. Albion Correctional Facility
  - 40% are more than 370 miles from home
- Unlikely to be apart of foster care planning
- Mothers are 2.5 times more likely to go to parenting classes than fathers
- Nursery units
  - Less than 10% return to prison
  - 33% separated from children return to prison

# CONNECTION WITH CHILDREN: RUSSIA

- 46 of 760 correctional facilities accommodate women
- Almost half of the women are imprisoned outside of their region of residency
- Mordovia
  - Most women never had a visitor
  - 22 different regions represented
- 13 Russian penitentiaries have attached child care facilities
- Penal Code is not followed

# CONNECTION WITH CHILDREN: BRAZIL

- Family visitation is infrequent
  - Negative stigma of being in prison
  - Around 35% do not have visitors
  - Limited visiting hours in overcrowded areas
- Nursing mothers
  - Constitution gives women the right to keep nursing babies during entire lactation period
  - Constitution is not enforced
- Mothers highly dissatisfied with the health care for the children

# PRISON REFORM

- SOLUTIONS TO VIOLATIONS
  - MEDICAL ABUSE
  - SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE
  - CONNECTION WITH CHILDREN
- BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE
- WHAT IS STILL NEEDED?

# MEDICAL ABUSE

FOCUS: PREGNANCY

- EDUCATION AND SUPPORT
  - PROGRAMS TO INFORM
  - BIRTHING CLASSES
  - NURSE/SOCIAL WORKER TO ASK QUESTIONS TO
- MEDICAL ASSISTANCE
  - FULL-TIME PRENATAL NURSE AND GYN ON STAFF
  - PROPER MEDICATIONS
  - USE OF PROPER INSTRUMENTS
- PLACEMENT OUTSIDE OF PRISONS
  - SPECIFIC HOUSING FOR PREGNANT WOMEN
  - ALLOWS FOR SEPARATION AND SPECIFIC TREATMENT
  - WILL DECREASE OVERCROWDING

# PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE

FOCUS: MALE CORRECTION  
OFFICERS

- RESTRICT ACCESS
  - MAKE CERTAIN AREAS OF FEMALE PRISONS OFF-LIMITS TO MALE OFFICERS
- DECREASE NUMBERS OF MALE OFFICERS:
  - HIRE MORE FEMALE OFFICERS THAN MALE
- VET WHO IS HIRED BY FEMALE PRISONS

98% OF STAFF ON INMATE RAPE IS BY MEN  
(FEMALE INMATES, 2014)

# CONNECTION WITH CHILDREN

- ENFORCE ALREADY EXISTING LAWS:
  - MOTHER'S RIGHTS TO VISIT NURSERY IN RUSSIA
  - FOSTER CARE/PARENTAL RIGHTS IN THE U.S.
- CREATION OF PROGRAM TO HAVE FAMILIES MEET HALFWAY
  - TRANSPORTATION FOR FAMILIES
  - TRANSPORTATION FOR WOMEN
  - HALF-WAY BUILDINGS FOR MEETINGS
  - SPECIFIC JOBS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS
    - CASE MANAGEMENT FOR FAMILIES IN NEED OF THIS PROGRAM
    - FACILITATE FOSTER-CARE MEETINGS AND PLANNING
    - PROVIDES MOTHERS AND FAMILIES WITH UPDATES WHEN FAMILIES CANNOT MEET

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

- MATTHEW 25:36-40
  - YOU VISITED ME IN PRISON: WHATEVER YOU DID FOR THE LEAST OF THESE YOU DID FOR ME
  - [HTTPS://WWW.PRISONFELLOWSHIP.ORG](https://www.prisonfellowship.org)
- HEBREWS 13:3
  - REMEMBER THOSE WHO ARE IN PRISON AS THOUGH YOU WERE THERE TOO
- ROMANS 3:23
  - FOR ALL FALL SHORT
  - EVERYONE HAS SINNED AND DESERVES DEATH

# WHAT IS STILL NEEDED?

- RESEARCH: THERE IS VERY LITTLE RESEARCH ABOUT
  - PREGNANT MOTHERS IN PRISON
  - EFFECTS ON NEWBORNS
  - EFFECTS OF MOTHER INCARCERATION AND SINGLE FATHER HOUSEHOLDS ON CHILDREN
- VOICES:
  - ADVOCATE
  - EDUCATE
  - REPRESENT
- RESOURCES
  - [HTTPS://WWW.PRISONACTIVIST.ORG](https://www.prisonactivist.org)
  - [HTTPS://JUSTDETENTION.ORG](https://justdetention.org)
  - [HTTPS://WWW.AMNESTY.ORG/EN](https://www.amnesty.org/en)

QUESTIONS?

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