Anti–Racism in the Digital Age: Everyday Resistance and Belonging in the Prison Justice Movement

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been growing concern over mass incarceration and carceral power in white settler colonial states like the United States and Canada. New digital technologies have increasingly exposed incidents of State-sponsored terror and the racial motivations behind the prison industry. Yet, these digital technologies have also led to an emergence of resistance movements, with prison justice activists and incarcerated people mobilizing in online and offline spaces to dismantle an increasingly corporatized, racist, and hegemonic prison industry. While discussions around prison abolition, digital activism, and dismantling white supremacy are reaching new heights in a digitally connected world, the intersection of these issues has gained little scholarly attention. This paper interrogates how digital technologies in prison justice organizing have reshaped global understanding of everyday anti-racism by focusing on four settler-colonial states, Aotearoa New Zealand, US, Canada, and Australia. By looking at 'everyday' global struggles for carceral abolition, I argue that digital technologies allow for greater recognition, belonging, and equitable inclusion of Indigenous, non-US, gender-diverse, and women leadership and narratives in prison justice movements through collectively stewarded everyday action.

Keywords

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Amidst a global pandemic, the year 2020 gave way to an unprecedented display of transnational solidarity in the anti-racism movement. The extrajudicial killing of George Floyd drove people across the globe to mobilize in online and offline spaces in support of survivors and targets of police brutality. Demands around reimagining public safety and dismantling police forces rose to the fore in public circles, igniting discussions around the efficacy of the current criminal legal system and the abuse of carceral power. In recent years, prison populations in white settler-colonial countries like the US and Canada have exponentially grown since the 1970s, targeting Black and Indigenous communities (Davis, 2003; Wacquant, 2009; Wang, 2018). As modern drug and policing policies continue to criminalize communities of colour (Brewer and Heitzeg, 2008; Taylor and Cooper, 2008), the intersection between race and incarceration has become an increasing area of sociological inquiry.

The prison-industrial complex (PIC), a term defining the intersecting interests of prisons, corporations, and governments to expand and legitimize incarceration, has devastated communities of colour, while ensuring the hegemony of the wealthy, corporate, and political elite. Today, the prison industry functions with economic and political purpose, using police departments, prisons and jails, and surveillance technologies as tools for citizen control (Wang, 2018). Simultaneously, governments have divested funds from community development projects, driving low-income communities of colour into poverty, poor health, homelessness, drug use, and educational and welfare withdrawal with minimal safety nets, thereby forcing them into contact with the criminal justice system (Davis, 2003; Wacquant, 2009). In response to this, resistance against the prison industry has increased traction over the years. While organizing is prohibited in prisons, students, scholars, and incarcerated people are challenging the racialization of the PIC in online and offline spaces (Chandler, 2003; Sudbury, 2000). With the emergence of new digital technologies, activists across geographies are increasingly mobilizing in digital space to counteract racialized mass incarceration and the PIC. Yet, this emerging movement, and the leadership behind it, is highly underrecognized in scholarship.

Digital technologies have reimagined opportunities for everyday knowledge production, expression, and information sharing transnationally, and this research will shed light on how they are driving new ways to challenge the prison industry to develop new global understandings of anti-racism. Specifically, this research examines how internet and communication technologies (ICTs) in abolitionist organizing shape everyday anti-racism in the digital age. In answering this question, this research looks at how ICT use amongst prison justice activists has opened opportunities for marginalized communities around the world to participate, lead, and express everyday resistance locally and globally against the PIC in creative ways. Consequently, I examine the 'everyday anti-racist' actions and leadership of communities who have been traditionally overlooked in prison justice movements and the role of ICTs in elevating their voices.

Understanding Contemporary Movements for Racial Justice

Anti-Racism and the 'Everyday'

There is a growing body of scholarship on everyday anti-racist practices, pedagogies, and strategies used by communities of colour to counter racist experiences encountered in the 'everyday'. Everyday anti-racism, defined as the daily micro-scale practices of non-white people to contest their subjugation, reveals the diverse range of repertoires that communities of colour use in their resistance (Aquino, 2016; Lamont and Fleming, 2005). Everyday anti-racism follows the multiple trajectories of racially subjugated communities, who may elect to downplay their marginalization, remain silent, avoid labelling racism as an issue, or engage in direct confrontation, amongst other resistance tactics, to resist their relegation (Lamont et al., 2016). These daily resistances are employed to respond to everyday racisms, from the microaggressions and less visible acts of racial aggression such as neglect or exclusion, to overt acts of racism, such as racial violence and verbal insults (Aquino, 2016; Lamont et al., 2016). Acknowledging the different ways in which communities respond to everyday racism is critical, particularly as digital technologies have created and enhanced new forms of self-expression.

While traditional conceptions of anti-racist resistance have often applied a universal depiction of overt protest with centralized, often masculine and abled-bodied leadership (Sudbury, 1998), studies of everyday anti-racism provide micro-level attention to the varied articulations of dissent across cultural and racial contexts rather than universalizing anti-racist praxis (Aquino, 2016). Past examinations of the 'everyday' have focused on strategies employed by Black and Indigenous communities in the US and Australia to resist white supremacy, such as engaging in physical confrontation, suppressing emotions to diffuse conflict, avoiding conflict for mental sanity, and talking back to racial epithets (Fleming et al., 2011; Mitchell et al., 2011). Studying the 'everyday' thus sheds light on the multiple actors who are involved in anti-racist resistance, though they can often be denied credit and their efforts overlooked. Other studies have demonstrated how everyday practices of anti-racism are critical in privileging the voices of storytellers who have been historically suppressed. This has become a pertinent practice for contemporary US-based Latinx and Black women, who use social media for content creation and hashtag publics like #SayHerName, to expose the intersection between structural racism and patriarchy (Robinson et al., 2015; Vivienne, 2016).

Social media platforms like Twitter represent important spaces of knowledge production on the 'everyday' for communities of colour. Their increasingly ubiquitous presence has created new opportunities for racial dialogue and challenging white supremacy in the Global North (Banks, 2018; Carlson et al., 2017; Rickford, 2016). They have provided new opportunities for marginalized communities to circulate evidence of State-sponsored violence. This has allowed for activists to decenter commentaries from the hands of State and 'expert'-controlled mass media through a process which Thompson (1995) refers to as *mediated publicness*, wherein public ideas are despatialized and diversified over multiple geographies (Davis, 2016; Petray, 2011; Rickford, 2016).

Yet, studies on everyday anti-racism have often been overlooked, with scholarship heavily concentrating on large-scale anti-racist practices found in social movements and organizational cultures (Lamont and Fleming, 2005). Smaller acts of resistance provide contextualization; in particular, digital technologies have presented a novel channel for activists to share personal stories of oppression on a habitual basis, although these examinations of online micro-resistances are often dismissed (Collins, 2019). Activists campaigning for gender and racial equality frequently disseminate and curate personal stories online to push for social change (Vivienne, 2016). ICTs have given communities around the world, from Palestine to the US to Australia, the ability to narrate everyday life under occupation, ongoing settler-colonialism, and modern-day slavery to a wider, global audience (Aoraugh, 2008; Davis, 2016; Carlson et al., 2017). By circumventing restrictions on physical mobility and travel in offline spaces, ICTs have enabled marginalized people to contribute to public discourse and channel their dissent through habitually accessed spaces like the internet (Aouragh, 2008). Viewpoints that have been historically placed in the margins are able to center themselves to a mainstream public, to "pursue projects not easily accommodated in their local, often limiting and oppressive situation" (Sassen, 2016).

These cases of everyday anti-racism demonstrate how organizers are increasingly resorting to digital tools out of necessity to challenge various forms of racism, settler-colonialism, misogyny, and authoritarian regimes (Aouragh, 2008; Rickford, 2016). Their decisions to express their grievances routinely against racism in online spaces can be seen as anti-racist micro-resistances, since the ability to contest racism in any space or form can be regarded as anti-racist defiance (Omi and Winant, 1996). Beyond physical sites of confrontational protest, the digitization of racial justice movements has demonstrated that anti-racist pursuits are not aberrational activities, but rather processes sustained through everyday action (Collins, 2019; Delgado and Stefencic, 2012; Omi and Winant, 1996).

Counter-Narratives of the Prison-Industrial Complex

Amidst heightened interest and participation in the anti-racist movement in recent years, prison abolition has become a focal struggle for communities of colour. Since the 1970s, mass incarceration has yielded significant suffering for communities of colour, particu-

larly in white settler-colonial States in the Global North, like Canada, Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), and the US (Brewer and Heitzeg, 2008; Davis, 2000). This has been attributable to societal and systemic failings against people of colour through underinvestment, but also due to the depictions of communities of colour as criminal and violent in mass media and film (Yousman, 2013). While tropes of criminality are normalized and accepted into societal consciousness without much scrutiny, the media plays a fundamental role in legitimizing Black and Brown people as inherently dangerous, and justifying punitive discourses in response to it. Media representations of communities of colour as criminal are then used as a form of power to control public attitudes to and acceptance of the carceral state and the people it harms (Fabregat and Kperogi, 2018). In response, critical prison research has focused on the voices and experiences of those affected from inside prisons, especially in the disciplines of criminology, sociology, gender, and ethnic studies (Richards et al., 2008; Sudbury, 2000). Greater attention to the intersections between race and prisons has produced new understandings on the treatment of incarcerated people of colour from currently and formerly incarcerated peoples' epistemologies (Richards et al., 2008).

Despite mass media attempts to attribute the influx of incarcerated people to crime, counternarratives led by prison justice activists and incarcerated people have dispelled these misconceptions, exposing the rampant abuse of incarcerated communities at the hands of the State. In Australia and Aotearoa, Indigenous people have used social media to recount personal stories of their upbringing that led them to incarceration, and coping strategies they use while inside prisons, such as community rituals and resource sharing to curb their isolation (Carlson et al., 2017; Elers and Elers, 2018). In the US and Canada, incarcerated womxn have shed light on their experiences of sexual abuse and harassment, and the multi-layered abuse they suffer by being incarcerated, due to the male-centric infrastructure of prisons (Johnson, 2003; Sudbury, 2009). These counternarratives have allowed incarcerated people to assert themselves as "people's historians" and knowledge bearers of the carceral state in scholarship (James, 2005). Even though these testimonials from prison have come from various countries, critical prison scholarship still disproportionately focuses on the US carceral state, and largely omits global counternarratives of the PIC. (Chandler, 2003; Davis, 2000; Taylor and Cooper, 2008).

Many of these counternarratives have been articulated by identities who experience multiple forms of structural oppression, such as young, womxn, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ people. Through prison writing workshops, drama, and interviews, they have revealed the misogynistic, capitalistic, and cis-dominated impacts of prisons on their bodies (Colvin, 2011; Jacobi, 2011). However, aside from some scholarship that focuses on the local experiences of incarcerated people, most literature criticizes the PIC from a US perspective (Davis and Rodriguez, 2000; Davis, 2000; Gilmore, 2007). Despite the varied global approaches to addressing societal harms and dismantling the carceral state, counternarratives of the PIC that call for prison abolition take on a considerably less global focus in scholarship. Mainstream anti-PIC scholarship has often been critiqued, due to the disproportionate attention to the mass incarceration of Black, Brown, and Latinx men in the US, ignoring the multiple other identities that are also heavily subjugated under the PIC globally.

Despite the abuse that women, particularly Black and Indigenous women, have faced since the imposition of neoliberal policies in the Global North, their experiences rarely receive public media or scholarly scrutiny. Yet, Black feminist scholars in the US have been at the forefront of theorizing alternatives to carceral punishment, rebuking scholarly arguments calling for criminal justice reform (Ben-Moshe, 2013; Davis, 2000, 2003; Gilmore, 2007). Specifically, arguments for prison abolition have emerged in response to criticisms of prison reform strategies for failing to reconcile human rights abuses. Formerly incarcerated people, those at risk of becoming incarcerated, and abolitionist scholars have called for the dismantling of the carceral state (Davis, 2003; Gilmore, 2007; Wang, 2018) and for a complete transformation of society. In essence, prison abolition embodies the ultimate counternarrative to the PIC by interrogating the existence of the entire prison supply chain, calling for a redirection of resources to attend to community needs, such as mental and physical health, housing, sexual violence support, education, and welfare

resources (Davis, 2003). With new and emerging digital technologies, these counternarratives and alternatives to criminal justice systems are increasingly making their way to mainstream discussions.

Digital technologies are important for scholarly examination to understand their transformative potential in producing new critical discourses and content that undergird social movements, solidarity-building, and citizen protest (Gilroy, 1999; Iseke-Barnes, 2002). Yet, scholarly analyses of mainstream acts of anti-racism can sometimes carry a very myopic understanding on anti-racism, one that can oversimplify the habitual and sustained multigenerational struggles for racial freedoms. Counternarratives of the PIC have often focused on the structural shortcomings of the prison industry at the national and global level (Davis, 2003; Gilmore, 2007), rather than interrogating the everyday counternarratives and small-scale acts of resistance to contest the PIC. Since everyday interaction and conversations between internet users create opportunities to (re)produce and uphold racism, it is equally important to understand how these spaces are being contested through digital means to formulate sites of everyday anti-racism.

Thus, this research fills a scholarly void by examining how citizens mobilizing in digital space, a space that embodies an uneven access divide along racial lines, normalize anti-PIC activism in everyday pursuit of social justice. By examining how ICTs produce new sites of contestation between hegemonic white-dominant narratives and prison justice activists in Australia, Canada, Aotearoa, and the US, this research examines the potential of digital technologies in reshaping anti-racist social, cultural, and political interaction through the 'everyday'.

Examining the 'Everyday' in the Digital Age

Under a participatory action research framework, I conducted semi-structured interviews for flexible and in-depth discussions with activists who work towards incarcerated people's rights. Using semi-structured interviews in Australia, Canada, Aotearoa, and the US, I gathered personal accounts on how activists who serve as intermediaries between the 'free world' and prisons use ICTs to elevate counternarratives against the PIC in their everyday anti-racist praxis on a global scale. After emailing community organizers, activists, and scholars involved in prison justice movements across the four countries, I interviewed 10 participants where I asked some central questions to participants about their work, such as their involvement in the prison justice movement, their initial introduction to decarceration work, and ICT use in activism. Interviews were kept flexible, not only going into interviewees' stories, but also engaging in mutual dialogue on the role of the academy in a greater social project around prison justice and focusing on outcomes they were hoping to see through an organizing-academic exchange. Interviewees were also contacted throughout the research process with follow-up questions and opportunities to comment on how they wanted the interview data to be used, and to discuss whether the research could be transformed to assist in volunteer, organizational, or public policy work. This approach intends to extend the application of research beyond the academy based on community needs, and to critically reflect on my own assumptions about the experiences and understandings of incarceration.

ICTs are used amongst prison justice organizers for a spectrum of reasons; therefore, unpacking their relevance by first questioning what digital technologies they use and how they use it in their organizing and context was critical before delving into their organizing outcomes. Interviews included individuals in white settler colonies like Australia, Canada, Aotearoa, and the US to examine how settler-colonial and racially heterogenous States are transnationally affecting their local and global struggle against the PIC. Given the oversaturation of US scholarship around the carceral state, I widened the geographical scope of interviews to include the three other white settler colonies, to gather a greater understanding of how carcerality affects Indigenous communities in other settler colonial contexts, and to see how similarly or differently resistance takes form.

Interviewees were initially contacted based on academic connections and a preliminary scoping of relevant activists and movement builders in the prison justice space, then further interviewees were snowball sampled. Interviewees across the four countries were anonymized for confidentiality purposes. The interviews centered around principal

themes in their everyday struggle, namely: 1) the ways in which systems of incarceration has affected them personally, 2) the ways in which they resist carceral systems, 3) the use of digital technologies in their struggle, and 4) pathways forward and solidarity-building between grassroots organizing and the academy. Ultimately, the research asked participants how ICTs are relevant for mobilizing purposes in their domestic struggle against police terror and State violence, as well as the broader struggle against a hegemonic globalizing practice of the PIC.

Shifting Everyday Anti-Racisms in the Digital Age

While the process by which anti-PIC praxis and ideas are mainstreamed into contemporary discourses has been minimally understood in scholarship, digital technologies have demonstrated how emerging anti-PIC counternarratives can produce and re-shift meanings of everyday anti-racism. Just as the manifestations of racism are shifting over time, ICTs have elevated new counternarratives and practices against the PIC by diversifying participation in and expressions of everyday anti-racism. This paper argues that by examining everyday anti-racism in online spaces, it can reveal the oftentimes hidden leadership of marginalized communities in prison justice movements and show how these everyday anti-racist actions are not individually-led motivations to the prison industry, but a collective action and body of work of anti-carceral communities around the world.

Revealing Gendered Leadership in Everyday Anti-Racism

ICTs have been particularly liberating for those who have been formerly sidelined in anti-PIC movements. To exemplify, while three queer Black women in the US founded Black Lives Matter (BLM) to lead a resistance to dismantle the PIC, BLM has been criticized over their supposed leaderless movement (Hall, 2016). They were not regarded as leaders because they emphasized group-centered organizing rather than conforming to traditional modes of anti-racist organizing, which rewards individualistic, masculine leadership styles (Sudbury, 1998). The under-recognition over BLM's leadership reflects how some voices in the anti-racist movement are erased and sidelined (Hall, 2016). Yet, ICTs are enabling organizers who have been historically excluded from anti-racist organizing to navigate exclusionary practices even within progressive spaces like anti-PIC work.

Gloria, who works at a sexual and domestic violence centre in the US, discussed how she approaches her organizing through the *last girl framework*:

> The *last girl framework* imagines someone who is most marginalized in society, so probably someone who is genderqueer, trans, poor, low-income, Black or Indigenous, etc., and we center that last girl in all the decision-making that we do. In relation to mass incarceration, we talk to people in positions of power so that when they are creating systems of change, they are centering that last girl in board discussions, police departments, or media presence. We think about who may come into contact with the criminal justice system, often survivors of sexual assault and violence, and we see them as the last girl impacted by mass incarceration and systems of detainment of extraction that need protecting.

Gloria expressed how using this framework in digital spaces allows her to mainstream other gendered narratives around the PIC, particularly when shedding insight into the rampant levels of sexual violence experienced by incarcerated women in prisons. Since 2020, she has launched social media outreach campaigns for sexual assault survivors and provided virtual healing spaces for formerly incarcerated women of colour, which have given visible and public attention to the gendered experiences and conditions of incarceration. Acknowledging the sometimes-exclusionary environment of prison justice work which often focuses on incarcerated men's experiences, Gloria's discussed how gender-diverse communities and women can find their space and ability to belong within activist circles by sharing their unique carceral experiences. Raising their narratives in online spaces also demonstrates how women and LGBTQ+ incarcerated communities are at the forefront of mobilizing against carceral abuse, despite little mainstream coverage.

Although women are the fastest-growing prison population in the US, Canada, Australia, and Aotearoa, prisons are commonly depicted as sites for incarcerated men (Bartels et al., 2020; Deckert, 2019; Jeffries and Newbold, 2016; Kilroy, 2016; Pate, 2011). Despite the oversight of women's incarceration, the criminalization of racialized women's bodies in the carceral state is not a new practice. Historically, Black women slaves were criminalized and sentenced to death for self-protection from sexual assault and gendered violence committed by their slave masters (Kaba, 2019). The formation of Australia as a penal state led to Indigenous women experiencing greater encounters with sexual violence upon contact with white settlers, while colonial administrations simultaneously made prisons as the default option for body control on stolen Indigenous land (Kilroy, 2016; Pate, 2011).

Petra, a Wellington-based organizer who works with young Maori people at risk of incarceration criticized how oversaturated depictions of US and UK incarcerated men in media is misleading, because "Indigenous women suffer as both women and Indigenous in New Zealand, from not just a current-day issue of incarceration, or a modern one, but from intergenerational trauma and cycle that leads to incarceration pushing people into the justice system." Petra's narrative furthers the idea that Indigenous women are not only doubly burdened by the PIC because of contemporary gendered and racial subjugation, but also from an intergenerational and colonial one, wherein women were subjugated to sexual abuse under settler-colonial administrations.

Since most cases of sexual   are unreported or unaddressed, organizers like Gloria and Petra have used online channels to publicize how the prison industry targets women, particularly Black and Indigenous women. When questioning why Gloria carries out her work through digital and visual campaigns, she responded:

> When Black, Brown, and Indigenous women experience sexual violence, we have been conditioned to rely on a racist system like police departments and the justice system. Yet when we think of mass incarceration, we typically only see images of Black and Brown men, middle-aged men, and probably more able-bodied men.

With the rise of neoliberal government policies, women have also been criminalized for their mental health condition (Jeffries and Newbold, 2016; Pate, 2011; Tripodi and Pettus-Davis, 2013), rather than addressing the underlying roots of patriarchy and sexual violence that resulted in their experiences of trauma. Gloria and Petra challenge these hegemonic narratives of men's incarceration by placing greater emphasis on Black and Indigenous, trans, gender non-conforming, and women identities' voices through media campaigns and virtual community healing spaces, by centering their liberation as the pathway for prison abolition and emphasizing the need for gendered belonging and justice within society. Through online organizing, they expose issues of patriarchy and cis-gender privilege within the prison industry and counter-hegemonic narratives in anti-PIC organizing and in scholarship that typically evaluates mass incarceration as a gendered 'woman/man' binary that affects predominantly men.

By sharing online stories, healing circles, and infographics of how varied communities are affected by the PIC, Petra and Gloria have exposed how 'prisons' refer to the racial and sexual captivity of women, trans, and gender nonconforming bodies notwithstanding their incarcerated status. This is particularly critical given how anti-PIC responses and services have typically focused on men's experiences. Wielding the power of ICTs to integrate feminist, trans, and LGBTQ+ led counternarratives have given greater public exposure to demands for gender-specific support inside and outside prisons, and how carceral abolition is also re-shifting understanding around building a society where all genders are able to belong. Equally, it has revealed how narratives fighting mass incarceration and carceral injustice have also been led by diverse genders, in contrast to a heavily documented practice of male leadership.

When asked about why the omission of diverse carceral experiences is problematic, Gloria discussed that,

> Justice is not attainable in our capitalist, white supremacist society because a lot of the times, there are other systems that come into play with mass incarceration. When we think about policing, we think that where there is an issue, calling 911 is safe, and we don't think of our community as the place where we can address sexual harm, trauma, and mental health suffered by women and survivors.

Organizers like Petra and Gloria have shown how ICT use has been deployed to counter mainstream anti-PIC efforts, in a deliberate effort to elevate the gendered consequences of incarceration. ICT use is enabling previously sidelined activists to claim online spaces of prison justice activism, which has demonstrated the diverse and heterogenous communities who have been leading anti-PIC work. Consequently, this increased participation and diversified resistance has not only shown the diverse leadership of anti-racist activism in gender and in geographical location, but also demonstrated the increased everyday awareness of the intimate linkages between sexual and gendered violence and mass incarceration and the prison industry.

Indigenizing Everyday Anti-Racism

While the racialization of the PIC has become increasingly focal in public discourses in the Global North, the lack of critical attention to mass incarceration outside of the US has led to the invisibility of Indigeneity in discussions around race and racism (Robertson, 2015), despite high Indigenous incarceration rates in white settler colonies like Canada and Australia. Yet, ICTs have uncovered how Indigenous communities have been on the frontlines of anti-PIC organizing and have been interrogating Indigenous deaths in custody and legal policies that incriminate Indigenous people in online and offline spaces.

Prison justice organizers in Canada, Aotearoa, and Australia rejected the US and UK-centric understandings of incarceration and carceral abolition and how it has become synonymous with the global abolition movement. In particular, interviewees expressed their frustrations with US carceral systems and activism being transposed onto their contextual realities because of their unique and country-specific histories and structures of penal punishment. Kira, who works for a grassroots legal clinic offering psycho-social support to incarcerated women in Australia, reflected how in both online and offline spaces, "America very much leads the conversation and the direction in this space...but in Australia we don't use the American legal system, we aren't informed by it at all, or very sparingly." Despite increasingly global practices of privatization, neoliberalism, and militarization, anti-PIC work involves operating within the context of the national racialized social system. Imposing an Americentric and UK-centric understanding of, and response to, the carceral state obfuscates the contextual historical impacts of settler-colonialism in other countries.

On the topic of prison abolition, Indigenous activists maintained the ethos of decarceration has always existed from a historical and cultural epistemology. When asked about imagining a future society, Nikau, a Maori prison justice activist in Aotearoa, asserted that "from a postcolonial or decolonization perspective, Maori would say that prisons would have no space in our society, they didn't exist prior to *Pakeha*, or white people, in New Zealand." Nikau's rationale reveals how prisons run paradigmatically counter to Maori way of life, a sentiment agreed upon by other Australian and Aotearoa-based interviewees. The Indigenous case for abolition, which has been minimally covered in mainstream media, highlights how practices of body captivity through white carceral institutions originate from colonial conquest, and instead emphasize the need to incorporate Indigenous epistemologies in everyday anti-racist praxis to strengthen cases for abolition.

While Aotearoa and Canadian interviewees spoke of government attempts to build prisons in line with Maori and First Nations principles, they also highly criticized these efforts. While Nikau previously supported this reconciliatory attempt to integrate Indigenous perspectives, he later redacted his support, noting,

> They did try to build a prison based on Maori values, just for Maori, but the difficulty is that the Department of Corrections wants to control that, and when they try to control, it removes a lot of the ethos and the spiritual values that we hold close. My position, while I initially supported that, is that we shouldn't do it, because the Department would not allow the freedom for that to succeed. It's a waste of time because they will never allow us to fulfill our responsibilities.

This non-Indigenous conception of penal punishment is particularly problematic in contexts in the Global North, wherein prisons and police institutions have been built on unceded Indigenous territories. While mainstream anti-PIC in the US or UK lack examination on settler-colonial impacts on current carceral practices, ICTs are increasingly exposing how the oppression of Indigenous people in prisons is not only a phenomenon that emerged with rising neoliberalism, rather as a direct consequence of settler-colonialism. Australian and Canadian prison justice activists have issued zines and audio studios documenting how Indigenous people continue to suffer from intergenerational trauma, experiencing high rates of poverty, drug abuse, homelessness, social isolation, and under-resourced food deserts, which ultimately places them into contact with the prison state. Interviewees discussed how intergenerational storytelling is now often transmitted online in addition to offline spaces, revealing how Indigenous communities were thriving before white settlement dispossessed them of their resources, body, and capital, and pushed them into the carceral system.

Anti-PIC counternarratives articulated through creative and diverse capacities corroborate the work of Indigenous scholars, who argue that Indigenous communities engage with a myriad of written, audio, and visual mediums for self-expression and resistance (Datta, 2018; Iseke, 2013). By enabling more diverse self-expressions and epistemologies that are compatible with Indigenous tradition, ICTs have allowed Indigenous internet users and other communities of colour who learn in non-colonial ways to express and understand carceral terror (Carlson et al., 2017). Though digital information is often fashioned as a shift towards modernization, traditional use of oral histories, storytelling, art, and visuals for social expression and intergenerational knowledge transfer has always been foundational to the survival of Indigenous communities (Iseke, 2013). Despite the digital divide, which has resulted in limited ICT access and use for Indigenous communities in Canada, Australia, Aotearoa, and the US, this research reflects how Indigenous epistemologies and practices are not at odds with digitization. Rather, they have re-emerged in public digital spheres, leading to a reclamation of Indigenous space and belonging and overt revival of Indigenous practice in everyday anti-racism movements. In doing so, the survival of their artistic and cultural expressions in digital space has amplified their anti-racist struggle by resisting a system of oppression that has been predicated on the expropriation and erasure of Indigenous identity in space.

Mainstream digital conversations around the criminal justice system are still intellectually and organizationally dominated by non-Indigenous actors in the US and UK. Yet, with a growing participation of Indigenous people on the internet, Indigenous communities are not only leading digital movements against the PIC, but also against lesser visible power struggles within the prison justice movement. By exposing government abuse against incarcerated Indigenous people, and the ongoing complicity of non-Indigenous people in the Global North who deny their contributions as settlers on Indigenous land, Indigenous anti-PIC organizers have produced new conversations around anti-racism as a domestic racial project and broader resistance against empire in online spaces.

Subverting Digital Spaces: Mobilizing Justice across Borders

In responding to State narratives of the PIC, activists working with incarcerated Indigenous communities often opted for a wider range of multimedia communication in their digital advocacy work vis-à-vis other participants. In Aotearoa, Petra described spending much of her time "hosting digital art exhibitions with formerly incarcerated people, dramatizing national plays, recording songs, and engaging in online storytelling platforms" of Maori and Pacific Islander carceral experiences. In Canada, Jack, a Canadian law student working in prison education, discussed how he "communicates the realities of First Nations people to the public through blog articles, policy briefs, and op-ed journal pieces," reflecting the various global outlets used to circulate Indigenous experiences in digital spaces. Nikau noted,

> We maintain close contact with a couple of African academics who have specialized in New Zealand in looking at the treatment of African youth by the police, and that's been very helpful. In terms of our media work we compare what is happening in the US, or in the UK, or Canada with what is happening in New Zealand…some of the progressive work down in Canada, we talk about some of their approaches that could actually be applied in New Zealand.

Nikau's examples demonstrate how international knowledge-sharing has been mediated by digital communication, which would not have been made possible otherwise. His ability to draw commonalities between settler-colonial states to imagine alternatives to policing and prisons through international media indicate his reliance on ICTs to seek redress for Maori people. This also shows how activists are using technology for cross-border knowledge exchange as part of their everyday organizing to build an international anti-racist imaginary beyond the nation-state, and to strategize on a world without prisons. Kai, a formerly incarcerated person in California and prison abolitionist, discussed how he uses the internet to look up "alternative policy reform models in countries such as Germany and the Netherlands when lobbying governments to pass specific bills," and live streams these efforts to keep internet users updated in real-time of global efforts for decarceration.

When asked about any potential collaborations with anti-PIC organizers outside of the US, Gloria mentioned that she organizes with Idaho-based activists, but looks at "international forms of resistance against penal punishment, such as campaigns against forced labour and sexual assault and digital forums building intergroup solidarities," with some of her connections reaching women and gender-diverse communities from the Global South. Other interviewees seconded Gloria's techniques of transnational solidarity building and noted the importance of using digital tools to connect to geographically disparate communities to exchange best organizing practices of anti-carceral struggles, such as women living near military operations or under settler colonial contexts. While women activists noted the perils of digital organizing, such as online harassment or cybersurveillance, they discussed how using the Internet to correspond with women fighting mass incarceration in different countries has allowed them to subvert hostile digital spaces for their activism. Herein, digital technologies are not only demonstrating the anti-racist efforts being led by women globally but are creating connections between women and gender-diverse communities in the Global North and South.

Normalizing this new understanding of anti-racism is critical for many reasons. By decentering the historical and contemporary work of prison justice away from a US and UK-centric model, it becomes clear that formulations and ideas around decarceration have always flowed transnationally. In fact, many Indigenous knowledge sharing practices have not relied on the US prison justice model at all. Indigenous interviewees from different communities in Aotearoa, Australia, and Canada have indicated separate emerging periods of prison abolition and organizing at simultaneous times, noting that the leadership around prison justice has always existed in international spheres, and not just in the US.

The Indigenous ethos and knowledge system of collaboration and trust allows for online conversations and debates around the PIC that are not 'claimed' or 'owned' but mutually stewarded by activists and allies, challenging the notion that 'everyday' activism happens at an individual level. ICTs not only reveal what the prison system does to communities of colour, but also how mainstream anti-PIC praxes and theories have often excluded voices within the movement who have been organizing for years, like Indigenous people. Digital spaces allow for Indigenous communities, activists outside of the US, and women and gender diverse communities to raise their counternarratives around prison justice to the fore, and thus re-shifts the anti-racist movement to privilege international voices of minoritized groups.

Thus, ICTs have given new direction and meaning for incarcerated people, communities of colour, and their allies to become leaders in everyday anti-racist movements in digital spaces by giving exposure to grassroots communities mobilizing globally. This research demonstrates how ICTs are capable of subverting power geometries and spatial networks to transcend divisions between highly surveilled prisons and the 'free world,' by taking their activism to online spaces and advocate for an inclusive and safe environment for marginalized communities. Even more, it has shown how ICTs reimagine the frequency at which communities are communicating through a multidirectional, multi-lingual, and international process that has opened new potential for solidarity work and movement participation on an everyday level.

What Does This Say About Everyday Anti-Racism?

These digital shifts in everyday anti-racism underscore how ICTs have allowed previously excluded participants in the anti-racist movement to claim more focal roles, and allow them to express their resistance in diverse forms of Indigenous and non-Indigenous meaning-making. In this following section, I discuss how digital mobilization for carceral abolition has allowed us to re-define everyday anti-racism as a concept that is more inclusive and global in its definition.

First, the emergence of counternarratives to the PIC led by women, gender diverse, Indigenous, and Global South communities living under occupation and carceral struggle in online spaces has demonstrated the oftentimes hidden or neglected leadership of prison justice movements. While much of the attention in abolition leadership has centered around US organizers and male leadership, this research demonstrates how Indigenous communities in other white settler-colonial states like Australia and Canada have been equally mobilizing for years against carceral abolition. Furthermore, the research has demonstrated how women have been fighting the gendered realities of incarceration, including sexual violence in prisons and body colonization suffered under settler-colonial projects. The widespread existence of virtual healing spaces, online campaigns, and virtual workshops led by women and Indigenous communities shed light on gendered, racial, and geographical realities of mass incarceration and has revealed how the leadership behind the prison justice movement exists beyond a seemingly male- and US-dominated demographic.

Additionally, the widespread and public accessibility of these counternarratives on online spaces also reveal a greater potential for inclusive participation in the prison justice movement. To exemplify, the ICTs have the capabilities to influence and expose a formerly unaware demographic to develop abolitionist ideologies; this challenges the notion that everyday anti-racist praxis can only be practiced by communities of colour or by communities directly experiencing the PIC. Due to the increased awareness of the PIC in global communities in digital spheres, allies of incarcerated people can participate in everyday action in solidarity to combat the local and daily oppression of incarcerated people and dismantle local and global white supremacy.

Secondly, the use of digital technology for everyday anti-racist anti-PIC organizing has demonstrated how singular and micro-scale resistances to address timely acts of racism are not only limited to moments of racial aggression, as it has been understood in scholarship (Aquino, 2016; Lamont and Fleming, 2005). Instead, everyday anti-racism can also

include efforts that contest sustained historical and contemporary processes of settler-co-lonialism and sexual violence. Most scholarly literature defines everyday anti-racism as the individual micro-resistances undertaken by communities of color to contest their own racial subjugation (Aquino, 2016; Lamont and Fleming, 2005; Lamont et al., 2016), yet the increasing use of ICTs for prison justice organizing and anti-racist collaboration have shift-ed understandings of everyday anti-racism to encompass collective action against global white supremacy and carcerality. Many Indigenous communities express their dissent and practice their leadership in prison justice circles through non-colonial epistemologies and through a 'we-based' approach rather than an individual one by collectively reimag-ining a society without prisons. This research redefines understandings of everyday an-ti-racism as a practice that can be collective, rather than its current mainstream definition as an individualistic tradition. Thus, this calls for the necessity to redefine the 'everyday' resistance as one that is also practiced globally and collectively just as it is locally.

Moreover, everyday anti-racism moves beyond individual reactionary decisions and responses, but involves an iterative process, wherein anti-racist praxes are constantly adapting to the evolving manifestations of racial aggressions. Since abolitionist approach-es often involve a multi-dialogue, long-term, and intersectional approach to reimagining society and prisons, their everyday resistance is not always perceptible by overt and fixed action as understood in scholarship. My research expands upon scholarly definitions of everyday anti-racism by calling for a rethinking of the 'everyday' as exchanges beyond small-scale outcomes and decisions but acknowledges a mediated process between an-ti-racist actors. It is important to define everyday anti-racism beyond individual efforts to resist local oppression to further credit how these individuals are informed and inspired by voices who may be less visible in the movement, such as Indigenous people, women, and trans and gender nonconforming communities.

This research thus underscores two pertinent themes in understanding anti-racist organ-izing against the prison industry in the digital age. One, I expand the understanding of anti-PIC leadership by demonstrating how examining digital spaces gives credit, visibility, and a sense of belonging to Indigenous, non-US, women, and gender-diverse communi-ties and activists who have been mobilizing for prison justice and abolition for years, de-spite mainstream media overlooking their contributions. Two, I expand the definition of everyday anti-racism to include actions from different epistemologies and meaning-mak-ing, by looking to how historically excluded groups in the anti-racist movement express themselves orally, visually, musically, and discursively in collective resistance. By expand-ing the definition of everyday anti-racism, my research shows how everyday anti-racism is not just about what is being done, but about acknowledging who is doing the work and how they are doing it through a global focus.

The Responsibility of the Academy in Everyday Anti-Racism

This research has demonstrated how digital technologies used in prison justice organiz-ing opens possibilities for *who* can partake, and *how* we understand the anti-racist move-ment. It has reimagined the definition of everyday anti-racism to adopt a more inclusive definition, one that does not only attribute local resistances to racism as an individual ef-fort, rather a part of a larger, global resistance made up of diverse communities who have a way of belonging and expressing their resistance within the prison justice movement. In reshaping new understandings and practices of everyday anti-racism in the digital age, my contribution to scholarship is two-fold.

First, my transnational examination of prison justice movements and their use of ICTs have contributed to nuanced understandings of everyday anti-racism in exposing hid-den leadership behind the anti-PIC movement. This research focused beyond the US and UK-centric nature of the PIC to depict how ICTs helps subvert this power dynamic in pris-on justice movements which have frequently given greater mainstream attention to male and US leadership over Indigenous, non-US based, women, and gender diverse voices. ICTs have allowed activists to challenge this imbalance and center their voices in anti-rac-ist organizing spaces, by creating zines, virtual workshops, and hosting open-access on-

line discussions about the movement. My research captures new nuances of how communities resist the PIC through creative, collective, and cultural means, such as the use of podcasts, digital storytelling, online petitions, and livestream videos and explain why issues of safety, stigma, cybersurveillance, and culture may require activists to exercise an anti-racist praxis in digital ways that may not be understood by current scholarship of the 'everyday'.

Second, this research reveals how ICTs in anti-PIC work stem beyond a resistance of micro-level or localized racisms in the 'everyday'. Rather, the research demonstrated how anti-PIC narratives are collectively stewarded and informed by digital connections and inspiration from various geographies. It redefines that everyday anti-racism is not only a singular effort, but rather a mediated process that is formed by multiple actors and epistemologies. This research contributes to redefining everyday anti-racism to encompass all verbal, written, musical, spiritual, multilingual, and multi-collaborative expressions that fall beyond the individual responses to racial aggressions, but collectively work together to fight global prison injustices and white supremacy. Everyday anti-racism encompasses the ability to resist beyond immediate, localized forms of oppression, but also broader, macro-level, and global racism through digital technology. Recognizing that the individual actions in anti-PIC movements are in fact a product of global collaboration not only demonstrates how everyday anti-racism is not just individualistic, but rather gives credit to those who were previously sidelined, revealing the true diversity of people leading anti-racist vocations to the mainstream digital public.

Opening this definition of everyday anti-racism by looking towards digital mobilization is critical in academic scholarship, to diversify the credit of marginalized communities in prison justice activism, and to widen discourse of anti-racist actions beyond the localized and individual. Given the rapid digitization of society, and increasing attention to the PIC, the academy must closely follow and contribute to the empirical practices of anti-racism in the digital sphere and maximize its strengths to diminish the exercise of State power in racial oppression.

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