

## The Second Murder of Sean Bell: Why We Must Fight Back (continued...)

The three cops would not have been tried at all had it not been for the struggle waged after Bell was killed. Tens of thousands of people around the country, and specifically in New York, expressed their just indignation and gave the authorities no other choice.

The judge showed his allegiance, proving once again that an officer of an unjust criminal justice system can not be trusted to rule justly when the defendants are “officers of the law.”

We demand that there be a new trial by jury, while recognizing the severe limitations of courts that are used to send Black, Brown and poor white workers to prison at an alarming rate for merely trying to survive in an oppressive and repressive country.

If the movement remains vigilant and doesn't relinquish the streets, then the courts will have no choice.

We can not suffer a third death of Sean Bell or another police killing. But to ultimately put an end to police brutality and oppression we must fight back against all forms of oppression and take the streets once and for all..



## Four generations of women

*Workers World Party and the Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST) youth group co-sponsored a March 28 forum, “Which way forward for the women’s movement?” that commemorated International Working Women’s Month in New York City. Ranging in ages from 21 to 82, the speakers included Christina Hilo, Filipinas for Rights and Empowerment (FiRE); Tyneisha Bowens and LeiLani Dowell, FIST and WWP; and Teresa Gutierrez, Monica Moorehead and Deirdre Griswold, WWP secretariat members. Pam Parker, a singer and WWP member in the D.C./Baltimore area, performed three songs. Joyce Kanowitz, WWP member, recited poetry. Go to <http://fistyouth.wordpress.org> to listen to the meeting.*

The following are excerpts from the speakers:

**Tyneisha Bowens:** Young women, the next generation of the women’s movement, are not just taking note of the increasing attacks on our rights as women; we are acting against these attacks. Youth and students are taking up initiatives to create a new women’s movement free of segregation and racism, built-in patriarchy and heteronormativity and the class divide of what calls itself the women’s movement today.

We are taking lessons from those that fought before us in creating a multinational sexually diverse women’s movement inclusive to the unique needs of women today and based on the elevation of queer women and women of color. We are redefining our sex, genders and sexualities as it is our responsibility to do. We are protecting the right of self-determination for all women in all nations across the world.

**Christina Hilo:** Filipinas first commemorated International Women’s Day in 1971 at the onset of the dictatorial rule of Ferdinand Marcos. With the establishment of GABRIELA in 1984, women under the alliance continued the militant tradition of commemoration of IWD from then on, recognizing the contribution of millions of working women’s struggles in the past.

Today, Filipino working women carry on the struggle a time of worsening economic and political crises under the seven-year Macapagal-Arroyo regime—a regime most subservient to U.S. imperialist dictates, most corrupt and tyrannical, and almost equaling the Marcos dictatorship in its fascism. The military’s policy of rape and sexual abuse against women in captivity is indeed enraging.

Our 8 March 2008 campaign is the persistence of the historic struggle and victory of the women’s movement as our own contribution to the intensifying struggle of the Filipino people. We will unleash a strong mass struggle of women against dire poverty, corruption and the tyranny of the Arroyo regime.



Tyneisha Bowens



Christina Hilo

## speak on important struggles

**Teresa Gutierrez:** We have so many heroes to look at. In the immigrant struggle comes to mind the case of sister Elvira Arellano, who is one example of many people, many workers, immigrant workers, who are having to spend 1,000 percent of their energy surviving and going to work, taking care of their families, but because of the repression, and because of the exploitation, are thrust into the political struggle and into the movement. It is inspiring to see someone like Elvira or Flor [Crisóstomo], or the mother of Amadou Diallo [Kadiatou Diallo], also as examples of women fighting back in terms of immigration and the horrific attacks; someone like Elvira is one of the many examples of the potential that exists in the U.S. right now to organize and to elevate the class struggle. So Elvira, Flor and the mother of Amadou Diallo are all examples of what lies there in the future for us.

**LeiLani Dowell:** As the Party, we would never compare the various levels of oppression that different groups face—people of color vs. women or LGBT people, for example.

However, we do pay particular attention to the intersection of oppression, how women of color face a double oppression; how lesbians of color face an even greater oppression.

The leadership of the broader women’s movement, which has historically been seen as majority white, has not always been correct in its understanding of the intersection of oppressions and its support of those facing the most attacks. For instance, some mainstream groups have been unclear about the fact that abortion is not a right unless all women can afford to have one. Others have completely ignored the forced sterilization that particularly Black and Latina women faced in the 1970s.

More recently, some of the leaders of the women’s movement have made statements along the lines of, “If you don’t support Hillary Clinton, you’re a traitor to women.” How do Black women factor into this? Do you have to choose between being a so-called traitor to your gender, or a traitor to your race? This type of reasoning doesn’t factor in Clinton’s pro-imperialist politics. If you don’t vote for Clinton—who has supported policies that have brought absolute misery to immigrant women, women in Iraq, and poor women in the U.S.—somehow you’re a traitor of women?

It’s been said here before and can’t be said enough in this particular, peculiar election year—we must be prepared to condemn any misogynist attacks against Clinton, just as we defend Obama against racist attacks, no matter how we feel about their politics.

And every pro-feminist and anti-racist should be thinking about this enough in this particular, peculiar election year—we must be prepared to condemn any misogynist attacks against Clinton, just as we defend Obama against racist attacks, no matter how we feel about their politics. And every pro-feminist and anti-racist should be thinking about this.

**Monica Moorehead:** Black and Latin@ people are victims in disproportionate numbers of the subprime mortgage loans carried out by predatory loan companies. According to the United for a Fair Economy report, Black people account for close to 55 percent of all high cost mortgages while constituting just over 13 percent of the overall general population.

And within these oppressed communities, women are especially targeted by these companies, including single mothers seeking a better life for themselves and their children. For instance, Black women are five times more likely to end up with a subprime mortgage than white men according to the Consumer Federation of America, a reflection of racist and sexist policies interwoven within capitalism. Black people were in a housing crisis long before this foreclosure scandal erupted, especially with the attacks on public housing made even more acute in the aftermath of Katrina and Rita. But now

this crisis affords the opportunity of merging together struggles of those facing the foreclosure of their homes with those facing evictions from their rented houses or apartments into a national movement to win a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions, a concession that can only be won from below in a united way. And the April 16 demonstration offers a wonderful opportunity to spark this kind of united fightback against these greedy bankers and the politicians in Congress whose pockets the bankers line. In light of the devastating impact that the crisis with foreclosures and public housing is having on oppressed and working women, a women’s contingent should be organized for April 16. This is an important vehicle for orienting the women’s movement in an independent, anti-racist, militant way.

**Deirdre Griswold:** Today, more women are serving in the U.S. armed forces than at any other time in U.S. history, including World Wars I and II. One in every seven soldiers in the Middle East is a woman. As of a year ago, more than 160,500 U.S. women soldiers had served in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East since the U.S. invasions began.

Not too much has been written about the lives of these women once they become soldiers. In fact, it took a former general, Janis Karpinski, to blow the cover on how the women are treated by their fellow male soldiers—especially those of higher ranks.

Karpinski had been the commanding general at Abu-Ghraib prison camp, until she was scapegoated for the atrocious tortures there. Karpinski in 2006 told a panel of judges at a Commission of Inquiry for Crimes against Humanity Committed by the Bush Administration that several women soldiers had actually died of dehydration because they refused to drink liquids late in the day. Why? They were afraid of being assaulted or even raped by male soldiers if they had to use the women’s latrine after dark.

Is it such a stretch to hope that women soldiers will realize that it’s the Iraqi people and all working and oppressed people fighting for their liberation, who are THEIR side? ■



Teresa Gutierrez



Monica Moorehead



Deirdre Griswold