

I Raise My Voice

Leslie Feinberg

Feinberg, a transgender activist (www.transgenderwarrior.org) and author of "Stone Butch Blues," "Trans Liberation: Beyond Pink or Blue" and other transgender and gender progressive works, received an honorary doctorate from Starr King School in May 2007. Feinberg delivered this speech at the school's commencement ceremonies.

I raise my voice here for all those the government is trying to silence.

I raise my voice to demand "free Mumia Abu-Jamal" so loudly that I hope this Black revolutionary journalist can hear me from his death-tow cell in Pennsylvania. He was accused of killing a white police officer after he opened up a journalistic investigation into police brutality in Philadelphia. Tonight we are all wearing this sticker to demonstrate our solidarity with Mumia who is in court in Philadelphia today, facing a new trial or a new execution date.

I raise my voice for AIM warrior Leonard Peltier, behind bars for killing an FBI agent, despite the government's admission that they don't know who shot the agent. The firefight occurred on a day when an energy corporation seized 1/8 of Oglala land.

I raise my voice for the Cuban 5--serving long sentences for the crime of trying to stop CIA-bankrolled terror attacks from U.S. soil against Cuba--while Luis Posada Carriles, a long-time CIA operative who boasts of his civilian kills, walks free in Miami.

I salute the indomitable determination of the peoples of the Middle East and Central Asia, of Africa and Latin America, who are fighting for their right to self-determination and sovereignty, refusing to be enslaved by the empire.

I speak out for undocumented immigrants, who risk their lives to cross the desert, or face the muzzle of immigration police and vigilante guns, and face police-state raids on workplaces and homes. There are no borders in this struggle.

I speak out for Muslim, Arab and South Asian immigrants being rounded up in the U.S., detained, deported and tortured where no one hears their screams.

I raise my voice alongside those of the Black movement demanding reparations from slavery and the right of Katrina survivors to return to their homes.

If we raise our voices together, we cannot be silenced. Let our solidarity thunder. Let our solidarity roar.

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