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SFPD: Don't Even Try To Front, We Know You Didn't Kill Harding to "Protect Women"

feminist critique committee

July 20, 2011

During the anti-police demo on 7/19/11 in response to the murder of two men by BART and San Francisco police, we handed out this leaflet to contribute some thoughts on police murders through the lens of some anti-statist, anti-capitalist feminists.

Last Saturday, a man who didn't pay his MUNI fare ran away from the cops trying to ticket him. The cops took out their guns and shot Kenneth Harding in the back 6 to 10 times in Bayview-Hunters Point. In the aftermath, the police and the media first claimed that he had a gun, then began to expose Harding's "misogynist past," downplaying the fact that he was just murdered in cold blood for fare evasion.

The Police and the State consistently justify their systemic racist violence by saying they are protecting women. Patriarchy, the dominance of men over women, happens everywhere in our society, but the state tries to convince us that Black men are

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the main perpetrators. This racist lie helps the state justify their violent control over “uncontrollable” communities.

Patriarchy is one of the overarching structures of our world and therefore we should not be surprised that any man has a past that includes violence against women. The police’s shooting of Harding is one instance of the way the state terrorizes a community that is a threat to the current social order, that has been historically attacked and barred from access to stable employment, etc...

It’s no longer politically correct to lynch Black men, but the police can shoot down Black and Brown people in the street and justify it through demonizing them.

Women in poor urban communities are often both breadwinners and housewives. They are the ones left behind in the wake of these murders, beatings, and incarcerations, to hold the funerals, pick up the pieces, and fight the fight against their sons’, husbands’, fathers’ murderers... all while still being subject to patriarchal violence, sexual assault, and the de-funding of social services, the cutting of the public sector particularly where it employs or supports women of color. The police targeting of young men of color is a phenomenon that ripples outward and effects the gendered structure of poor communities, that affects women as well as men, but in a different form.

Harding didn’t pay his MUNI fare on the Bayview T line, and was shot up to ten times. Two weeks ago an unarmed homeless man was shot and killed by the Police in the Civic Center Bart station. Two years ago Oscar Grant was shot in the back at the Fruitvale Bart station by a cop who is now in comfy retirement. The severe policing of Bay Area transport and the constant increase in fares shows us that the state wants poor people to stay in their hood and to remain isolated from the rest of society. Perhaps it shows us that mobility is a potential weapon. In every neighborhood in SF and the East Bay, we want a FREE public transit, FREE of PIGS. Until then, jump turnstiles, back door it! and MUNI and

BART workers: look the other way, invite people to take the emergency exit, tell people to use the back door of the bus!