

# Twin Cities DSA Socialist Feminist Branch Manifesto

## Purpose

The Socialist Feminist Branch of the Twin Cities DSA was formed to identify systems of oppression that primarily affect womxn and to work collectively toward the liberation of womxn from oppression. In this context, “womxn” refers to people who have been historically oppressed because of their gender assignment and/or identity. This may include those who identify as women, femme, or non-binary, or those who were assigned female at birth. This manifesto outlines the purpose and values of the branch.

The purpose of the branch is to build power among womxn under the oppressive conditions of capitalism, with the ultimate goal of a more equitable, socialist society. This purpose will inform the actions we take to address issues impacting womxn within and outside of TCDSA. Our actions will be grounded in Black feminist theory<sup>1</sup>, socialist feminist theory, and the feminist process<sup>2</sup>. The branch also provides a space for womxn in TCDSA to gather in solidarity. We strive to be inclusive and act in ways that recognize how our identities intersect. We will prioritize the voices of working class womxn, womxn of color, womxn with disabilities, trans womxn, and members of the LGBTQ community.

## Values

Stating our values clearly allows us to acknowledge the broad landscape of oppression while identifying the values that we feel are most relevant and urgent to our mission. This is a living document, and we expect our values to change and grow over time as we learn more and grow together.

- **Disability Justice.** The branch understands the harmful consequences of ableism<sup>3</sup> and seeks to amplify the voices of womxn with disabilities. The branch recognizes that when able-bodied womxn speak for womxn with disabilities, it leads to erasure and misrepresentation. Therefore the branch is dedicated to amplifying the voices of womxn with disabilities. The branch is also committed to showing solidarity by working to

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<sup>1</sup> Black Feminist theory - the school of thought that recognizes the oppressions faced by people at the intersection of a number of identities (including but not limited to gender, race, and class) frequently interact and reinforce each other.

<sup>2</sup> Feminist Process - a set of practices that recognizes the personal power dynamics present, focuses on building interpersonal relationships, and attempts to create a climate in which the least confident in the space feel safe to share their perspective.

<sup>3</sup> Ableism - the systemic favoring of able-bodied & able-minded individuals and consequently, the systemic discrimination & subjugation of people with disabilities.

dismantle structures designed to exclude womxn with disabilities, and build a community that is accessible for all womxn.

- **Economic Justice.** The branch believes that womxn's economic security is intertwined with their rights as workers to collectively bargain for livable and fair wages, benefits, and safe working conditions, and supports actions that advance these causes. We affirm people's work is valuable, regardless of compensation, while also affirming the importance of unwaged labor. We also affirm these groups are deserving of economic justice regardless of their material contributions to the economy.
- **Gender & Sexual Inclusivity.** The branch condemns heterosexual and patriarchal structures that perpetuate sexism, transphobia, homophobia, and heteronormativity.
- **International Solidarity.** The branch supports migrant people and refugee communities within the US and internationally. We support open borders and condemn the use of state violence in the enforcement of international boundaries.
- **Intersectionality.** The branch recognizes that the oppression of womxn is inextricably linked to womxn's multifaceted identities of race, class, gender identification, sexual orientation, and ability. Recognizing these intersections guides the branch to understanding and combating systemic injustices. We value and honor the intersectional identities of TCDSA members, and are committed to never asking a member to choose one identity over another, recognizing that this is neither possible nor desirable.
- **Prefigurative Politics.** The branch strives to enact, in our work and relationships with each other, the values we want to see in the world around us. We are committed to building shared power and breaking down hierarchies of dominance and oppression.
- **Prison Abolition and Transformative Justice.** The branch is committed to dismantling the prison industrial complex<sup>4</sup> of the United States, fighting the school-to-prison pipeline<sup>5</sup>, ending bail bonds, and working to fundamentally transform society's concept of justice. We recognize that the carceral state disproportionately affects black, indigenous, latinx, and other communities of color. We stand in solidarity with the incarcerated, with their families, and with all people affected by the carceral state.
- **Racial Justice.** The branch supports actions that address the structural barriers in which womxn of color, and particularly black womxn, are disproportionately impacted. We

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<sup>4</sup> Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) - the system in which the interests of the public sector and private companies focus on using punitive measures (surveillance, policing, imprisonment) to address social, economic, and political problems.

<sup>5</sup> School-to-prison pipeline - describes the disturbing trend of children and young adults of color to be funneled from schools into prisons based on harsh discipline policies and practices.

recognize that womxn of color are due more economic, social and political resources because of their historical exclusion due to systemic oppression, and support equitable policies and efforts towards an anti-racist society. Included in these efforts is the recognition of the colonization of, and past and present violence against Indigenous peoples, and in particular the violence against Indigenous womxn.

- **Reproductive Justice.** The branch believes the complete physical and mental well-being of womxn can only be achieved when womxn have the economic, political and social power to make decisions about their bodies, sexuality and reproduction. The branch believes in reproductive self-determination for all people regardless of biology, which necessitates unbiased, factual, accessible information, as well as the right to privacy when making decisions related to one's body, sexuality, and reproduction.
- **Socialist Feminism.** The branch believes that the liberation of womxn is achieved through recognizing and dismantling the cultural (patriarchal) and economic (capitalist) structures that perpetuate the oppression of womxn.
- **Survivor Agency and Justice.** The branch supports the agency of victims/survivors of gender based violence. The branch condemns violence and abuse against womxn in all forms, including but not limited to mental abuse, emotional abuse, sexual violence, domestic violence, and intimate partner violence. The branch supports a culture in which womxn can feel safe in relationships with others and themselves.